

Issued no 3

Bishop: Rt Reverend Alan Wilson

Archdeacon: The Very Reverend Karen Gorham

Associate Area Dean: Rev Laurence Meering

Secretary Mr Geoff Ball

Diocesan Representatives: Rev Derek Witchell (Clergy); Rev Michelle Morton (Clergy); Annie Cooper (Laity); Gavin Merrylees (Laity)

Newly Licensed Lay Ministers at Christ Church, Oxford with Bishop Stephen
Saturday 7th November 2009



We are delighted to welcome Barbara de Butts and Sandra Green on their being licensed as LLMs as they join the team of Ministers, which serves the Deanery so well. You can see Barbara on the extreme right of the picture; Sandra is third from the left in the back row.

They join the 5 stipendiary and 2 House for Duty ministers of the Deanery and Carole Peters (Curate in Training at Ivinghoe with Slapton and Marsworth), This brings the number of LLM in the Deanery to 4, who are therefore Jeremy Hopkinson at Great Brickhill, Judith Saunders at Newton Longville, Barbara de Butts at Slapton and Sandra Green at Ivinghoe. We also belatedly welcome Judith, who joined the Deanery a few months ago.

Barbara writes:

“About three years ago, Tracey preached a sermon. I realised that, with retirement, I would have more time to give to God and his Church. That began the process that led me to embark on the training as a Lay Minister. Encouraged by the PCC and the congregation at Holy Cross, Slapton, and guided [by] Marion Balance and Tracey, I started on the various courses required for the training. These were weekly evening courses at either Winslow or Oxford every Tuesday. I learned much; Shirley Burrell and Wendy Mann gallantly accompanied me to some of them and I always had Sandra’s company..[which].. spurred me on while Tracey gave me every support and opportunity to develop role within our churches. [This] was the enjoyable reward [for hard work]. Everyone was so encouraging and so patient when asked to fill out yet another appraisal form. Thank you everyone for your support and I look forward to being alongside you in our benefice as we all move forward in our Christian lives and build a loving and caring church which supports our communities. In the words of Tiny Tim: God bless us, every one.”

Sandra writes:

“In September 2006 I began training as a Licensed Lay Minister or LLM. The last three years have been spent attending courses, writing assignments and gaining experience of parish work. As a result of this I have gained a Diploma in Theology and have studied subjects such as mission and evangelism, doctrine and worship.

On Saturday 7th November, together with 10 others including Barbara de Butts from Slapton I was licensed by Stephen Cottrell - the Bishop of Reading at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford. It was a wonderful occasion.. which will remain with me for the rest of my life [and] so affirming to have friends and family with me at the cathedral . However, the day didn’t end there [we] returned to Ivinghoe..[for] a wonderful lunch prepared by Freda and Dennis Baxter from Slapton – thank you both so much! The afternoon ended with a service of celebration when more members of our church families from across the benefice joined us for worship. Now I will be part of the team of ministers in the benefice led by Tracey and be responsible for [in the words of Bishop Stephen] ‘...leading public worship, to preach and teach the word of God, to assist at the eucharist and to share in pastoral and evangelistic work.’

The Diocesan Synod

The new triennium began on 15th November with the First Synod at High Wycombe. All the Deanery Representatives from Mursley were present. Opening worship, was led by the team linking the Diocese of Oxford and Kimberley and Kuruman in South Africa.

The Bishop then spoke to us about our Synods, which should each, be centred on one of our 5 priorities, which should be the touchstone for our debates. He encouraged us to take risks, and to paint our own masterpieces (as individuals, parishes and deaneries) from the colours of the five priorities. **After coffee we had a very moving presentation about our link with Kimberley and Kuruman.** The deanery representatives recommend that the Deanery should invite a speaker to the Synod. As we welcome Barbara and Sandra to swell our ranks of leaders in the deanery, it is all the more poignant to realise that the Kimberly and Kuruman Diocese covers an area of about the size of France with only 20 stipendiary clergy including the Bishop and Archdeacons.

We then voted in separate houses for our **Vice-Presidents of Synod**, (our Lay Chair is now Judith Scott and the clergy Vice President remains Andrew Bunch) and together we affirmed Brian Newey and Michael Hardman to lead our Board of Finance.

We then heard something of the work done by our Board of Education in primary and, increasingly, secondary schools in the Diocese and voted to move forward in making the Board a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Bishop John gave a brief informative explanation about the technicalities of the question of **women bishops**

The Synod then adjourned for a Bring and Share Lunch, which was followed by some entertaining group work about how we each sustained our own sacred centre.

The Deanery Synod

At the Synod on 18th November after worship, formal business confirmed that the **parish share increase** for the Deanery in 2010 is set at 1.5%. Due to the way in which the contributions are allocated among the parishes, it is hoped that the maximum increase for any one parish will not exceed 2%. **There was also a serious discussion on the nature and format of this newsletter. Is there anyone able to set up a Deanery Website?**

After that there was discussion about the **Deanery Re-organisation** still unresolved for the 8 central parishes. The Deanery Pastoral Committee had looked at the question and applying the criteria of (a) Happiness, (b) Geography and (c) Clergy Deployment and suggested 3 options, namely (1) to continue with the present trial, (2) to amend the current trial by moving Aston Abbots to the Wing Benefice and (3) Set up a Group Ministry of all 8 parishes. All parishes in the Deanery were asked to take this back to their PCCs and consider these options and any other suggestions and ask their Representatives to bring them to the next Deanery Synod, which must make a decision before next June. It was understood that although technically this would be a Deanery Decision, the non affected parishes, barring serious matters, should concur with what those parishes decided. **The Synod then moved to consider Women Bishops.** There then followed presentations by Rev Carole Peters (in Favour) and Bobbie Ward with Rev Laurence Meering (at the last minute: against) concerning the admission of women to the Episcopate (women bishops). Time prevented any further discussion. The parishes are to take this to their PCCs for discussion and to bring the views back to the next Deanery Synod.

News from the Parishes

Wing: SOCKS (Society of Christian Kids) This is a youth group (age 11-14ish at the moment) centred on the Wing benefice but open to anyone. We meet twice each month, once a month for fun and Christian teaching (and we always share a meal) and once a month we have a purely social event. Locations change between the villages involved and it seems to work very well! All of your young people are welcome to join us, regularly or occasionally. Email annie@littlediggers for more information.

Marsworth has had the wall box broken into. Information about box designs and methods of making boxes secure is welcome. Please contact on of the Churchwardens with any tips

Great Brickhill The Archdeacon was present at a very good celebration the thanksgiving service of Harvest hymns and readings, combining the completion of re-roofing side aisles and tower and the raising of about £450,000 over 10 years for that for the re-hanging of the bells. They had to raise roughly £450,000 for this work over the last 10 years and many people have been involved in fund-raising activities and contributing to the efforts to get it all done. The service was well attended by many of those who had been involved from the Architect and builders to fund raisers and those who attended fund-raising events. The highlight of the service was the contributions from children at High Ash C of E School in the village

Mursley Benefice: 1.Men feel there are few places where they can meet for conversation on the deeper things in life. We have started a monthly Men's Meal - 12 round a table, discussing Christain values at Work, War, 21st century marriage and the Christain life. Good food and good talk make an excellent evening out. **2. Do you think that children** are not being told the true meaning of Christmas? In Newton Longville, the Anglican and Free church will once again be hosting a 'Christmas Cracked' day - for Year 6's to experience an excellent interactive presentation of Christmas and the 1st century Christams period. We also have an Advent celebration afternoon in Mursley for all Primary school age children.

But for the incompetence of the editor this would have been the last newsletter before Christmas. In which John Waller, Bobbie Ward and Laurence Meering sent all the churches warmest greetings.