

# Epiphany 2018

In Keble College Chapel in Oxford, there is a wonderful, and world famous, painting by Holman Hunt: Christ as 'The Light of the World'. Christian life follows in the steps of the Magi, a journeying towards the light that is Christ, so that we may worship, offer our gifts, and be encouraged through such a humbling encounter to go and make a witness in new ways.

Of intrigue and challenge are a number of important elements in the story:

- The Magi were seekers, not experts.
- They offered expressions of themselves.
- They worshipped Jesus.
- Their witness was to be in their own areas of calling.
- Their journeying towards the Light of Christ empowered each of them to go forth and shed this light further.

This spirit of Epiphany – seeking to see the Light of Christ more clearly, and then seeking to shed it abroad – is the way of the Christian life. Our focus is worship, and this call empowers us for witness – in our own particular ways.

It is in this spirit of Epiphany that I have invited a number of colleagues to share some insights into their particular journeying and the range of witness being blessed into our work as a Diocese.

I hope that all of us in leadership roles across the Diocese can use and share these Epiphany offerings to encourage others, and to invite prayerful support for further discernment and development.

Christ is the Light of the World. May we root our work together in the Diocese for 2018 in this spirit of Epiphany – for ourselves, and for all for whom we accept responsibilities in terms of seeking to provide appropriate opportunities and structures through which this Holy light can stream.



Bishop Alastair addressing sixth-form students at a Parliament Week event in November 2017



A student experiencing virtual reality at a Parliament week event in November 2017.



## Spirituality

"Prayer is the raising of the mind and heart to God."  
(John of Damascus d.749)

Prayer and the spiritual life form the bedrock of our Diocesan life. All that we are and do as a Diocese flows from our relationship with the Divine. As individual believers, as parishes, deaneries and as a Diocese we are called to continually grow and nurture our relationship with God.

As part of the School of Formation the Spirituality Group works to assist people in the development of their prayer and spiritual life. The Group seeks to enable individuals to access resources that can aid their spiritual journey whether by signposting opportunities for retreats and quiet days or linking people with spiritual accompaniers or organising training days.

The Spirituality Group is currently developing a course on prayer that can be used in parishes and deaneries to encourage and help people on their pilgrimage of faith. In addition, a new training course for those called to the vocation of spiritual accompanier is being drawn up and plans to resource the Diocese to respond to the national #Thy Kingdom Come initiative for a season of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost are being formulated.

"You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognise the possibilities and challenges offered by this present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope."  
(Thomas Merton d. 1968)

Richard Reade, Chair of the Spirituality Group

## Developing Our Deaneries: Two Examples

For more than two years, the two 'old' Deaneries of Wirksworth and Ashbourne have been meeting together to pray and debate and try and hear what is God's dream for our churches. Fairly early on we established a few guiding principles that have been incredibly useful in the conversations and journeying together. The first is that we make relationships a priority: we may not always agree, but we always meet face-to-face. The second principle is that we will only do at the Deanery level what can't be done at the Parish: the parish is the focus of our mission. The third guiding principle is that the strategy comes first, structures are secondary: the time for endless structural reorganization, playing around with the edges of our parishes, is over. We need a reformation – our churches re-forming to meet the challenge of our vision, which is a flourishing Christian presence in every community.

The first step was to combine legally to be one Deanery – this is almost complete, and Carsington Deanery will be born in early 2018! The second step was to draw up a map of the road ahead, without being overly specific. Therefore we will be spending most of 2018 building confidence (encouraging each other, praying, sharing stories of Good News), most of the next year growing capacity (a strong focus on vocations and training), which allows us in subsequent years to be far more creative in ministering (less clergy-led, more nimble, honouring traditional church yet encouraging surprising new forms to flourish). Along the way we will pray and debate the various ways we can organize ourselves to serve our communities - bringing light and life - a process in which everyone has a voice. This is the journey we are on as a Deanery: thanks be to God.

Duncan Ballard, Area Dean of Carsington Deanery

The Peak Deanery has enjoyed a fruitful period of development and a profound sense of journey. The Luke 24 image of the disciples talking with each





other on the Emmaus Road has been significant – an informing journey in conversation with one another about ‘everything that has happened’. Joined by ‘the stranger’ who draws alongside us, our shared and informing conversation has also been a bold and courageous one.

Developments have seen the emergence of Glossopdale Mission Community, seven churches with an ambitious vision. Supported by the prayers and resources of the whole community, each church is encouraged to pursue growth and mission plans in their own context, but Mission Community also imagines a greater dimension – interdependence; collaboration; pooled resources; shared wisdom; traditional and pioneer ministry; relationships governed by equality not hierarchy or status; celebration of and sacrificial support for mission and growth projects not necessarily in or run by my parish.

The years ahead will see continued conversation to explore and test possibilities:

- Networks of mission communities
- Ministry to church schools
- Resource centres and training hubs
- Pioneer ministry
- Planting new worshipping communities
- Chaplaincy networks

The Peak Deanery is journeying well as we navigate the mystery of our Emmaus Road. Outcomes are encouraging, though not without question or challenge. Turning a vision which imagines into the reality of experience will require continued engagement with the hard questions of our times. Development of a culture of Kingdom first, deploying the right kind of resource to the right place will need every part of an informing, bold and courageous conversation. Honesty and grace remain our constant companions. An interesting journey awaits us.

Colin Pearson, Area Dean of Peak Deanery





## Our Cathedral

2017 was a major year for Derby Cathedral. As Derby marked 40 years since it became a city, we marked 90 years since All Saints' Church was hallowed to be the Cathedral for the new Diocese of Derby. A highlight of our celebrations was a wonderful Festival

Evensong of Light, organised in conjunction with the University of Derby, building on the successful Faith in Science project. This saw the Cathedral lit in a variety of evocative ways, and made for a memorable evening. Check out the pictures online if you haven't seen them!

We hope and pray that 2018 will be another big and fruitful year. In September the new Cathedral School will open its doors for the first time, welcoming 180 pupils per year and placing the Cathedral in contact with many new families.

We will be working on plans for the next phase of works to the building, and to secure the sustainability for the Cathedral into the future. We will continue to look for ways to engage with more and more people, in worship and mission, as we seek to make the best of the opportunities God has given us. Most of all, I pray we will grow in spiritual depth, vibrancy, and love for the Lord.

On a personal note, these are my first months as Dean of Derby. I want to get to know this wonderful diocese and its people. So as you pray for your Cathedral, as I hope you will, please consider inviting me to your parish, that I might learn and hopefully, be able to support and encourage in return. Thank you to all who support the ministry here in whatever way - it is all most appreciated!

Stephen Hance, Dean of Derby

## Workplace Chaplaincy

Chaplains serving in the workplace in Derbyshire are in great demand. For example, I received this email: "I am experiencing problems with work and need some support. I am trying to pull in resources of my own to address the issues. I want to meet with you to explain what I am doing and why, and at the end of the meeting receive a prayer". I talked about chaplaincy with the CEO of a company, and after discussing this with his Executive, he wrote: "The feedback was really positive. I want to arrange a further meeting with you and HR, Communications and Derbyshire based divisions". We have over 100 workplace chaplains, and the majority are lay people from churches across the

denominations. They support employers and employees in places the church is often unable to access, and as ambassadors of Jesus, they boldly enter the workplace to provide a listening ear, a word of comfort and hope, and prayers of support.

We serve in many sectors, including the Police and Fire Services, Transport (Airport, Trains), Industry (Rolls Royce, Bombardier), Sport (Derby County and Chesterfield Football Clubs, Derbyshire County Cricket Club, Triathlons, Trailblazers Basketball Team), Agriculture, Retail, Business, Social Care (Care Homes, Derbyshire Community Health Services, Derbyshire Health United), Derby City Council, Education (Primary and Secondary Schools, Derby College), and Leisure (Mercia Marina, Derby Theatre).

## Schools and Education

When asked to identify the greatest commandment Jesus referred to Deuteronomy 6v5, asserting that the first commandment is to Love God with all our heart. A verse later and we are reminded of the importance of sharing our Christian narrative with children, that they too might chose to love God.

The Diocesan Board of Education continues to enable church schools to be faithfully Christian. Recent initiatives include Understanding Christianity, a national approach to teaching Christianity that goes beyond nice stories to the teaching of key concepts such as incarnation and salvation. The DBE have launched a method of re-framing Collective worship so that it is more than a passive listening experience, but also one where pupils are encouraged to think hard, ask and respond to their own questions, involve themselves in discussion and lead active and engaging worship experiences for others.

As well as promoting a Deeply Christian approach within schools, DBE has been working to love our neighbour and Serve the Common Good by developing capacity to take responsibility for improving all aspects of school, including standards. Educational provision in two failing church primary schools has now been transformed by the diocese and many schools, including good and outstanding community schools are keen to join our academy trust.



Derby Cathedral School, opening September 2018, will be our first secondary school providing church school education as a choice within Derby for ages 3-18. These initiatives provide the diocese with an ever-increasing sphere of influence in new and existing communities.

The DBE is seeking new ways of developing partnership with our churches to meet need in our communities - together. Please remember church schools in your prayers so that we may go and grow where God needs us to be and live out a vision for an education that is Deeply Christian, serving the common good.

David Channon, Director of Education

The majority of our chaplains serve on behalf of Workplace Chaplaincy in Derbyshire and Derby City Centre Chaplaincy, but a recent development has been the growth of Town Centre Chaplaincies in Swadlincote, Buxton, Belper, Long Eaton, Ashbourne, Ilkeston and Shirebrook.

Please join us in prayer to recruit more chaplains, appoint chaplains to more workplaces, start new Town Centre Chaplaincies and strengthen the existing ones, that this movement will continue to be a blessing to many people.

Paul Morris, Co-ordinating Chaplain, Workplace Chaplaincy







## Readers

There are currently over 9,000 active readers in the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

Readers are lay people in the Church of England, from all walks of life, who are called by God, theologically trained and licensed by the Church to preach, teach, lead worship and assist in pastoral, evangelistic and liturgical work. They do this inside and outside the existing church by being role models for and fellow disciples with people seeking to live out the Christian Gospel in today's world:

- Explaining the Christian Faith.
- Leading worship.
- Responding pastorally to need.

In 2016 the Church of England celebrated 150 years of Reader ministry and in Derby Diocese we are blessed to have 211 licensed Readers offering an amazingly rich and varied ministry across the Diocese.

Those men and women who feel called to offer for Reader Ministry are supported by the Vocations Team of advisers to help them discern their call and proceed to training with recommendation from their vicar and PCC at the invitation from the Bishop. The new Derby Pathways for training was launched in 2017 and ten people began Reader training through

Transforming Faith - learning alongside fellow disciples and those training for ordination.

In September 2017 ten new Readers were licensed in Derby Cathedral and began their new ministry in a variety of parishes. It was a very exciting and joyful occasion.

As we move forward with the new deanery model of organisation we are planning to appoint an Assistant Warden of Readers in each deanery to be part of the Deanery Leadership Team. This will give Readers a clear voice into the conversations and planning related to deployment of Readers offering a view of reader ministry in the local context.

I hope that together we can plan for future development of Reader ministry in Derby Diocese and ensure that ongoing ministerial training and development for readers is on the agenda and relevant to the needs of the individual and the church.

Please pray that God will call people – men and women, old and young to come forward and test a call to train for Reader ministry. Let's be ambitious for an increase in 2018!

Geraldine Pond, Warden of Readers

## Stewardship

What picture would you use to describe what it means to be 'Church', the people gathered around Christ, seeking to learn from Christ, seeking to worship God? One picture used in the New Testament is the 'household of God' (e.g., Ephesians 2.19; 1 Timothy 3.15). Even though our contemporary experience may be of independent living rather than of communal living, we can probably imagine some of the implications of what it might mean to live a 'common life' together as the 'household of God'. One implication is spelt out in the first Epistle of Peter: Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you have received. (1 Peter 4.10)

God invites us to be stewards in the household of God. At the time when the New Testament epistles were written a steward was usually a slave who had been given the responsibility by the householder to administer the householder's property or estate. The key virtue sought in a steward was faithfulness: a good steward was one who followed the example set by the householder; a good steward did what the householder expected.

As stewards in the household of God, we are entrusted with the task of wisely administering what we have received from God. Everything we have is a gift given from 'the manifold grace of God': there is always more than enough. God's economy is one of abundance. God's grace is always 'superabounding', God's riches are always inexhaustibly being given, God's giving is never-ending. As stewards in the household of God we are liberated from the greed, hoarding, and consuming that characterizes the economy of scarcity and that are so often the root cause of envy, theft, and violence – as well as condescending benevolence – that destroys human communities. As we say in our Eucharistic liturgy:

"Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you."

David Mundy, Parish Resource Officer

## Communication

Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Periscope, the list goes on and on.

'Communications' used to be about writing good press releases and responding to phone calls from journalists. With the advent of electronic media, it's a full time job to keep up with our 24/7 news culture and to make sure that the voice of the Church is still being heard.

Ten years ago, I was startled to be told by my new, young, communications colleague that, "if you're not on the web, you don't exist". The same could be said today of social media (Facebook etc), and that is certainly the case for anyone under the age of 30. And so having reviewed our Diocesan communications, we have managed to secure funding from the Church Commissioners for a second full time Media Officer to work alongside our Communications Officer, Lucy Harrison.

Meanwhile Lucy has been exploring designs for a new Diocesan website, which will be clearer and easier to navigate than our present site. Websites need to be redesigned every few years in order to remain up to date and relevant, and the Church of England nationally has just launched a new site, which you can see at [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org). Look carefully and you may see the Bishop of Repton on the home page! We've listened too to pleas for a return of a paper Diocesan Directory and plans are afoot to resurrect this useful communications tool.

Finally we're exploring the idea of a new glossy, quarterly Diocesan magazine, which will be paid for by income from advertising. It will help us to see what other churches in our Diocesan family are doing, so that we can share ideas for what works well; as well as enabling the bishops, archdeacons, diocesan staff and Cathedral to communicate more easily with the parishes. Watch this space for the launch date!

Jan McFarlane, Bishop of Repton



## Church Planting and the Resource Church

We have launched!! As I write, it is exactly two months since re-opening St Werburgh's Church and we are amazed and excited by all that's gone on. For the past seven years the church has been empty and unused, for the previous 30 years the church has not been used as a church. The church was launched on September 17th with over 300 people attending our launch service, from all walks of life and every age and stage, to pray, worship and welcome in this new church. The church took a few weeks intensive hard work to get it ready to be used. Having not been used for a while the building needed a good clean and sort out to get it to a reasonable state. We had temporary lighting, heating and electrics put in so that the building can be used on a temporary basis while we wait for planning permissions to be granted and building work to be completed.

Over the weeks since the launch we have seen steady numbers of about 200 coming each week. We are serving wer-burgers each week in order to help gather people together and build community and they have been a great hit! There has been a growing number of youth, students and young adults joining us to worship which is very exciting. Bishop Alastair originally invited us to plant this church in order to specifically see young people be part of the church as statistics tell us that the church is generally growing older and the weakness of the Church of England throughout the country is that young people are leaving and have left the church. So our remit is to try and play our part in reversing this trend within Derby - no small task!

We have seen a good number of people coming to join us who have struggled to find a church to call home or who have drifted away from faith for the past few years who have been excited to come along and join us. We've loved getting to know people and have been so touched by the hospitality that has been extended to us over the past few months and how we have been welcomed to the city. It's been great to see many people start serving on teams, helping us in the worship team, welcoming on the doors and serving tea, coffee, cakes and burgers in particular!



Last week we hosted our first children's event - a light party for an alternative event to Halloween and we welcomed in 85 guests and over 30 volunteer helpers. It was great to also host 20-25 children from refugee families and welcome them into the church for crafts, games, food and a bouncy castle! We have another couple of children's events coming up with the idea of hosting an event monthly in order to make connections in the interim with local families and children until we are able to fully launch a second service with children's work.

Coming up over the next few months, we are hosting a number of student events in order to connect with students locally and next term we will be launching Alpha so we are praying that this will be a good foundation for the church as we continue to build and grow and as we encourage people to invite friends along and connect.

Phil Mann, Pioneer Minister of the Derby City Bishop's Mission Order

**I hope that each parish, as part of journeying towards the Light of Christ and receiving blessings to share abroad, will try to find ways of praying for each of these pathways of witness, and encouraging participation from the local Christian community wherever possible.**

+ Alastair