

Dear friends in South East Derbyshire Deanery,

None of us will ever forget this year and, as we start this school year, we continue to face difficult times in our communities as the economic impact of COVID bites and Brexit draws closer. Our churches continue to face difficulties as we look to celebrating harvest, plan remembrance and think about Christmas. All of which are likely to be different and are having to be rethought in light of COVID and social distancing. This coupled with the fact that some people in our communities are ignoring guidelines, or are confused by what guidelines apply, where is putting strains of church leaders lay and ordained.

I have likened this feeling to driving a new car. All of the things you normally use are there but not quite in the same place. All the festivals and parts of church life will be part of the coming months such as harvest and APCMs but not quite in the same way. Some church buildings will not be open again this year and some will continue to do a mixture of services online and in the building. The context we are working in is different too, as people adjust to changes in their own life.

Each situation is unique, and we need to pray and care for one another as we navigate the way ahead. Sharing our ideas and listening to the insight we gain is vital as we learn afresh what it means to be a missional church. There is no doubt this experience will change us and our churches, so that when we emerge from the experience of COVID we will take with us lessons learned and new ways of doing things.

We may find ourselves over the coming months evaluating what our churches pick up and what we no longer do. Many of us have found new opportunities presenting themselves, new contacts made and new ideas for example zoom. In all of this it is vital we listening to God's prompting and guiding and also manage our expectations.

Please be assured of my prayers and support and do get in touch if we can help as a deanery in any way.

The deanery has a spare place for one clergy and one lay representative on the diocesan synod. If you would be interested in being a member, please speak to me or contact Angela who can send you the forms required and put you in contact with current members to find out more

Karen

Deanery Synod elections and APCMs

Provision has now been made for APCM's to take place either in person or remotely. These will need to take place by either mean by 31st October Existing Deanery Synod members will remain in office until 30th November and remain part of their PCC until that date and new members, voted for at APCM, will take up office on 1st December. Wardens will remain in office until 31st January 2021 unless their successors (voted for at APCM) have been 'sworn in' before that date. The admission of wardens will take place via zoom and dates will be announced soon. Likewise, provision has been made via a Bishop's Instrument for Deanery Synods to take place remotely until it is safe to resume

Guidance on Holding an Annual Parish Meeting (APM) and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) whilst Covid-19 restrictions are in place

In March, Bishop Libby signed an Instrument which postponed the need to hold the APM and APCM in each parish until 31st October 2020. The deadline for holding them cannot be put back again. Some parishes will already have received e-mails from the Charity Commission, asking for their approved accounts. Churches and church halls can now be used, subject to compliance with Government restrictions. Bishop Libby has signed another Instrument, dated 17th August 2020, enabling parishes, should they wish to do so, to hold their APMs and APCMs remotely. Archdeacons will also be able to hold some or all of their Visitations remotely, too. Please remember

- The new rules about the possibility of postal voting for the APCM are not available for use this year. If you want to use them next year, you will need to pass a resolution to that effect at this year's APCM.
- There is no minimum quorum for APMs or APCMs.
- Deanery representatives should be appointed this year.
- Sidespersons are no longer appointed by the APCM but by the PCC.
- Nominations for posts will need to be re-opened prior to the meetings, be they actual or virtual.
- Face-coverings will be mandatory for attendees at a physical meeting, unless an exemption applies.
- Paperwork for the appointment of churchwardens was sent out from the Registry by e-mail on 12-13 March. If you need it again, please contact Natalie Hutchinson, the Registry Clerk, on nh@ewlaw.co.uk.

There are two options for holding APMs/APCMs:

a) Physically or

b) Remotely by video conferencing facility (such as Zoom)

A hybrid meeting would be possible but it is likely to prove quite difficult to manage efficiently.

Parishes are not obliged to open the church or church hall for the purpose of these meetings. If they do wish to do so, the risk assessment must show there is sufficient capacity to hold the meetings AND your Archdeacon has signed it off. **The decision on which option to use should, if possible, be a PCC decision.**

Holding a meeting at which parishioners are physically present:

1) Assess your building, be that church or church hall, by working through the most recent version of the Risk Assessment available on the Church of England website. Bear in mind that capacity isn't the only criterion which you need to consider.

- 2) Work out how many people can be accommodated within the rules of social distancing and safety. As the meetings won't class as 'life events', there is no restriction on numbers permitted to attend, but you will have to work out how many can safely be in the building at the same time. For some churches, this will be less than the 30 permitted for 'life events'; for others it will be more.
- 3) How many do you usually have at your APM/APCM? If you could comfortably accommodate that number, whilst adhering to all Government restrictions and Church of England guidance, you can go ahead and hold a physical meeting, but you don't have to.
- 4) Put up notices in the usual way, advertise it well online and in whatever way is appropriate for your parish. Please note that people attending the meetings will be expected to:
 - a) wash their hands thoroughly or use the hand sanitiser provided;
 - b) wear masks, unless a Government exemption applies to a particular person;
 - c) give his/her name, address and telephone number for contact tracing purposes upon arrival. These details will be destroyed after 21 days.
 - d) bring to the meeting relevant paperwork which will have been sent out previously to members on the Electoral Roll.

Holding a virtual meeting:

- 1) Include in the notice for the APM the ID and access code to enter the meeting. Make this a separate meeting with its own, unique ID so no-one would be able to gate-crash the APCM or, indeed, a future meeting.
- 2) Advertise it widely, as set out at 4) in the previous section on physical meetings.
- 3) The notice for the APCM should include the ID and access code for the separate meeting of the APCM and needs to go to all members on the electoral roll only.
- 4) If a person on the electoral roll has given you their e-mail address, you are allowed to use it for the purpose of notifying them of the APM and APCM because it is for the purposes of fulfilling your obligations under the Church Representation Rules.
- 5) Identify a host who is someone other than the Chair of the meeting and who will be in charge of the IT at the meeting. Name and give contact details of that person on the notice.
- 6) Ask that, if possible, anyone wishing to attend the APM notifies the host in advance. This may make it easier to check up in advance whether someone is entitled to attend.
- 7) You could add something along the following lines to your notice:
 - a) If you do not have internet access and would like to attend, please contact (name the host) who will see what can be done to assist by way of telephone link.
 - b) For those who are hard of hearing, there may be a facility to include live captions. If this would help you to participate more fully, then please contact (name host) in advance of the meeting.
- 8) The host of the meeting shouldn't be the Chair but should be someone whose task it is to vet and admit people wanting to attend and checking the eligibility of anyone they don't know. They also need to be able to silence or remove anyone causing unnecessary disruption.
- 9) It would be sensible for the host and the Chair to be in contact by text or similar as appropriate. The Chair should likewise be in contact with anyone with whom they might want a private word during the meeting.
- 10) There is the facility on some meeting providers for those without internet access to link in by Telephone and Computer Audio and to have live captions (though be aware that you may need to pay for this option) of what is being said for those hard of hearing.
- 11) If you are proposing to record one or both of the meetings (which may be helpful from the point of view of taking the minutes), make sure that you notify everyone both in the notices and at the beginning of each meeting that this is what will be happening. Say that the recording will be deleted after 21 days and make sure that is done.

Full details available on <https://derby.anglican.org/en/about-us/governance/apcms.html>

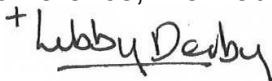
DEANERY SYNODS

PROVISION MADE BY THE BISHOP OF DERBY UNDER CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES 2020

This Instrument is made on twenty-fifth August 2020 and has effect within the Diocese of Derby from the date on which it is made until thirty-first August 2021 or until revoked if sooner. During this period a deanery synod ('the Synod') may hold any of its meetings remotely should it wish to do so.

Remote working

1. Rule 26 Church Representation Rules 2020 (procedure of deanery synods) and the Rules for Deanery Synods dated 10th June 2017 apply with the following modifications.
2. A reference to a meeting of the Synod includes a reference to a meeting which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.
3. A reference to a place where a meeting of the Synod is held, or is to be held, includes a reference to more than one place, including electronic, digital or virtual locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
4. A person is to be regarded as present at a meeting of the Synod at any given time if the person is at that time able to hear and be heard and, where practicable, see and be seen by the other persons present.
5. A vote, whether of the whole Synod or by Houses, may be taken by such electronic method of voting as may be determined by the Area Dean (or, if the post is vacant, by the Acting Area Dean) and the Chair of the House of Laity of the Synod, acting jointly.
6. The provisions made by this Instrument have effect in spite of any inconsistent provision in any Rule of the Synod and any such provision is to be ignored.
7. A reference in this Instrument to being present at a meeting of the Synod includes a reference to being present by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcast and live interactive streaming.



Rt Revd Libby Lane
Bishop of Derby

Deanery Synod Elections and first meeting of new synod

All Deanery synod lay members will be newly elected at APCM's this year and take up their posts on 1st December 2020. Can PCC secretaries please inform Angela who has been elected.

Thanks to all who have served on the current synod and who may be stepping down this time. The first meeting of the new synod will be on Tuesday 1st December via zoom. Details will be sent to members well in advance. Along with deanery business and election of deanery officers, **Bishop Libby** will be the speaker.

Communication and support during the current emergency

Church house staff are now mostly working from home but are still in communication and have limited access to systems Do continue email people and they will help. If you are unsure or are unable to get hold of any usual contacts at the Church Support Office, please contact Angela who is able to find out who is available to answer your query.

The Safeguarding Department has had to cancel all face to face training but still has the usual email contact for urgent enquiries and the emergency contact line is still diverted to a member of the team on duty 24 hours a day **01332 388678**

The Independent Examiner

One of the formalities of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting is the appointment of the Independent Examiner [IE]. So, who can be appointed and what is their role? The first thing to say is that if the PCC's annual turnover exceeds £250,000 or its accounts are prepared on an accruals basis then you need a qualified accountant or auditor as your IE. As I suspect few if any of our churches are in that position these notes only apply to PCCs with turnover of under £250,000, with accounts prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

The IE does not have to hold any formal qualifications, just a working knowledge of financial matters.

The IE should not be a member of the PCC, employed by the PCC or in any way connected to anyone who is. It can be a member of the congregation but it is easier to demonstrate complete independence if it is someone who is not connected to the church. Perhaps have an arrangement with a neighbouring parish to cover each other's examination.

The IE has to be appointed at the APCM but this is usually on the recommendation of the PCC who should consider the suitability of their nominee. An IE may be prepared to do the examination for free or a small charitable donation. As mentioned, a quid pro quo arrangement with another church could be arranged. If all else fails, you will need to pay a fee. The IE should not be expected to prepare accounts, they just examine accounts prepared by the treasurer against the ledgers maintained by the treasures and bank and investment statements.

The IE should

- Check that the balances agree with bank statements, investment reports and any cash book
- Identify any significant items reflected in those statements and seek documentary evidence of the purpose of the receipt or payments and how they have been reflected in the accounts
- Randomly review other entries and check against supporting evidence – concentrate on irregular or fluctuating items
- Pay particular attention to payments made to PCC members, employees or connected persons.
- Once satisfied complete the certificate. Certificate 4.2 in this guidance

Further information: Checklist from the Charity Commission

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742698/CC32a_Independent_Examiners_checklist

From the Church of England:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/pcc-accountability-guide/chapter-11>

Do you have someone in your parish who could offer this service to a neighbouring parish?

Virtual Holiday Club

Reverend Sam Tredwell, Long Eaton St John and Reverend Elaine Jones, Sawley and HOPE Long Eaton ran an online Holiday Club from 3rd to 7th August.

Sam says, 'Years ago I use to run regular holiday clubs with crafts and children and dressing up. In recent years we never seem to have enough volunteers or time to run a holiday club. With lock down all sorts of amazing and creative materials started to appear with ideas on how to connect in new ways with children and families – one was from the Diocese of York – a prepared holiday club for online ministry. It included drama, puppets, craft and a daily bible story and all we needed to do was record it. After a quick chat with Elaine Jones (curate of Sawley) and Carl (from Hope Long Eaton) we decided to go for it. Using Elaine's amazing tech skills and our terrible acting skills and a few rusty puppet skills we created a 5 session holiday club which went out across the area. We laughed a lot and my family laughed at my efforts but it seemed to be well received and connected with many. I will certainly think about doing it again – probably with more time and planning – it could certainly be a deanery scheme for next summer'.



News of Curates in our Deanery

Reverend Elaine Jones, curate at Sawley, will be ordained priest in a service at the Cathedral on 25th September. This will be a much smaller event than was originally anticipated with only a few guests allowed. The service will be live streamed on the Cathedral website, so anyone who wishes to watch can do so. We will circulate detail when we have them.

On Sunday 26th September, Kate Smedley, who lives in Sawley, will be ordained Deacon to serve at Spondon, again in a streamed service from Derby Cathedral

Reverend Bruce Johnson will be transferring his curacy to Ockbrook and Borrowash from 15th September.





All Saints Marlpool 'Noah's Ark' Tableau

Marlpool church took the opportunity to join the community zoo in a garden competition and share the first

conservation zoom of Noah's ark. The animals arrived 2 by 2 over several weeks and an Ark was built. Contributions came from all ages and led to some peculiar conversations and bad jokes fun was had however and

the rain started just as we finished building the ark. The Ark came second in the competition.

Welcome on Wednesday

Welcome on Wednesday (WOW) has been a community lunch at St John's Church, Long Eaton that has run for the last 3 years and when lock down came we all cried when we had to shut. We had built up a really good community and feed a lot of people. After the first shock of lock down the PCC and I started to talk about our lock down exit plan and what small steps we wanted to take towards that. WOW, it was decided, was the first thing to get up and running and so with a lot of planning, risk assessments and permission from the Bishop we re-opened after 8 weeks of lockdown as a take away from the door of the hall serving a hot meal. Our local councillor gave us some money for takeaway containers and we were supplied with food through the feeding Derbyshire network. It is different and not the same and we took a number of weeks to get the hang of it – like having only a few volunteers in and training people to use the line and waiting system but gradually the community has returned. We are feeding around 80 to 90 people a week and offering foodbank vouchers, CAB signposting and help with universal credit claims. It feels good to be back. One delight of it all has been working across churches in the area, including Tony Street and Elaine Jones from Sawley, in a way we hadn't before and friendships have been formed and developed for future working. We have no plans to return inside at the moment because of restrictions – we aren't prepared to choose who can eat and most people who come have no internet connection or mobile phone credit to book places. If anyone would like to help please do contact me.

Reverend Sam Tredwell, Long Eaton St John

Join in The Big Church Read

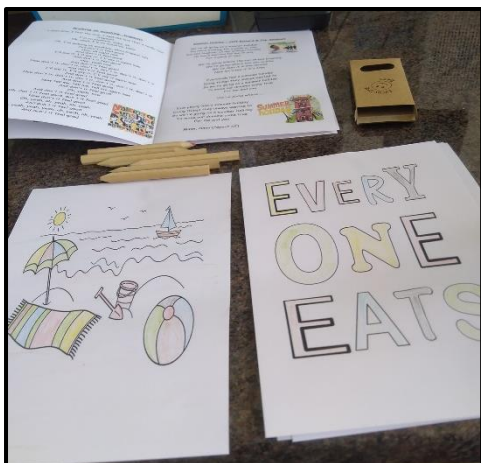
Hodder Faith, in partnership with St Andrew's Bookshop, is delighted to announce the launch of a national church book club this Autumn, to be known as The Big Church Read.

The book club will launch on 21 September 2020 with one of Hodder Faith's leading titles, The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry by John Mark Comer – a book that encourages us to unplug and slow down in order to follow Jesus and live the life God intends for us.

Church groups and individuals can join in for free by registering their details on the website where, at 7.00 p.m. each Monday evening, an exclusive video with John Mark Comer will be released introducing the themes of that week's chapter so groups can discuss with their friends, prompted by a range of starter questions which are available for free in the resource pack.)

<https://thebigchurchread.co.uk/>

A trip to the seaside (well almost)



On Saturday 15th August 600 free lunch bags were distributed across Erewash (and neighbouring areas) by local charity Every One Eats. The picnic bags had the theme 'A Day Trip to the Seaside' and included a stick of rock as well as cobs, sausage rolls and cakes.

Three sing-along favourite holiday tunes were played on the same day after 3pm on Erewash Sound by presenter Nikki Fretwell. The words to Cliff Richard's We're all going on a Summer Holiday, etc.,

were printed in a booklet contained in the bag so everyone could join in if they wanted to.

The project was based at Kirk Hallam but also supplied picnic bags to several other parishes in the deanery who in turn distributed to people who were isolated or had been going through difficult times

Because of the fantastic feedback, kind donations and a grant from the National Lottery, the group plans to do another one at the end of September. More details on

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Community-Organization/Every-One-Eats-375517129745140/> or via Reverend Christine French at Kirk Hallam



Season of Creation - 2020

Creationtide or the Season of Creation is

the period in the annual church calendar, from 1st September to 4th October, dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life.

The theme for the Season of Creation 2020 is Jubilee for the Earth. Jubilee is a time of rest for the land from exploitation, and to restore ecosystems and people. The ideas and resources in the [Celebration Guide](#) will help you find a way to pray or to hold an event or special service, whether your church has been able to open or not. Find out more about the Season of Creation [here](#).



The Season of Creation is a great time to encourage children and young people to take part in the [Letters for Creation](#) project. This is a way for them to reflect on what caring for creation means to them, and how they want their voice to be heard in climate justice conversation.

[Climate Sunday](#) will also be launched during the Season of Creation. In the year leading up to the UN global climate change talks in November 2021 (COP26), we'll be encouraging churches to hold a special Climate Sunday service or event, to make a commitment to tackle climate change, and to raise their voices to call on world leaders to do the same.

You can find out more about how to take action on environmental issues on [Environment Programme page](#).

Greater Chapter Meetings

The next two Chapter meetings for clergy will also be open to any Readers who would like to attend(codes available from Rachel Hobbs or Angela Clayton)

Tuesday 6th October at 11am

Guest: Captain Tim Rourke (CA), Diocesan Disability and Inclusion Project Officer (venue or zoom tbc)

Tuesday 10th Nov at 11am

Guest: Very Reverend Peter Robinson. Dean of Derby Cathedral (venue or zoom tbc)

The Bishop of Derby's Harvest Appeal 2020 will support mental wellbeing in Derbyshire

There are two strands to this year's appeal:

- **to raise £15,000 to help Derbyshire Mind deliver a range of community wellbeing courses and activities as part of its [Enjoying Derbyshire](#) project**
- **to provide a variety of courses, workshops and activities to help anyone and everyone in the diocese maintain their mental wellbeing.**

People who live in the Diocese of Derby - indeed the entire world - have been through a challenging time this year, challenges that will continue for many months to come.

But as well as the medical - the physical - havoc wreaked by the pandemic, Covid-19 has also affected the mental wellbeing of so many people.

The strain of lockdown - having to stay at home, isolate, keep apart from our family and friends, staying away from work, the concern over job security and finances and the worry of catching an unpredictable disease - has taken its toll.

So, this year, the Bishop of Derby's Harvest Appeal aims to support some of the fantastic work being done to help people with their mental wellbeing. As well as raising funds for Derbyshire Mind, the Diocese of Derby is partnering with other agencies to deliver activities that will offer a Christian-based approach to mindfulness and wellbeing.

Learning in Faith

Learning in Faith Resources -Diocese of Derby learning goes online.

This autumn, explore the huge variety of free learning opportunities that are now available as online events. The main focus will be on mental health and wellbeing, as Bishop Libby is encouraging us as a Diocese to think intentionally about our own, other people, and wider society's mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to this, there will be webinars on Talking about Your Faith, online Churchwarden training and Leading Intercessions, with other events being added all the time, so please keep checking the Diocesan Learning in Faith page. <https://derby.anglican.org/en/training/learning-in-faith.html>

All the events can be booked via Eventbrite or the Diocesan training page 'Learning in Faith' You can find resources for creative prayer ideas, information to support children's wellbeing and links to Christian meditation videos on this page.

There is also a free mini module on 'Sustaining Spiritual Health in Isolation' available here: <https://www.discipleship-training.org/>

ONLINE EVENTS

Parenting for Faith -21st September at 7pm

Occasional Offices and Mission: Baptisms -24th September at 7pm

Poetry for Health - 29th September at 7.30pm

Talking Faith for Ordinary People -webinar - 3rd October at 10am

Prayer Walking Workshop – 7th October at 2.30pm

Loneliness Matters – 10th October at 2pm

Love Redeems Suffering, 'An Overview of the Church's Ministry of Healing' – 12th October at 2pm

Churchwarden Training – Buildings -13th October at 2pm

Leading Intercessions – 14th October at 7pm

Growing in God's Life -15th October: two connected sessions 10.30 am and 1pm

Renew Wellbeing – Setting up Shared Spaces where it's ok not to be ok - 2nd November at 2.30pm

Occasion Offices and Mission: Funerals -3rd November at 10am

Managing Anxiety and Trauma using Christian Principles – 5th November at 10am

Online Reading Group: Care of Mind. Care of Soul -five Thursday afternoons starting on the 5th November at 2pm

Come and See: Creating a Culture of Invitation in your Church -7th November at 10am or 12th November at 10am

The Largest Untapped Mission Field -Turning Rhetoric into Reality -10th November 10.30am

Interconnected -Mental, Physical and Spiritual Health in a Disabling Society -11th Nov 2pm

The Theology of Wellbeing - 14th November at 10am

Forwards from Lockdown -how to plan parish children's work during this time -17th November at 10.30

Mental Health Manifesto for Churches – 30th November at 2pm

Christian Meditation with Reverend Tony Luke - In these three recordings on Youtube, Tony demonstrates the practice of sitting meditation and then guides you through some meditation exercises to help you unwind, relax and focus on the present rather than worry about the future.

Still Centre Meditation: [Find it here](#)

Sphere of Light Meditation: [Find it here](#)

Canvas of Sounds Meditation: [Find it here](#)

Poetry for Health -Thinking about poetry as a resource - a podcast chat with the opportunity for live comments

Tuesday 29th September 7.30 - 8.30pm - [BOOK NOW](#)

This podcast chat features the Reverend Sam Tredwell, Vicar of St John's, Long Eaton and Stella Collishaw, the Diocese of Derby's Community Action Officer talking about some poems that they like; why they are helpful for mental health, plus some suggestions of where to look for resources.

Renew Wellbeing: Setting up quiet shared spaces where it's ok not to be ok in your community

Monday 21st September 2.30 - 4.00pm - [BOOK NOW](#)

This online session will be led by Ruth Rice: Founder and Director of Renew Wellbeing, a national charity based in Nottingham. This webinar will look at the experience we have had over the last 5 years helping churches set up wellbeing spaces based on 3 principles:

Be present; Be prayerful; Be in partnership

It will explore what wellbeing looks like and what habits we can share between church and community in simple, safe, sustainable spaces. 'You will also hear the story of how the charity started out of Ruth's own broken story and how God can show up in our vulnerability. There will be time for Q and A.

More details on all courses at <https://derby.anglican.org/en/training/learning-in-faith.html>

Safeguarding in the Diocese

There have been changes to senior personnel in the Derby Safeguarding Team. Julian Hodgson has moved to a post in Southwell Diocese and a new Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA), **Hannah Hogg**, takes up post in October

Hannah is currently Corporate Safeguarding Lead at Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust and brings with her extensive experience of working across a multi-agency partnership at a senior level. The Derby Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser post is a key role and Mrs Hogg will advise the diocese on all safeguarding matters ensuring that all advice is in line with the law, government guidance and national policy and guidance from the House of Bishops.

She will take start her new role in October.

Helen Jebb has been appointed the Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel. She is a former Detective Chief Superintendent with Nottinghamshire Police, where she was Head of Crime and Intelligence with responsibility for Public Protection and Safeguarding. She will join the diocese in September.

Contact Us!

In these difficult times, with information changing daily, deanery officers will do their best to be a point of contact to answer or pass on queries. Please send any email message that is not confidential to Karen, Angela and Brian so that one of them can be sure to pick it up or anything confidential or personal to Karen.

Please remember that Karen's day off is a Friday and she will also be off on the occasional Saturday.

Area Dean: Reverend Karen Padley:

01773 712097

padleykaren@gmail.com

Deanery Administrator:

Angela Clayton:

07939 285394

angela.clayton@derby.anglican.org

Lay Chair:

Brian Parker

brianp103@hotmail.co.uk

Chapter Clerk:

Reverend Bob Short

bobthevicar@gmail.com

Parish Finance Returns

Thank you to all who contributed to a 100% return of finances uploaded on to the website by the required date of 31st July. This was done despite all the problems created by Covid 19 and the problems in having PCC meetings to agree the finance reports. Many thanks to all involved

The latest edition of 'Our Diocese Together' magazine is available online.

https://issuu.com/togethermagazine/docs/odt5_september_2020



Virtual Retreats

Leading retreats are something I have done for many years and I have lead an annual Advent retreat for Cliff College in Derbyshire for last 6 years. I do really enjoy the thinking, praying and preparing for a retreat and I love the extra time you get to go deep with people in a way you don't get on a Sunday morning. During lock down I had been working on my tech skills for online services and I also did a range of online courses that suddenly become available so I wondered on Facebook if anyone fancied trying an online retreat and they did. So I created a private Facebook group for the retreat and got planning. I wrote and recorded three talks, prepared questions and activities and loaded them on the group. 90 people signed up and took part over 2 days (the same retreat twice) with optional zoom prayer morning and evening and booked in messenger chats with people. Those on retreat created a space in their homes and worked through the videos and activities at their own pace – sharing creative activities online afterwards. I really enjoyed running the retreat and managed to connect with friends in Finland and Moscow for the retreat. As we learn more about faith at home and encourage people in that this seems like a very accessible way forward. The next retreat is early September and this will be repeated in October with an Advent one planned for late November. Do contact me if you would like to take part.
Sam Tredwell