

Rector's Letter, May 2019

Dear Friends,

There are several things I would like to bring to your attention:

Parish Prayer Meeting Saturday 1st June – 'Thy Kingdom Come' Prayers

Our parish prayer meeting usually meets at 8.30 am on the first Saturday of each month in the Church Pavilion.

But for the beginning of June, we're going to do something a bit different: the meeting will be at **10.30 am in the Lounge, Nichols Court, Flaxfields. Coffee, tea and cake will be available.**

The focus of this meeting will be to join in with the Archbishops' call to prayer, '*Thy Kingdom Come*', which is in its third year now, inviting Christians of all denominations to give some time between Ascension Day and Pentecost to pray specifically for more people to come to faith in Christ, and for us ordinary Christians to be involved in helping them along their way.

We all know people – spouses, family members, friends, neighbours, colleagues, and others – with whom we're in frequent contact, who don't have the joy, comfort and challenge we find in believing in Jesus. It's a gift we'd love to see them share, and I'm sure that most of us believe that in some ways, the world would be a better place if more people had this gift. And so we're called to pray 'Thy Kingdom come' with this specific intention. In our All Age service on Sunday 27th May, Cathy Watts and Nicola Collard will be encouraging us to pray in this way, and for some of us who followed the Lent Course '*Sharing Faith the Jesus Way*', there was also a challenge to each to think of someone, or some people, for whom we might pray consistently and faithfully that they come to faith. Our prayer meeting will be an opportunity for us to pray together for those who are on our hearts: we'll probably break into small groups to share with each other discreetly who we're praying for, and then pray in those groups, either silently or out loud, according to how we feel most at ease. (We shall try to divide people according to whether they want to be in a 'silent' group or a 'speaking' group, and there will be some simple resources to help get prayer going, for those who are unused to praying in this an informal group context - the idea being that no one should feel pressured or uncomfortable.) Jesus said that where two or three agree on anything to pray for, God will grant their request: we can't prescribe exactly what this might mean in any case, but it should encourage us to come together to pray, and to believe that there is a particular power in prayer that is shared, with people coming to one mind and heart about it before it is offered. So please come and join us on Saturday 1st June at 10.30 am for no more than an hour, whether or not you followed the Lent Course – and come with the names of one or more people on your heart who you'd like to pray for. We shall share these prayers on the strict understanding that we will not discuss outside that prayer meeting whom we have been praying for.

News from our Diocese – new Bishop of Huntingdon chosen

The Diocese recently announced the choice of The Revd. Canon Dr Dagmar Winter as Bishop of Huntingdon, to assist the Bishop of Ely in the care of the diocese. She will be consecrated in St Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday July 3rd at 11 am, (along with two others being consecrated as suffragan bishops for other dioceses) and there are a few tickets available to people from the diocese who might like to attend – but apply soon, as they're limited. To apply, email RSVP.Bishopshouse@elydiocese.org, and you should hear by June 6th if you've been successful.

Canon Winter is currently Rector of Hexham Abbey in Northumberland, and has good experience of rural and market-town ministry, which makes her an excellent 'fit' for our diocese. Her German Christian name comes from her partly-Swiss family background. She also did some of her theological studies in Germany. She will be the first woman bishop in the East of England, and will take up office actively in September.

The email which announced her appointment showed a very warm, smiley face. We look forward to meeting her, and benefiting from her ministry, and are all encouraged to pray for her in the months of before she takes up her appointment. To find out more about her, look at :

www.elydiocese.org/article?id=2567

Forthcoming Dates for Events in our Team

As well as our own Scarecrow Festival at the end of June, there are other significant dates coming up for our Team: **June 12th** a Lecture in Horseheath at 7.30 by the Revd Dr Jeremy Begbie entitled '*Are we singing the Right Tune?*'. I can't emphasise enough how lucky we are to have this very distinguished speaker coming, who is an expert in both music and theology, and can very engagingly help us think about the link between them both – in this case, in reflecting on hymn tunes, and how they support the words (or fail to!) which we sing. I think we probably all have views on our 'favourite' tunes and find it difficult if unfamiliar ones are used. Perhaps Jeremy can help us think about this in a creative way. Please come!

Sunday 16th June, 7 pm, Confirmation at Castle Camps, at which Miles Bown from our congregation will be confirmed, and Esther Pearson from Horseheath. Please come to support them.

22nd June, Michael Wilcockson's ordination as priest (please pray for him);

Monday 8th July at Castle Camps – Free Lecture by Professor David Thompson from Cambridge on *The Rural Parish in the mid-nineteenth Century*. (his, like Jeremy Bebie's lecture, is part of the celebration of 150 years since '*O Jesus, I have promised*', was published, written by the then Vicar of Castle Camps, John Bode. Professor Thompson is a renowned Church historian, and we hope he will particularly highlight the background in relationships between the Church of England and the Free Churches ('Dissenters', as they would have been known in the mid nineteenth Century), since local legend has it that John Bode wrote his hymn about 'serving to the end' partly in the face of discouragement, because villagers in Castle Camps were preferring to worship at the Dissenting chapel in the village rather than the parish Church. In these days of happier ecumenical relations, it will be interesting to be taken back to such a different time and situation. More advertising to come.

Saturday 20th July Barn Dance at St Mary's, Linton, in aid of Team funds – our contribution, following up on the very successful Farm Visit in Bartlow two years ago, and the well-attended Civil War Skirmish at Castle Camps last year. More details later – but save the date!

As many of you know, re-building ties within our Team has been close to my heart since I started my ministry here. We have a lot to give each other. Please support these events enthusiastically.

With my prayers for you all, and best wishes,

Maggie.