

AREA DEANS' NOTES FOR AMERSHAM DEANERY SYNOD MARCH 18th 2021

TIMETABLE FOR REOPENING CHURCHES FOR WORSHIP

The Bishops are working on a recommended timetable of stages for our churches to re-open for public worship that shadows government guidelines. For example, when and on what level services might resume, when Sunday school children and youth work might begin, social events be held and so on. We will open if we can do so safely. Many clergy are bombarded with the passionate and vehement views of those who feel strongly one way or the other on re-opening.

MARRIAGE LAW CHANGES

We have just heard that from early May it is all change. Anglican clergy cease to be registrars. After complying with the usual requirements to be married in church, (e.g. calling of banns or the issue of a bishop's common licence or an archbishop's special licence) couples will be issued with a 'Marriage Document' by clergy. After the wedding, couples must take this to the civil registrar's office, where the marriage will be electronically registered and a marriage certificate can be issued. This is apparently the biggest change since 1837. The details of how to comply are continuing to be worked.

DEANERY VACANCIES

A significant number of parishes and team churches in the deanery will be vacant in the near future. Rather than looking to save money on stipends and having at least a year of interregnum, the Bishop is concerned that a key deanery like Amersham should have them filled asap and is negotiating with the Diocese to speed up appointments.

FLOURISHING IN MINISTRY

Many of you will have received the new diocesan booklet full of good ideas.

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/flourishing-in-ministry/>

COME AND SEE

Have you registered and interest for your parish in Bishop Steven's Lent series? Lots of good stuff on how to reach people on the fringe of church life, especially now that most of or worship is virtual. <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see/>

A NEW RESOURCE

We welcome Angela Curran-Smith as 'Church-School Relationship Adviser & Discipleship Enabler (Buckinghamshire)' Angela is distinguished former head teacher in touch with the realities of school life in these difficult times, so do use her skills. Contact her on 07552 247904 or angela.curran-smith@oxford.anglican.org

ODCD – The Oxford Diocesan Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

<http://www.odcd.org.uk/>

Deanery and Diocesan Synod member Nigel Edward-Few has recently been appointed to the newly revitalised council under the new leadership of Christopher Tyrer. The council has concluded that the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing in the diocese have, for some time, not been adequately been met. A request for information on what provision has been made for the hard of hearing has been circulated via Deanery Chapter.

RIDE AND STRIDE

This raises money to give grants to churches needing to repair their structure. The Trust's main fund-raising is the annual "Ride and Stride" event, usually on the second Saturday in September. People cycle/ride/even go on horseback to visit churches, seeking sponsorship for doing so, often specified as so much for each church visited. The money raised is then split between a church of each rider's nomination and the Trust. This needs a new Amersham deanery coordinator. Expressions of interest please to our deanery Hon Sec. (See also separate detailed notice on Deanery Website on Bucks Historic Churches)

WELCOME

Rev'ds Brian and Peggy Ludlow now serving jointly in the House for Duty post in the Chenies Benefice.

FAREWELL

To Rev'd Simon Winn, Great Chesham, moving to a post as incumbent of St Alfege, Greenwich, in Southwark Diocese.

To Rev'd Cassa Messervy, Seer Green and Jordans moving to be Team Rector at the Wychert Benefice, based in Haddenham just south of Aylesbury.

To Rev'd John Shepherd, Great Chesham, moving to be incumbent of Christ Church Surbiton Hill and Emmanuel Tolworth, Southwark Diocese.

To Rev'd Ruth Boughton, Rev'd Ian Brown and Rev'd Tim Harper, all retiring before the next Synod.

We give thanks for the many years of service that all of those leaving have given to their respective parishes, and pray that they will enjoy continued blessings in their new roles.

With Best Wishes for Easter
The Deanery Team