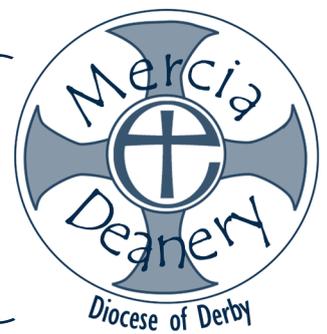


Deanery News

July 2020
Your Bi-monthly Newsletter



Great is thy Faithfulness

As I have been reflecting on what to write in this short opening to our Deanery Newsletter, a hymn has been rumbling around in my head, 'Great is thy faithfulness.' A hymn written by Thomas Chisholm in about 1923. Chisholm is in many ways an unremarkable character but a prolific writer. His work included being a school teacher, a newspaper editor, and insurance agent. On retirement he spent much time at the Methodist Home for the Aged in New Jersey. This well known hymn started life as a poem and unlike many of this time that have heart-wrenching stories behind them, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" is inspired by the simple realisation that God is at work in our lives on a daily basis. Chisholm wrote:

"My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."

For me the simplicity of the truth of understanding that God is at work in our lives at every level. God is in the great and mighty acts of love and compassion, of hard work and heroism that we have witnessed over the last few months, But God is also in the everyday, in the hum drum and routine as well as the space and the isolation. And God will be in the steps we look to take as we move forward from this challenging time.

Can I take this opportunity as we reflect thankfulness to thank you all for the continued prayer that has supported and sustained the ongoing mission and ministry of the church. Your faithfulness through these past months lays the foundations for how we step forward. Thank you.

The challenge is still before us, and there will be many ups and downs to come but perhaps we can take comfort from the final stanza of Thomas Chisholm's Poem.

***Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
Thomas Obadiah Chisholm (1866-1960)***

Thank you

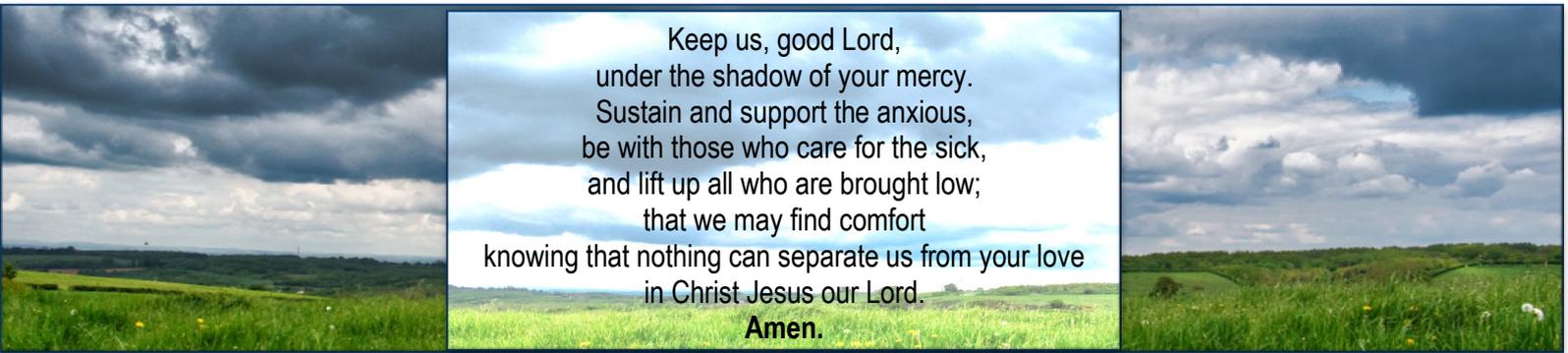
Also I would like to publicly thank Mary Hirst (St Georges, Ticknall) for her faithfulness. Mary has been a long standing member of Deanery Synod Leadership team, and after much thought decided that now is the time to step down and free up some space in her very busy diary of commitments. She continues to be a member of Deanery Synod and I know that her wisdom will continue to be a part of our gatherings.

Mary, thank you.

Rev Philip Basher

Acting Area Dean

If you would like to include your news in our next Deanery Newsletter, please contact Debbie. You can also subscribe (or unsubscribe) to the newsletter by emailing: debbie.patrick@derby.anglican.org



Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Thoughts from Aston Rectory

I think the suddenness of the lockdown took us all by surprise. For about two weeks we had restrictions imposed on our worship, such as no passing of the Peace and no sharing of the chalice. Then suddenly everything shut down!

This experience has certainly forced us to think afresh about what it means to be the Church. When we think about ministry, and by that I mean the ministry of the whole Church, not just the clergy, we often think of it in terms of “doing.” We are task orientated. We spend much time in meetings thinking about what we should be “doing” as a church. This poses a problem in lockdown. For many the challenge of inactivity has been acutely challenging, for we so often define ourselves by what we do. During this time the “doing” of the church has been reduced to recording services, giving pastoral support to the isolated and needy and praying for one another. Not forgetting the occasional Zoom meeting! How many of us had heard of Zoom three months ago?

However, when “doing” is severely restricted, we perhaps learn the importance of “being.” Even when our buildings are closed to us and we cannot come physically together, we never stop being the Church. Our principal calling is to live in relationship with God, to “be” before God. This is far more important than all the busyness, however important the tasks may be, which can sometimes serve as a distraction from our true focus upon being the people of God.

Revd. Tony Luke



Coronavirus—guidance for Churches

Guidance for the opening of churches for either private prayer or for worship is changing fast. For the latest guidance, go to

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches>

Not all of our churches will be opening for worship straight away. Contact your local priest or Churchwarden to find out if your church will be opening up for worship. Some churches have been able to open up for private prayer, again contact your local priest or Churchwarden for more details.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



News from **St Peters church**, Stapenhill is that they are opening for private prayer on Saturdays from 2pm-3.30pm

And

St Giles church, Caldwell on Saturdays from 3.30pm-5pm.

Please note that there will not be any bibles or prayer books available.

The view from Repton Vicarage

The view from my office windows – there are two – is mostly greenery, and wet greenery this morning. Above the hedgerow is the top of a Churchyard yew which in due season is a mass of starlings or fieldfares, whichever gets there first, eating the berries. And if I lean to the right, as far as I dare without toppling my chair, I can just see the top of the spire. A reminder to all who see it that God is in our midst.

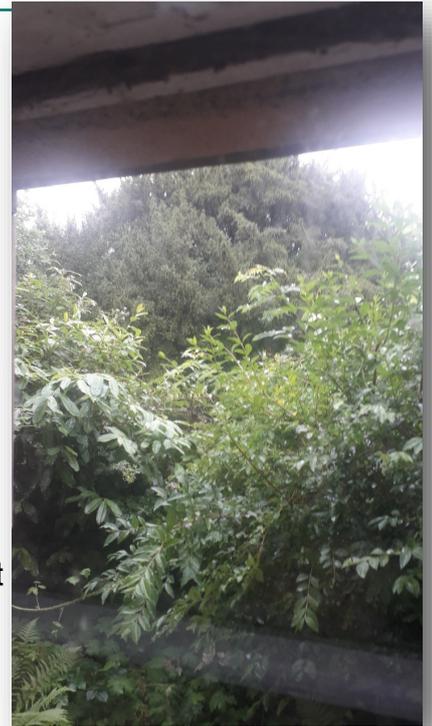
There is no doubt in my heart or mind that God is with us, that He is close by. Many of you will know that I spent 18 months off work with Mental Health Issues. I returned to work a year ago not expecting that it would only be a few months and the world would change. That 18 months was a long drawn out ordeal with my spending much of it alone. There were many months of lockdown within the Vicarage. During those months of intense loneliness and often very dark periods of depression, even though I wasn't able to be in touch with God as a result of the drugs and my mind set, somehow I knew that He would be close and reaching out to me.

So it was when this coronavirus lockdown occurred that I was well prepared for what lay ahead. Or at least I thought I was. The prospect of weeks on my own was fine, I had been there. But underneath it all is one big difference- I am not alone – we are all affected by this. Admittedly the effects vary from place to place and individual to individual – but that 'all in it together' situation has knock-on effects that we all have to cope with. For me as Vicar they have at times been very challenging to deal with. The on-going result of coping with such things, with the lockdown itself and with all my personal feelings is now expressing itself in fatigue – a deep tiredness that sleep itself cannot overcome. This is a weakness that St Paul would relate to. In 2 Corinthians 12 verse 9 he quotes Jesus as saying, "My power is made perfect in weakness"? And then says in verse 10 "For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses"? It is a reminder to me – and to us all perhaps, that it is at our times of weakness that we tend to be more open to God's presence and His strength. In these times of fatigue and all the rest, God has promised that through Christ He will be with us, that His strength can be ours and that in Him we can find the hope we need to go on.

In one major sense while Covid19 is a curse it might also just happen to be a blessing. God is in the midst of all this pandemic and if we are open to Him then turning a curse into a blessing is the sort of thing that our God can do. One blessing God is offering us is the clean sheet. Many priests have longed for a clean sheet of paper and to ask their church – what is God calling us to be, what is he asking us to do? How should we worship? How should we build up our faith and fellowship? How should we seek to serve others? And yes, you would be right to say that we have done this with our PCC's, exploring our vision for our churches. But the sheet has never been clean and an inability to let go of existing things has often stifled initiatives that appear to be the right thing to do.

Now we have the chance presented to us. We have the cleanest sheet of paper we will ever have. Will we be brave enough, sure enough in our faith to use this opportunity? To ask of God, what is truly important? To ask what does God call us to be? To not rush and simply do things because we used to do them? To truly seek His will is a big step to take but God is with us and when we recognise that, our confidence will be such that we can more effectively be the people He wants us to be.

Individually God is with us; together, even when that is via the internet or phone, God is with us. He is in the midst of the pandemic, in the suffering, in the recovery, in the mourning and the joys. He is in the communities pulling together and the things that are falling apart. God will be with us tomorrow and the day after, in the low points and in the times we rejoice. Both as individuals and churches, as we move forward, as we remain faithful to Him, then we can be certain that He is within us, around us, before us and above us. These may be times we look back on and say, "We were tested, our faith was tested then". Let us all keep firm hold of God's hand so that we can also say – "Together, we came through, the better for it". Thanks be to God.



St Marks Winshill & St Wystans Bretby

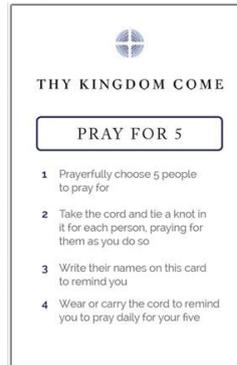
During the Season of Thy Kingdom Come, resources were distributed to members of both congregations, including



Prayer Journal

Prayer for 5 Friends

Lecto Divina



9 Days of listening out for God through Divine Reading

Prayer Walking

Over the last 2 years we have also Prayer Walked the Parish of Winshill in small groups through this season. Clearly unable to do that this year, the parish went virtual prayer walking, with 9 different routes photographed and commentary added. There were also maps and full script of prayers and readings for each one. 3 new walks were included for Bretby. They are still available at www.stmarkswinshill.co.uk if you wish to have a look.

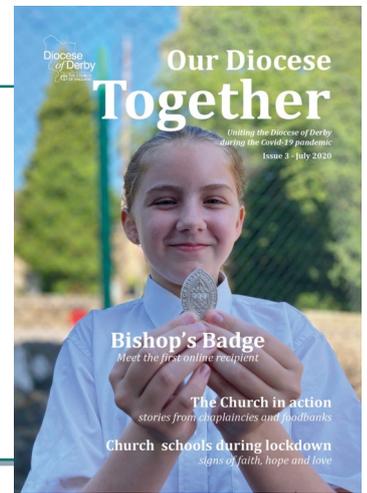


Our Diocese Together

Uniting the Diocese of Derby during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Due to the CofE recommended guidelines regarding the distribution of printed documents, we have merged our monthly "Our Diocese" and quarterly "Together Magazine" publications to form a new online monthly "Our Diocese Together".

We really encourage you to send in your good news (Covid-19 related or other) for us to share across the diocese. Please send any news or stories to communications@derby.anglican.org



Free Social Media Webinars



The Church of England Digital Team offers these [free training webinars](#) to support you with becoming familiar and confident in digital communications.

New webinar topics have now been added alongside their existing offering. There is no charge to register and a great deal of knowledge to gain!

Learning in Faith



STOP PRESS!

Online courses beginning in July
2 x 1 hour Zoom sessions with Derby Diocese's Children's Advisor Sarah Brown.

'Unexpected Child in the Church Area!'

Ideas to support churches that have occasional child visitors.
Monday 13th July 11am-12noon - Click here to [BOOK NOW](#)

'Love Your Local School(s)'

How your church can love and support your local schools
Monday 20th July 11am-12noon - Click here to [BOOK NOW](#)

Archdeacon Visitation Service



This year's Visitation services were due to take place in June and early July. However, they have been cancelled following the necessary postponement of the APCMs.

We will be carefully monitoring guidance from both the government and the Church of England regarding possible alternative timelines or mechanisms to allow churchwardens to be sworn in, possibly in the late autumn. However, the decision may be taken on either a national or local level to postpone them completely until next year.

Deadline for September Deanery Newsletter

Please send in your articles to debbie.patrick@derby.anglican.org

Deadline - 21st August

Remember that anything you send looks much better with photo's so please send anything you have.

Dates for your Diary

Deanery Synod dates for 2020

Tuesday July 14th - zoom

Wednesday October 14th – TBC

Your Deanery Leadership team are...

Acting Area Dean (statutory role) - Revd Philip boshier –Chair –Winhill & Bretby

Maggie Fenby-Taylor - Lay Chair - St George, Ticknall

Liz Ballinger -Deanery Treasurer - St Mark, Winhill

Jon Whiten - Leadership Team Member and Diocesan Synod Rep - St George & St Mary, Gresley

Debbie Patrick - Deanery Administrator and Deanery Synod Secretary

Mercia Deanery Benefices

- Foremark and Repton with Newton Solney ● Church Gresley ● Melbourne, Ticknall, Smisby and Stanton-by-Bridge ● Newhall ● Seale: Lullington, Linton, Castle Gresley and Overseal ● 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