

Deanery News



February 2018
Your Bi-monthly Newsletter

Dear all

This Lent I am particularly looking forward to Bishop Alastair leading our deanery Lent reflections. As one of our Deanery priorities is times and opportunities for prayer, this is a great way to do just that as he visits a number of different churches across the deanery.

Four of these services will also be led by our new curates, as a way of encouraging them and giving them valuable experience. Do please come along to some or all of them; details are in the newsletter.

At our last Deanery Synod we heard from Peter Firbank who worships at Church Gresley and is a member of the Church of England Youth Council. The CEYC exists to represent, enrich, and engage, the wider church and young people. Peter's presentation was both encouraging and challenging, and as another of our Deanery priorities of working with young people we look forward to developing our links. As part of this we have added a page to our website which we hope to develop. If you haven't been on recently, then please do have a look: <https://merciadeanery.wordpress.com>.

At synod, we also considered Bishop Jan's questions after her presentation to the Deanery last year. These identified areas where there are problems or we are struggling, as well as areas where there are signs of growth and things that we can share. I will pass these on, along with our discussions at clergy Chapter, to Bishop Jan, and we will also see what we can do as a deanery to support and encourage one another.

Myself and Debbie (the Deanery Administrator) met with the new Safeguarding trainer to iron out some of the problems and challenges that have been evident and also to put in place a better system of offering training opportunities. This means that we should have a regular pattern of training in the deanery, which will hopefully be helpful.

Recently, I was able to meet with some of the Deanery's Readers and Geraldine Pond, the new Warden of Readers. Geraldine encouraged the Readers to appoint an Assistant Warden in the Deanery and also to think about how we can value and support the important work that our Readers do.

The formal consultation for the legal creation of Mercia Deanery is also underway, and hopefully PCCs and incumbents have had a chance to discuss and respond to this.

I hope that your Lent and Easter are good opportunities for you to encounter God afresh.

Rev Graham Rutter

Area Dean of Mercia Deanery



An introduction to St John's, Newhall

Who are we and what do we do?

St. John's is the Parish Church of Newhall. The style of worship is mainly traditional Church of England, the congregation coming mainly from the local community or just outside the parish. The congregation is mainly middle aged and above. There are currently 30 on the Electoral roll. We have a hard working Pastoral team who visit a large number of people at their homes, and in residential care Homes in the area. We are part of Churches Together in Swadlincote.



Our aim at St. John's is to build relationships and show a hospitality that is the practice of small gestures of kindness and friendliness, a practice and discipline that asks us to do what in the world's eyes may seem inconsequential but from the perspective of the Gospel is a manifestation of God's Kingdom. The emphasis is on practice, not just for special events or gatherings, but week in week out Intentional kindness, without an agenda, creating authentic friendships. We recognise the importance of creating community, both within and outside the church which requires consistency and commitment. We believe this what Jesus was looking for, when He said "Love your Neighbour," is the church inviting people into our building and expecting them to cross our threshold or about building relationships and community where the people already are.



Social Activities

Every third Saturday the church is open as a Cafe serving light lunches and a variety of cakes. We have "Cafe Church" known as "The Bridge" which is held on the 1st Thursday of the month at the Old Post Community.

Families @ 4, which is similar to Messy Church, is held on the first Sunday of the month, at 4pm. "Crumbs" Out and a Bite is on the second Monday of the month, this is where we organise to gather for lunch at one of the many Pubs in Swadlincote, and a craft group is every Tuesday 1pm -3pm in the Church. There is also a very active and thriving group of bell ringers at St Johns.



What are our Challenges?

- We do have a very active and committed, but aging congregation, we need to think about how we build up our contact with younger people and families.
- We need to re-build our links out in the wider community, with the schools, community centres, Pubs and clubs in Newhall.
- The Church itself is set back from the main road and somewhat hidden behind houses, so people miss that it is here we need to think a lot about how we are advertising ourselves to the local community.
- Getting to know and getting used to a new Vicar and adapting to him being part time, while embracing and encouraging his wider role within the whole of Swadlincote.

What are we celebrating?

- Our new vicar. This is giving us a new lease of life, and energy.
- That have over the last 6 months re-established links with 2 of the schools in the parish.
- That we have a great pastoral support network, with the elderly and the housebound.
- A close and strengthening relationship with the local Methodist Church.
- A very wide and varied group of fringe people who have contact with the church at least monthly, though social events and the activities we already do.

Towards a Healthier Church

If you ask many people today (including in churches), they will say that church decline is inevitable; yet, the natural state of God's Church is one of growth. The Church, for all her flaws, is the visible representation of God's Kingdom on earth, the growth of which was likened by Jesus to a mustard seed becoming a tree (Mt 13.31-32). In the early Church, it was God who, day by day, added to their number those who were being saved (Ac 2.47). God, through his Holy Spirit, gives increase to the Church. Of course, that's not to say that we should expect all individual churches to constantly expand in size. Jesus himself spoke of pruning in order to be more fruitful (Jn 15.2).

Although it is God who gives growth in his Church, we should still be concerned with it; not as a matter of survival, but because God desires the increase of his Kingdom on earth. It is the prayer that Jesus gave us: 'Your Kingdom come ... on earth as it is in heaven.' (Mt 6.10).

How do we do that? The gardener will look for growth in their garden, hope for it and expect it. However, they don't spend their days measuring the plants and anxiously willing them to get bigger. Growth is built in; they focus on the health of their plants, trusting that a healthy plant will grow. So, we should hope for, expect and pray for church growth; but our part is to ensure that our churches are healthy, trusting God will, in his time, give increase to that healthy church. A healthy church is one that is faithful to the call of God to be his Church in character, purpose and priorities.

A New MAP for Derby Diocese

The latest version of Mission Action Planning for Derby Diocese, just launched, draws on and learns from the heritage of our use of MAP; but it is also a major reworking. It is based firmly on the conviction that if we are faithful to God in his call to be his Church, then he will, in his time and by his Holy Spirit, grow his church.

MAP for Derby Diocese is a process to help churches respond to God's call to be his church by helping them to reflect his character, purpose and priorities.

We have produced MAP for Derby Diocese not to add further burdens on churches, but because we believe that it will be helpful and fruitful for them in responding to God's call. There are no timescales or reporting, and the decision to use it is entirely the church's.

So how is it different? Firstly, MAP for Derby Diocese isn't about doing more things and starting more programmes. It is about helping the church to reflect God's desired character and purpose – to be his Church. Secondly, every aspect, from the theology that underpins it to the language it uses, is faithful to God's call to his Church, rather than being over-reliant on business models and language. Thirdly, MAP for Derby Diocese encompasses the whole of the life of God's Church, not just mission outreach, believing that to be healthy, every part of his Church needs to work according to his will and purpose. Finally, MAP for Derby Diocese has just three core principles and three core elements, ensuring that God's work through the process will be lasting and fruitful, whilst allowing the church to adapt the process to suit its needs.

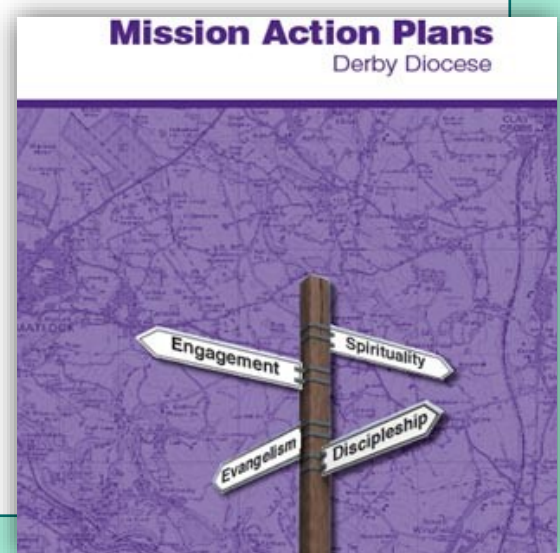
All these things mean that MAP for Derby Diocese can be used by churches of any context, tradition or size, at any level (church, parish, benefice, deanery or other groupings).

Like to know more?

If you would like to find out more, you can:

- Go to the Mission Action Planning section of the Derby Diocese website [click 'Mission' on the home page, and then scroll down and click the 'Mission Action Plans (MAP)' tile].
- Speak to Jason Kennedy or any of the Mission and Ministry Team at Church House. We would be delighted to introduce you to MAP for Derby Diocese.

Rev Jason Kennedy Diocesan Missioner •
jason.kennedy@derby.anglican.org • 01332 388691



Experience Christmas at St Marks, Winshill

St Marks put on 12 sessions of 'Experience Christmas' for our 2 primary schools. We invited Key Stage 2 classes to come up and visit the church and Journey from Advent to Christmas via 6 stations. We had a total of 350 children journey with us over the 2 weeks. Both children and staff really enjoyed the experience. Below are the stations with a line about what we shared with them.

1. The Preparation. Advent Learning about how Christians prepare for Christmas. Not just preparing our homes and churches but our hearts as well.



2. The Announcement. Finding out about Mary and the job she was asked to undertake, to be the mother of Gods own son, and thinking about the big pinch of courage she had to take to say 'Yes'.



3. The Promises. Discovering the promises in the bible about the Messiah. Also thinking about the gifts given by the wise men and wondering what gifts we could bring for Jesus. (The cards with the children's gifts written on were brought up and blessed with the congregations offerings on Christmas morning)



4. The Journey. It's a long way to for an expectant Mary and Joseph to walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem! We talked about the journey and the final destination. A stable isn't really where you'd expect a king to be born.



5. The Message. Hearing the angels glorious message of peace, given to the lowly shepherds and to us all.



6. The Gift. The greatest gift of all is God's gift to us of his own beloved son Jesus. The children's 'gifts' were placed around the manger as we reflected on the final verse of in the bleak midwinter. 'What can I give him.. give my heart.'

Rev Martin Flowerdew braving the shave!



As mentioned in the previous newsletter, on 14th December at a Concert for Rainbows Hospice for Children and Young People, the Rev'd Martin Flowerdew had his beard and hair shaved off!

Sponsorship monies passed his initial target of £500.00 well before the event and the final total has exceeded £2,000.00!

He would like to thank everyone who has helped him reach such a wonderful sum.

Various described as looking like – at one end of the scale 'Gollum' and at the other one of the Mitchell brothers off East Enders – Rev. Martin is remaining clean shaven until into the new year. He is uncertain whether he will replace his 'Viking' beard but has yet to decide just how much he will re-grow in the spring.

BISHOP ALASTAIR'S LENT TALK SERIES

WHEN/WHERE

18th February—All Saints, Aston on Trent
25th February—The Chapel, Repton School
4th March—St Mark, Winshill
11th March—Emmanuel, Swadlincote
18th March—St Mary, Coton in the Elms

BISHOP ALASTAIR WILL BE LEADING A SERIES OF REFLECTIONS

SERVICES START
AT 6PM

REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE SERVED
AFTER THE
SERVICE

YOU ARE WELCOME TO ANY
AND ALL OF THE SERVICES.



Picnic Concert

featuring entertainment by

The Breakaways

Emmanuel Church Hall

Church Street, Swadlincote, DE11 8LF.

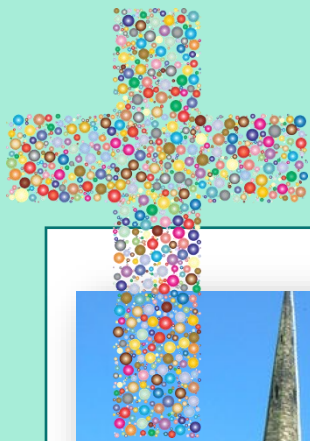
**on Saturday,
24th February
at 7.00pm - 10.00pm**

**Bring your own picnic,
Hot drinks will be available**

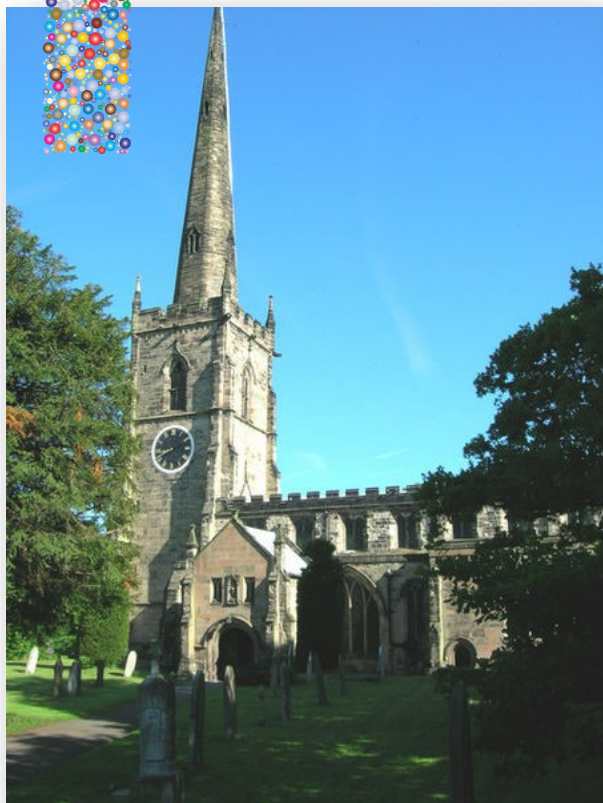
**Tickets are £5 each,
available from Jackie Eyre 01283 214748**



**Help our Church
to raise funds to
repair the roof**



Preparing for Easter at St Wystan's Church, Repton



On **Shrove Tuesday** we hold a Baked Potatoes & Pancakes lunch in the home of one of our church members. It is a popular event and a good reminder of Lent to come. You would be most welcome.

During Lent itself, we have six **Lent Lunches** of simple homemade soup and bread and cheese, running on a Wednesday from 14th February until 21st March in St Wystan's church. Do please join us. It begins at 12.30 until 1.30pm. There is no charge but donations are requested and the amount collected given to a local charity. This year we will be supporting the Padley Centre.

For information contact Carol Lloyd, 01283 702410 or email cl.l@btinternet.com.

A **Lent course** is an important aspect of this time of year. People sign up for a group who meet in the leaders homes, and this year will have a choice of course, between; "Finding a Voice" based on the film "The Kings Speech" and a York course "On the Third Day" exploring the Resurrection and its implications. All information is in St Wystan's church.

The bells ring out at 8.30am on **Easter Sunday** morning and then one of the ways we then celebrate is to have an **Easter Sunday breakfast**. We hold it between our two morning services, so there is just enough time to enjoy orange juice, granola, croissants and coffee, with of course, a small Easter egg to finish. People can join us after the 8 am Communion or before the main Easter service at 9.45.

Christian Writers Day



Association of Christian Writers Writers Day on Journalism
Saturday 10th March 2018—10am to 4pm
at St Alkmund's, Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 1GU

The theme of the day will focus on journalism with two speakers from Premier Christianity magazine, Sam Hailes and Claire Musters. Discover how to find that all important hook to grab the interest of an editor, structure your article writing, conduct interviews, how to work with the local press and much much more.

For information on our talks and meetings in 2018, please contact Richard and Eirene Palmer on 07592 303048 or drop us an email at derbychrwriters@gmail.com

For further information or to book, visit www.christianwriters.org.uk/events Café Writers And if you are looking for a local Christian writers group, Café Writers meets every 2 months on Saturday morning in the Cathedral Café. We are affiliated to ACW and cater for all levels of writer.



PARISH GIVING SCHEME LAUNCH

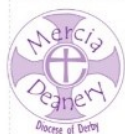
LED BY: DAVID MEREDITH &
DAVID MUNDY

WEDNESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY

7.30PM–9.00PM

ARRIVE AT 7PM FOR REFRESHMENTS

ST MARY CHURCH
ELMS ROAD, COTON IN THE ELMS, DE12 8HG



Mercia Deanery



TODDLER ROADSHOW

RUN BY: SARAH BROWN

DATE: 24TH APRIL 2018
TIME: 11.30AM–1.30PM
VENUE: ST PETER'S CHURCH HALL
HARTSHORNE
DE11 7BE
COST: FREE

**A MID-DAY MEETING TO INSPIRE AND INFORM THOSE WHO LEAD
AND HELP WITH TODDLER GROUPS.**

- ☛ Coffee and a chat with space for toddlers to play
- ☛ Information from relevant groups which support and resource Toddler groups.
- ☛ Keeping everyone safe, a quiz, a chance to check you're on track and to plan for any improvements.
- ☛ Resources to use for craft and storytelling activities.
- ☛ Ideas for linking children and carers with the church – what's worked for you and what might help.

Deadline for sign up is 23rd April 2018

To sign up go to: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/toddler-roadshow-tickets-42867443678



Mercia Deanery

Dates for your Diary

18th February

Bishop's Lent series begins

See flyer in this newsletter.

28th March

Parish Giving Scheme night

St Mary's Church, Coton in the Elms

7.00pm-9.00pm

24th April

Toddler Roadshow

St Peter's Church Hall, Hartshorne

11.30am-1.30pm

13th June

Deanery Synod

TBC

7.30pm-9.30pm

10th July

Deanery Confirmation service with Bishop Jan

Venue TBC

4.00pm

For more information on every aspect of
Deanery life look on the
Mercia Deanery Website

<https://merciadeanery.wordpress.com>



Mercia Deanery
Resourcing Mercia Deanery

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Mercia Deanery Benefices

● Foremark and Repton with Newton Solney ● Gresley ● Melbourne, Ticknal, Smisby and Stanton-by-Bridge ● Newhall ● Seale and Lullington with Linton and Castle Gresley ● Stapenhill (including Caldwell) ● Swadlincote and Hartshorne ● Trent and Derwent: Aston-on-Trent, Elvaston, Weston-on-Trent and Shardlow, Barrow-upon-Trent with Twyford and Swarkestone ● Trent United: Walton-on-Trent and Croxall, Stapenhill Immanuel. Rosliston, Coton-in-the-Elms, Catton ● Winhill and Bretby