



## Pray One For Me

Here are a couple of numbers which ought to pull us churchgoers up short: A recent internet search for the word "Spirituality" returned 29 million UK web pages.

Research conducted by Tearfund in 2007 suggests that 20 million adults in the country pray – that's 42% of the population.

For many people, and they are often those that Church finds hard to reach, there is a great desire to seek spiritual engagement away from what we might recognise as the traditional faiths.

It is these facts that have helped inspired a new website, launched by the Church of England on Ash Wednesday 22 February; Pray One For Me [www.prayoneforme.org](http://www.prayoneforme.org).

This new year-round campaign builds on previous prayer-based Lent campaigns (Say One For Me). Pray One for Me and its accompanying Facebook page found at [www.facebook.com/prayoneforme](http://www.facebook.com/prayoneforme) offers people the opportunity to post prayer requests online.

The earlier projects showed that many of the prayer requests will be for family and friends, for healing and worldwide problems and thanking God.

And that's where you can be part of the prayer life of thousands. Can your parish or benefice consider a rota of visiting the site and praying the prayers? Could the team include some who might visit the Facebook page and post stories of how the prayers were prayed, such as where they were prayed and by whom? Or how about regularly using the site and its prayer themes as part of your intercession prayers yourself or in church?

You'll be praying alongside those across the worldwide church. Many of the closed prayer communities are contributing their time to the project.

Through the year, the site will occasionally encourage themed prayers to focus prayer on some of the life's big events such as Christian Aid week, the Queen's Jubilee, the Olympics, and Education Sunday, and to respond to events in the news.

Pray One For Me - we hope you will and that you and your parish will help shape this new venture.



## Real Easter Egg



Congregations are being asked to support the Real Easter Egg 2012 which is the first and only Fairtrade Easter egg to explain the Easter story on the box and give money to charity.

The Real Easter Egg is breaking new ground this year and has had a make-over with brighter colours. The Easter story on the outside of the box is a colourful visual and there are three crosses on the front. For the first time ever on an Easter Egg there is a bible quote under the lid and a free copy of the Easter story included inside every box. These new features make the egg even more

attractive than last year.

The recommended retail price is £3.99. The Real Easter Egg is made from 125g of high quality Fairtrade chocolate and 15 pence from every sale is donated to Traidcraft Exchange.

15p from each Real Easter Egg sale is donated to Traidcraft Exchange. The cocoa and sugar farmers also earn a Fairtrade Premium of \$60 a tonne from sales to invest in community projects that they choose, from buying chickens to securing fresh water supplies. A fee is also paid to The Fairtrade Foundation to support their work including its education programme. Last year over £26,000 was been donated to charity from sales.

There are limited supplies so early ordering is advised. The official Real Easter Egg online shop is [www.realeasteregg.co.uk](http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk). To ensure supply, churches are advised to place a bulk order by the end of February. The site has sign-up form, posters and other resources. Online ordering will be open for as long as supplies last or until the middle of March but check the official online shop of Facebook for details.

Traidcraft will also have major stocks available through its online shop and its network of church re-sellers. A number of Independent retailers, including Cathedrals, are expected to stock. The Real Easter Egg online shop will include details of all retailers as they start selling.

19

May

2012

To find out more visit [www.rochester.anglican.org](http://www.rochester.anglican.org)

PLEASE NOTE: Copy deadline for the March issue of The Link is 13 February at 4pm

## The Bishop of Tonbridge's Diary, The Rt Rev Dr Brian Castle February

1 Feb	1100	Bishops' CME Day, London
2 Feb	1030	Visit and Blessing of School Cross – Shorne C of E Primary School
	1930	Induction of the Rev Glenn McWatt - Grain w Stoke
5 Feb	1000 1600	Confirmation - All Saints, Perry Street Songs of Praise Service - Holy Family, Gravesend
5 Feb-12 Feb		Deanery Visit - Gravesend
6 Feb	1030	South East Regional Bishops' Meeting, Southwark
12 Feb	1000	Confirmation - St Botolph, Northfleet
13 Feb	1000	Meeting with Christ Church Canterbury, Medway Campus
14 Feb	0930	Bishop's Staff Meeting
14 Feb-21 Feb		Visit link Diocese of Harare, Zimbabwe
22 Feb	2000	Ash Wednesday Deanery Service, St Peter Upper Church, Pembury
23 Feb	1400	Advisory Council for Ministry and Training meeting - Rochester
24 Feb	1800	Speak at Readers' and Pastoral Assistants' Residential Conference - Aylesford

# What's on

## February

### Saturday 4 February

TUNBRIDGE WELLS – Celebrating Gabrieli – concert by Temenos Chamber Choir with The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble at King Charles the Martyr Church at 7:30pm. Tickets £12.50, students £6 from Sevenoaks Bookshop or from Halls Bookshop in Tunbridge Wells or contact 01959 522302.

ROCHESTER - Dickens Ghost Stories at the Parish Centre, Delce Road at 7:30pm. Tickets £3 from 01634 721886 or on the door. Light refreshments available.

### Thursday 9 February

ORPINGTON - Focus on the Middle East: An evening of presentation and discussion from the Rev Canon Andrew White, Vicar of Bagdad-President of FRRME, Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, President of Otrad and Andy Dipper, Chief Executive of Release International. At St Mary's Church 7pm-9:30pm. Free entry with retiring collection. Contact 01689 852905 for details.

### Sunday 19 February

ROCHESTER - The Launch service for the Prayer Relay for the Olympics which will cover every Deanery in the Diocese at 3.15pm at Rochester Cathedral. All welcome. Contact Lorna Kahan on lorna.kahan@hotmail.co.uk or 01322 271657.

### Saturday 25 February

ISTEAD RISE – St Barnabas Church Table Top Sale at the Community Centre, Worcester Close 10am-1pm. Tables £12. Call 01474 832091 or email heatherfrost@waitrose.com. Admission £1 adults.

### Various

SEVENOAKS - Lunchtime Recitals at St Luke's Church. Wednesdays at 12.30pm - retiring collection

- 1 Greg Tassell - Tenor
- 8 Hiroshi Kanazawa – Tenor & Barry Griffiths - Piano
- 15 Jean Bentley's Old Tyme Dance Band
- 22 Caroline & Richard Walshaw – Soprano & Organ h
- 29 Ingrid Cusido - Piano

PEMBURY - Lent Talks 2012 at St Peter's Upper Church 7.30pm. 29 Feb: Alan Strachan, Stewardship Adviser: Our Response Through Stewardship. 7 March: the Rev Canon Edmund Newell, Sub-Dean, Christ Church, Oxford: Our Response in Money & Possessions. 14 March: the Rev Canon Jean Kerr, Bishop's Officer for Mission: Our Response in Mission. 21 March: the Rev Susanne Carlsson, Co-ordinator of Spirituality: Our Response in Spirituality 28 March: the Rev Alan Le Grys: Our Response in Mission.

WATERINGBURY – Lunches for Lent at the Church of St John the Baptist on Wednesdays 29 February, 7, 14, 21, 28 March 12:30pm-2pm. Soup, sandwiches and drinks available. Call 01622 813032 for more details.

## March

### Saturday 3 March

CANTERBURY - Focusing on the Olympics at the Churches Together in Kent inaugural annual Forum at Christ Church University 9:45am-3pm. Free admission. To book places visit [www.canterburydiocese.org/ctkent](http://www.canterburydiocese.org/ctkent).

### Saturday 10 March

GREENHITHE – Leading for growth - Supporting full time and voluntary leaders at Greenhithe Church Hall at 7pm. A DVD and discussion on an international leader. Free. Visit [www.stmarygreenhithe.com](http://www.stmarygreenhithe.com) for programme.

ROCHESTER – Safeguarding seminar 'Facing the Unthinkable: Child Abuse and the Church' at St Justus Church 9am – 1:30pm. Attendance is free to all those with a relevant parish responsibility. To book contact Carol Martin on 01634 560000

## Lyme Regis Organ School

Winter Workshop 16-18 February 2012: The Glories of French Organ Music from 1600 to the present. The workshop, led by Philip Scriven, includes lectures, recitals, masterclasses and personal study sessions. Participants will be able to play the new 3 manual Skrabl organ in Lyme Regis parish church, and also a Hauptwerk reproduction of the large Cavallé Coll in La Madelaine, Paris. Cost £160, not including accommodation. Contact Desmond Chaffey on [desmond.chaffey@btinternet.com](mailto:desmond.chaffey@btinternet.com) or 01305 250528.

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Saturday 11 February 10am-6pm  
Sunday 12 February 10am-5pm

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# Feeling it like you do

By the Ven Simon Burton-Jones

**Mel Gibson and Lindsay Lohan are toxic property in Hollywood today - linked as they are, variously, to antisemitism, misogyny, drug abuse and shoplifting - yet in two of their funnier films they show us what empathy really means.**

In Freaky Friday, a mother and daughter magically inhabit the body of the other while, in What Women Want, Mel Gibson is given the gift of hearing the inner voices of the women he meets. Both films give people the opportunity to get under the skin of those they don't understand.

The teenage daughter perceives the strain of an overworked professional lone parent and her mother the dilemmas posed by relationships in the modern high school.

Initially, Gibson finds he has a competitive advantage at work and in relationships, able to stay one step ahead of the game. Eventually his gift becomes a curse because the voices become like tinnitus in his ears, though not before he learns to become a nurturer by hearing what he sounds like to others and in eavesdropping on their deepest vulnerabilities.

These plot lines may labour a cliché, but they demonstrate where human relationships fail: in the lack of empathy we offer one another. We are often so preoccupied with our own status and the perceived wrongs done to us by others that we fail to think about our impact on others.

One of the reasons we are harder on others than on ourselves is that we judge them by action and ourselves by intention. People may mean better than they seem to but, without a spirit of enquiry and generosity

on our part, we lose touch. This ingrained human failing is magnified by digital communication, which is stripped of the vital clues to emotion and intention which reading a human face helps to supply.

We should resist the suggestion that we either have the gift of empathy or we don't, as some experts in neuroscience assert. Today's siren call to love only ourselves already produces a world of clashing egos. Choosing to stand in someone else's shoes is part of what it means to die to self in Christian discipleship. Some may more naturally intuit the feelings of others but we are not excused this duty of care because we find it difficult. Authentic Christian witness is formed in the subtle accretion of listening to others and showing kindness by what we have learned.



The Ven Simon Burton-Jones

## Bishop's Quiet Days – Lent 2012



I will be leading Quiet Days during Lent. These are intended for anybody, lay or ordained, who wishes to spend some hours with me in reflection and prayer during Lent. I will be offering broadly the same material and programme at six different venues as indicated below, and hope that these days will offer some spiritual nourishment and encouragement as we seek to be faithful to Christ in our daily lives.

Each Quiet Day will begin at 10.30am (with arrivals from 10.00am) and will end around 3.30pm. The Quiet Day will include times of shared worship, some addresses by me and space for personal prayer and reflection. The overall theme for my addresses will be 'Home Thoughts from Abroad'; my intention is to offer some reflections around scriptural themes of home and belonging, and especially how we nourish ourselves spiritually for life 'at home' in a world which we may often experience as being 'abroad', that is strange

and unfamiliar. Using different language, this might be about the tension of living in the here and now, while also nurturing the life of the Spirit within us.

The dates and venues for the Quiet Days are as follows:

- Saturday 25 February at St Barnabas, Joydens Wood
- Thursday 1 March at St Peter, Pembury (Upper Church)
- Monday 5 March at St Martin, Chelsfield
- Monday 12 March at St John, Meopham
- Saturday 17 March at Bromley College (Rochester Spirituality Network Lent Quiet Day)
- Friday 23 March at St John, Hildenborough

There is no charge for attendance, though people are asked to bring their own packed

lunch – tea/coffee will be provided. Numbers will be limited to 50 at each venue in the first instance, and booking will be on a first-come basis. To book contact Jenny Churcher on 01634 842721 or [bishops.secretary@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:bishops.secretary@rochester.anglican.org)

Across the Diocese there will be many other opportunities for deepening spiritual life during Lent, often in ecumenical groupings as well as through our own parish worship and groups.

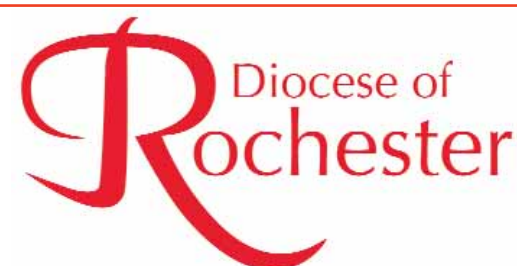
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With my prayers and good wishes,  
**James, Bishop of Rochester**

## Bishop James' Diary - February


27 Jan-5 Feb	Holiday	19 Feb	1000	Confirmation Service – Christ Church, Dartford	25 Feb	1030	Lent Quiet Day – Joydens Wood
6 Feb-9 Feb	General Synod – Church House, London		1600	Confirmation Service – Downe	26 Feb	1000	Readers' Residential – Aylesford Priory
11 Feb	Wedding Fair – Bluewater	20 Feb	1000	Rural Advisory Group – Diocesan House, Canterbury	27 Feb	0930	Seminar: 'Leading in an Age of Uncertainty' – Lambeth Palace
12 Feb	1000		1930	3G Stewardship Programme Launch – Christ Church, Orpington		1930	3G Stewardship Launch – St Andrew, Paddock Wood
13 Feb	1000	21 Feb	1000	Regional Church Leaders – The Salvation Army, Maidstone	28 Feb	1100	Healing Ministry's Residential – The Oasts, Northiam
14 Feb	All day	22 Feb	0900	Slade Green Infant School – visit/tour	29 Feb	All day	Annual RDFS Leadership Conference – Mercure Hotel, Hollingbourne, Maidstone
15 Feb	1430	23 Feb	1930	Licensing Service – St Michael's and All Angels, and St Augustine, Beckenham		1930	Chatham Cluster Lent Meeting
18 Feb	All day						

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# From Pentateuch to QR Code

**The technically savvy and eagle-eyed of you will already be familiar with QR codes. Maybe you are already scanning them with your smart phones. QR stands for "Quick Response" and you will see these squares of higgledy piggledy random black and white patterns everywhere. If you scan them, they can act as a link to a website, reveal text or play some music!**

A member of the congregation at St Mark's Church, Tunbridge Wells, David Gazzard has spent a lifetime in and around the sea, harbouring a desire to study fine art. When he retired from the shipping industry, he began a self-funded degree course in fine art at West Kent College in Tonbridge, under the auspices of the University of Greenwich. He said, "Art had always had a prominent place in my life. I began my fine arts HND course in

2007 and it offered a top-up year which made it a BA (Hons) degree."

The course offered structured modules in subject areas like materials, photography, casting, modelling, working with glass and paper making. David said, "I didn't start the course wanting people to see my work, but after 4 years and having achieved a first class honours degree I was thrilled. Now I do want people to see my work."

David has his own website at [www.davidgazzard.co.uk](http://www.davidgazzard.co.uk). He said, "I do have some trouble defining what I do. The labels are odd. I like conceptual art – an expression of an idea. There is no specific theme in my work and no specific materials either."

David's original inspiration to translate parts of the Bible into code was some time ago. He said, "I love the King James version of the Bible – just as prose. In particular, I like John's gospel and the text, 'by him all things were made' struck a chord with me. I began to ponder about 'all things being made'. When we go shopping, we scan bar codes and I was inspired one day to translate John's



David Gazzard

gospel into bar code! The resultant book looks like a bible, with a black leather cover and a red ribbon to mark the chapter. It can't be read without a bar code scanner, but it is quite an intriguing work of art."

David needed to create a final piece of art work for his degree and tutors encouraged him to follow a theme. He said, "I wanted the work to be accessible and to me, the obvious thing was to go for QR code next. I liked the idea that the King James version of the Bible is archaic and sometimes difficult to read - and QR code is impossible to read without the right software. So, I decided to translate the first five books of the Bible into QR code. The Pentateuch as written takes 800 pages of QR code, so it's quite cumbersome!"

David's QR code version of the Pentateuch is bound in black leather and looks like a religious text. David said, "It probably took me around 100 hours, and I derive a great deal of satisfaction from having done it. It's a unique object."

To those thinking about studying as a mature student, David said, "Do it! People think they can't, but I would say don't worry, just do it! The age range is from 19 to 60 something, so there is room for everyone."



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# Gossip the Good News

Wilson Carlile who founded the Church Army said that most Anglicans are like Arctic rivers – frozen at the mouth. Why are we so hesitant about telling other people how good it is to be a Christian?

When Saint Peter was writing to new believers he said, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15)

Gossip the Good News is a five session course designed to help ordinary church members to feel comfortable talking about the good news of Jesus to people who are not yet active worshippers and to know how to put this into ordinary everyday language.

Hundreds of people use our buildings and benefit from the ministries offered by the church. Only a few actually participate in the worship and spiritual life of the church. They are missing out on the good news that they could experience if they were to know God better. Many of these people have pre-conceived ideas about God and his church which discourage them from wanting to move ahead in their faith journey. They need to hear credible stories of how God is real and makes a difference in everyday life. Many church leaders have said that there is a need for "something" before people will come to an enquirers' course. In many cases people are not ready for any course until



they have reached the point of being a "seeker". Experience and research shows that a person needs several positive encounters with credible Christians in order to move from being a "doubter" to an "observer" and then from an "observer" to a "seeker".

Gossip the Good News has been written recognising that many of our church members are not confident about talking to "doubters" or "observers" about their faith even though we have many positive stories to tell. The stories that we hear from one another each week about how God is at work in our lives will help us feel more confident that we have something to say when opportunities arise.

Through video clips, fun activities, prayer, worship and discussions, the course explores some of the fears we have and how we might overcome those fears. We will look at how people make the journey to faith and what we can say to help them understand that coming to church could be good news for them too. The course includes some training on how to be an active listener and how to take a conversation deeper.

For more details contact the Rev Ross Garner, Mission Growth Team Leader on [ross.garner@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:ross.garner@rochester.anglican.org) or 01634 322924.

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# Photography and theology

## The Rev Robert Avery connects photography with faith



Above: Pevensey 100mm, f2, 1/500 sec



Above: Splash frozen by flash, 100mm, f4, 1/200 sec

By Louise Whiffin

**The Rev Robert Avery, Vicar of King Charles the Martyr, Tunbridge Wells, has recently written a book about photography and theology during this three months of study leave.**

Robert's book entitled 'Photography and Theology' explores the connections between these two subjects. He said, "I wanted to bring together my interest in theology with my rediscovery of photography and it struck me that there were some interesting connections between the two. However, during my research into these connections, I discovered quite a lot has been written about painting and other forms of art and theology, but no-one had really explored photography as a subject in its own right. Hence, it lent itself as a natural subject to spend the three months of study leave exploring and I also enjoy getting out and about taking photos."

Robert took some 12,000 images and visited a number of locations including London, Oxford and the Ashdown Forest. He said, "Photography allows you to see things in the ordinary, the mundane and the familiar, so you never need to actually go that far away to get a really good photo. I think it's just whether you see it or you are there at the right time. Good photos are all about light and shadow and it's about being able to get up

early or remembering to have a camera with you."

When writing his book Robert said, "I think being a theologian first and then coming in as a photographer, I found making the connections to theology fairly straightforward. I did read a lot on photography, but there is not much literature on the slightly more reflective aspects; what are we doing when we take photos? Or how do photographers express truth? These questions are more philosophical and there seems to be less published on these areas, so that's where I had to do most of the thinking."

In his book Robert discusses the ideas of perspective and how this can change how you see a subject. He said, "As I suggested when you look at theologians including St Paul, he uses different perspectives in terms of explaining Jesus' death, one minute you are in the perspective of a child being adopted and the next minute you in the perspective of a slave being freed and each of those perspectives shows you things that you perhaps might miss from another perspective."

Robert describes the idea of seeing something in two phases, perception and conception. He said, "Perception is when you notice something and it enters your consciousness. So I used the example of a red traffic light; you see the red light and become aware of it. The second stage is the conception, where you interpret it and give it



Pevensey Bay 100mm, f2.8, 1/1000 sec



Tower Bridge, 35mm, f16, 15 sec

meaning and significance, so that red light is not just a bright red light, it's a light telling you to stop. Seeing has both elements and they happen all the time and they happen very quickly. But I think often what happens is we move into the second one quite quickly and therefore perhaps miss out things on the earlier stage."

Photographers can use a number of different techniques to allow the viewer to see things they may not necessarily see. For example macro photography magnifies subject detail, such as the eyes of an insect. Or photographers can freeze time to capture movement that could be missed - a drop of water as it hits a surface.

Robert said, "I think the nice analogy is the theologian in some ways is doing a similar task. Helping us to see things about faith and God's connection with the world that ordinarily we might not have the presence of mind, scale or the time to see unaided. I subsequently explored the techniques the photographer uses to enable that slowing down of seeing - how you decide what's in focus and how important that is or how to compress something that has an enormous amount of meaning and significance into something you can represent. This is a huge issue in photography and I think for a theologian, how you express truth about Jesus and God in a way that can be understood and communicated has some similarities."

Robert added, "Seeing the world more carefully and clearly, I think, is a spiritual thing and enables us to be aware of God's involvement and presence perhaps more fully and deeply than we would if we weren't looking so carefully. In a world where the virtual is increasingly influential, actually engaging with reality seems to be ever-more important and perhaps photography can help us see the world around us more clearly."

Photography is a great way of recording an event, place or moment in time, but Robert adds, "I think there is a sense in which photography can have a negative effect, for example the invasiveness of paparazzi. Even the language of photography is interesting because we talk about shooting and capturing, there is almost a slightly aggressive feel to it. The photographer has quite a lot of power and often photographers don't like being in photos, perhaps for that reason! Some people love being photographed, I'm not one of them! I'd rather be behind the lens. But the lens points both ways, as they say, what photos you take and the choices you make - in terms of what you include and exclude in an image - can say a lot about you as a photographer."

You can download a copy of Robert's book from <http://bit.ly/vESUha> or contact Robert on 01892 525455 or email [robert.avery@btinternet.com](mailto:robert.avery@btinternet.com)

**Photos by Rev Robert Avery**



Above: Luskentyre, Harris, 24mm, f11, 1/500 sec



Above: South Oxfordshire, 200mm, f16, 3.2 seconds



seconds



Above: Callanish Stones, Lewis, 28mm, f11, 1/640 sec

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# Rochester Cathedral Becomes Deaf Aware

By Louise Micklewright

**One in seven people in the UK has a hearing loss of one degree or another, an invisible disability, often leaving the sufferer isolated from society. Deaf people find it hard to get their voices heard.**

Visiting Rochester Cathedral has never been better or more inclusive. All Cathedral Welcomers have undertaken the 'Welcome All' training course, learning about assisting visitors with a range of disabilities. Also, in September, we were extremely proud to present our newest set of Cathedral Tour Guides with their accreditation certificates from The Institute of Tourist Guiding, making our guides the only Cathedral guides in the country, bar St Paul's in London, to have this prestigious qualification. However, the training does not stop there. Thanks to the Cathedral's Deaf Awareness project, the new guides have also taken part in a basic British Sign Language (BSL) course and Lipreading training. This means that guided tours are now available to the hearing impaired as well as catering for those with other disabilities. We offer a warm welcome to our inclusive Cathedral.

Brian Micklewright, Rosemary Clemence, Gerda Dib and Liz Mallinson, some of the recently accredited tour guides, gave their first "deaf aware" tour for members of the Twydall Lipreading Support group which is funded by Hi Kent, a local charity supporting people with a hearing loss. One guide, Gerda Dib said "After our course for



Photo by Albert Porter

guiding hearing impaired people we had our first tour. We four guides decided to speak in turn but we realised that it would have been easier for all concerned if we each had a smaller group as lipreading is easier if everyone can see the guide. Lots of lessons were learned and taken on board for future tours. I believe it went very well. We made sure the light was on our faces with no hands in front of our mouths and we articulated well". Brian Micklewright commented "It is wonderful to be able to offer this service for people. My wife is hard of hearing, so it is something close to my heart. Deaf awareness is something which is coming more and more into the public eye so it is important that the Cathedral keeps up with what people need". Susan Chapman-Acott, the Lipreading Tutor employed by Hi Kent said "I had great

pleasure in attending the first deaf aware guided tour of Rochester Cathedral. It was the first time in 35 years that I actually managed to get the gist of what was being said. Not all deaf or hard of hearing people can wear a hearing aid so will often rely upon communication by eye contact, lipreading, body language and good lighting. At the start of the tour the lighting was poor so I said so, and 'Hey Presto', the lights came up. Well done to all the guides on that day. You certainly are Deaf Aware. May many others follow your example".

Hearty congratulations to all the new guides. What a wonderful positive way to enter the New Year.

For more information, please contact: [volunteermanager@rochester-cathedral.org](mailto:volunteermanager@rochester-cathedral.org)

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## Join the Stewardship Link

By Alan Strachan, Diocesan Stewardship Advisor

**Over the next two months within the Diocese we are seeking to equip our parishes with tools to develop stewardship and giving across all our churches.**

One of the key strategies which will underpin this programme is the development of a diocesan-wide network of people to act as 'Parish Stewardship Links' who would be resourced to encourage their parish or benefice in the Christian principles of stewardship. There is real strong statistical evidence to show that parishes with a 'Stewardship Link' are able to grow their giving faster and hence be more efficiently equipped to resource their ministry and mission.

To start this process we have organised some launch seminars in each of the Archdeaconries for the incumbents and treasurers of each parish and for those people who would be interested in taking on this important yet informal role within their parish church. The seminars will be led by Bishop James who will outline the future 'Ministry of Stewardship' within our Diocese.

In the coming year a training module will be provided for those who wish to be the 'Stewardship Link' to the Diocesan Stewardship Adviser via a Diocesan Stewardship Network. This training module is aimed at providing a sound base of knowledge on stewardship for those attending as their Parish Link.

The training will be based on three key elements.

- 1) Personal – seeking and encouraging members to reflect on their own personal understanding of Christian Stewardship.
- 2) Theological – A brief overview on what the Bible says about God's generosity to us and the real stewardship principles.
- 3) Practical – What is the role of a Parish Stewardship Link and how we can challenge our church communities with the principle of Christian Giving.

The dates for the initial launch events with Bishop James are as follows:

Bromley and Bexley Archdeaconry  
 Monday the 20 February 2012 – Christ Church Orpington 8:00pm

Tonbridge Archdeaconry  
 Monday 27 February 2012 – St Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood 8:00pm

Rochester Archdeaconry  
 Monday 5 March 2012 – St John the Baptist Church, Meopham 8:00pm

We have arranged a combined meeting for those unable to make the previous evening seminars on Saturday 10 March 2012 – St Luke's Church, Sevenoaks starting at 10:00am for 10:30am.

These events are relevant to everyone even if you have recently run a stewardship programme for your church as they are



Alan Strachan

designed to keep us committed to Christian stewardship renewal on a regular basis. The network of Links throughout the Diocese is designed to maintain stewardship at the forefront of our thinking and to fully appreciate that our mission and ministry can only flourish if we utilise good Christian stewardship which will then underpin everything we do as a church.

For more information contact Alan Strachan on 01634 560000.

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# Praying the way

## World

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## Diocese

For the Olympic Prayer Relay launch 19 February at 3:15pm at Cathedral. All welcome. For all planned Lent courses.

## Bromley and Bexley

### Bromley Deanery

For the Rev Canon Katrina Barnes as she becomes Area Dean.

**St Augustine, Bromley Common:** That monies will be raised to repair the church.

**Keston Parish Church:** For our Messy Church group.

### Orpington Deanery

**Church of Unity at Ramsden:** For the way forward, that we will be in accordance with God's purpose and will bless the community we serve.

### Sidcup Deanery

**St John, Sidcup:** For all involved in the Ministry Day.

**St Mary, Bexley:** For our interregnum.

### Erith Deanery

**Northumberland Heath:** For Messy Church on 7 February: for our building redevelopment programme; that the many people we contact will know God's love.

**Christ Church, Bexleyheath:** For our 'Venture in Faith' Programme.

## Rochester

### Cobham Deanery

**Longfield, Ash and Ridley:** For our interregnum.

**Meopham and Nurstead:** Throughout Lent to be open to God, to witness the Good News; for guidance in the way forward in regard to baptised children taking Communion.



**Cobham and Luddesdowne:** For new Alpha Course and Valentine's celebration; for future planning for Luddesdowne church.

**Snodland:** For a PCC morning looking at our Future Vision; for all in confirmation classes.

### Dartford Deanery

**Christ Church, Dartford:** For those being confirmed; that the new 'Sustain' service will flourish and youth and children's outreach will expand.

**Churches Together in Swanley:** For Marriage Builders Valentine's Dinner.

### Gillingham Deanery

**St Matthew, Wigmore:** For Sir Stephen Bubb's lecture on 18th February.

**Parish of South Gillingham:** For the course called 'Closer to God' 27 Feb-2 March being led by the Rev Richard King from Lincoln.

### Gravesend Deanery

For Deanery's part in the Prayer Relay 11-18 March. For all that is planned in Lent

**Swanscombe:** Thanks for the installation of the Rev Mark Hurley, pray for blessing on his ministry and parish.

**St Aidan and Holy Family with Ifield:** For the parishes during their interregnum.

### Strood Deanery

**Cuxton:** For the service on 6 February marking the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen, preacher - Archdeacon of Rochester.

### Tonbridge

#### Sevenoaks Deanery

**St Nicholas, Sevenoaks:** Sunday 5 February Annual Tearfund Lunch, Sundays 19 and 26 February and 4 March: Toolbox workshop seminars. Wednesday 29 February Parenting Course starts.

**Weald:** Tuesday 21 February Charity Pancake lunch for all.

#### Tunbridge Wells Deanery

**Burrwood:** For our work with patients and guests.

**Bidborough:** For our 'Faith in the Lord' outreach programme.

**Christ Church, Southborough:** Our parenting course.

**Rustall:** For all residential/nursing homes where communion is taken.

**St Thomas, Southborough:** For the unemployed and those poorly housed.

**St Luke, Tunbridge Wells:** For those finding dark days difficult.

**St Mark, Tunbridge Wells:** For the next stage of our Mission Action Planning.

## Prayer Requests

For March LINK to Jenny Smith, Flat 1, 52 High Street, Chislehurst. BR7 5AQ, [jenny\\_mary@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny_mary@btinternet.com), 020 8467 6499, by 1 February. For more detailed prayers visit [www.rochester.anglican.org](http://www.rochester.anglican.org)



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# Intercession during February

- 1 February: Archbishops Council
- 2 February: Biggin Hill
- 3 February: Christ Church, Bromley
- 4 February: St Andrew, Bromley
- 5 February: St John Bromley
- 6 February: General Synod 6-10, The General Synod Office
- 7 February: General Synod: House of Bishops
- 8 February: General Synod: House of Clergy
- 9 February: General Synod: House of Laity
- 10 February: St Mark, Bromley
- 11 February: St Mary, Bromley

- 12 February: St Peter and St Paul, Bromley
- 13 February: Holy Trinity, Bromley Common
- 14 February: St Augustine, Bromley Common
- 15 February: St Luke, Bromley Common
- 16 February: Christ Church, Chislehurst
- 17 February: St Nicholas, Chislehurst
- 18 February: Diocesan Synod
- 19 February: The Annunciation, Chislehurst
- 20 February: Hayes
- 21 February: Keston
- 22 February: The Diocesan Office
- 23 February: Legal Offices in the Diocese

- 24 February: Diocesan Finance Committee
  - 25 February: Diocesan Advisory Committee
  - 26 February: Bromley and Sheppards Colleges
  - 27 February: The Honorary Canons of Rochester Cathedral, Lay Canons and Ecumenical Canons of Honour
  - 28 February: The Church Commissioners
  - 29 February: Diocesan Board of Education
- For the Anglican Cycle of Intercession please visit [www.aco.org/acp](http://www.aco.org/acp)

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# The Cathedral Quire Stalls

The stalls in the Cathedral Quire, mostly occupied by the Honorary Canons of the Cathedral, are each named after significant characters in Rochester's long history.

**John Harmer:** In 1905 the shape of the Diocese of Rochester changed when the Diocese of Southwark was created: The area of the Diocese was restored to that which it had been in earliest times, apart from Greenwich and Woolwich which became part of Southwark. In 1905 John Reginald Harmer, who was, for ten years, Bishop of Adelaide, Australia, was appointed to the See of Rochester. His main task was to rebuild the Diocese. A year after his appointment the Archdeaconry of Tonbridge was created. The Bishop lived in Sevenoaks

but in 1920 his official residence was established in Rochester. Bishop Harmer continued with the already established 'Bishop's Week of Prayer and Preaching'. It has been written, "our Bishop, though without Episcopal assistance until Bishop G.L King was appointed in 1924 to a residential Canonry, has been able to arrange on average 75 Confirmations annually." John Harmer oversaw a great many changes in the Diocese. His episcopate of 25 years (until 1930) included the Great War and saw the development of Lay Reader Ministry and the growth of the Mothers' Union.

Rev Canon Chris Dench, Bishop's Officer for Ministry and Training occupies this stall.



The Rev Canon Chris Dench

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# Encountering Depression

## Why me?

**How many times have you heard someone describe themselves as, “depressed” when really they are just being flippant? You know the kind of remark; “I’ve just seen my credit card bill...I’m so depressed” or, after indulging a bit too much Christmas pudding, “I’ve just stepped off the scales...I’m so depressed.” But clinical depression is so much more than a passing moment of despondency.**

It can be a really debilitating illness that has very negative consequences for the sufferer and those around them. Depression can last many months or years and sufferers can feel isolated and hopeless.

The Rev Andrew Proctor has been a parish priest for over 30 years, is a senior accredited counsellor with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and serves on the Diocesan Council for Health and Healing. Dr Elizabeth Proctor is a consultant psychiatrist and also serves on the Diocesan Council for Health and Healing. They have collaborated in a new book specifically written from a Christian perspective, called, “Encountering Depression.”

Elizabeth said, “Christians suffering from depression often have added issues because of their relationship with God. They can be angry with God, asking ‘why has this happened to me?’ or they may feel that they should not be depressed because of their faith. Some feel that by being depressed, they may have committed a sin and others feel that this is the work of the devil or that they have become demon possessed.”

For some people, depression is so debilitating that it impacts on their relationship with the church. Ordinarily, depressed people find everyday life difficult and their view of themselves and the world is often very negative. They can feel condemned. Elizabeth said, “members of the congregation may be aware that one of their members is depressed, but they may not understand the length of time it takes for someone to recover. Some congregations are excellent and offer a

great deal of pastoral care. Sometimes, the sufferer can be given lots of advice that they simply can’t make use of because of their condition. The individual may not be well-informed about treatments that are available and some can be anxious about becoming dependent on medication.”

Weather forecasters speak of depressions in a meteorological sense. They describe dark clouds, storm fronts and a time when the sun won’t shine. Depression can make a person feel like this all of the time. They can lose their sense of joy, lose their appetite, feel constantly anxious, snappy and irritable and find it difficult to sleep. Over time, this can be quite hard to live with, for the sufferer and those around them. This may not lift, no matter how hard they try to be more positive. But what causes people to become depressed?

Andrew said, “We know that depression is more likely to affect women than men and it is now recognised more in young people than it used to be. Anyone can become depressed at any time. Something can happen in early life like the loss of a parent which can then cause depression in later life. It may be that the person was always ‘put down’ when they were younger. Anything can cause it.” Elizabeth added, “Some people have a genetic predisposition to depression. Others are more resilient but we don’t know why. Infections like ‘flu or shingles can cause it, or chemical imbalances which can result in post-natal depression. An imbalance in thyroid hormones can also be responsible. Many people are aware that they are depressed, but they struggle on regardless, until they can’t function anymore.”

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is often used as part of the treatment for depression. Part of the work is to encourage the sufferer to notice the negative thoughts they have and to try and change them to positive ones. Andrew said, “We encourage people to seek help from their GP and to be gentle on themselves. The sufferer has to come to terms with what has happened. There are exercises at the end of the book designed to help people think more positively. Each chapter answers a question – for example, ‘has this happened to me because I have sinned?’ We don’t believe that our loving



The Rev Andrew Proctor and Dr Elizabeth Proctor

God punishes people in this way. Each chapter has four sections: Firstly, information, then inspiration, followed by meditation (maybe a verse or two of the Bible) and finally perspiration – some effort and maybe a physical activity like taking a brisk, short walk. We also recommend that people eat a healthy diet.” Elizabeth added, “The book is designed for people who can’t concentrate for very long. The chapters are short and snappy. People can dip in and out of it and there is a resource section at the end.”

So what should people do if they are afraid that they are slipping into depression? Andrew said, “Try not to hit rock-bottom before you ask for help! We recommend that people seek help from their GP in the first instance, and don’t worry about the so-called stigma of mental illness. People are inclined to be quite understanding. If the GP recommends medication, take it! Anti-depressants lift the mood. Ideally, sufferers need to try and recognise the root cause, and we would recommend therapy to help them do this. Look for counsellors registered with The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and perhaps The Association

of Christian Counsellors (ACC). The ACC often ask for a donation to funds rather than charging a flat fee.

Andrew said, “Sometimes people just get better. God built our bodies to get better! Elizabeth added, “It can take a long time to recover. That’s why medication should be taken for some weeks after a sufferer feels better.”

Elizabeth concluded, “Our book is aimed at the mildly to moderately depressed Christian and those who seek to support them. There is a chapter at the end for carers and churches. Andrew and I have both been in the church and concerned with caring and healing all of our lives. When someone is clinically ill, it can be difficult for them and hard for the church to hold on to them. We hope our book will be a useful tool in that area.”

Encountering Depression will be launched on 24 February at Plaxtol Memorial Hall at 7:45 pm. Tickets cost £3.00. The book will be available from Tonbridge Christian Book Shop, Amazon and is published by SPCK ISBN 978 0 281 06472 4 priced £8.99.

## 2012 – A Diamond Opportunity

As well as the Olympics, the nation will be preparing to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee as the 60th anniversary of the Queen’s accession to the throne. With two bank holidays during the Summer half term week (4 & 5 June) churches may consider how best to use this opportunity to engage in mission activities.

There are a number of different ways in which to engage with the local community during the Jubilee celebrations:

**Beacons** - churches with towers can purchase a beacon to light up a party on the evening of 4 June. The cut off date for ordering gas beacons is 12 March. [www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk](http://www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk).

**Barbeques** - invite the neighbours to an event in your church grounds or somewhere else that’s suitable.

**Capsules** - get uniformed organisations, youth groups, Sunday School etc. to put together a time capsule filled with iconic items from 2012. Visit [www.jubileetimecapsule.org](http://www.jubileetimecapsule.org).

**Emblems** - the Diamond Jubilee Emblem is available as a free download [www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchUK/Symbols/DiamondJubileemblem.aspx](http://www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchUK/Symbols/DiamondJubileemblem.aspx)

**Lunches** - a traditional street party might be an appropriate event for a church to organise, or to join in with a community lunch. Visit [www.thebiglunch.com](http://www.thebiglunch.com).

**Wood for the Trees** - The Woodland Trust aims to plant Jubilee woods as part of the commemoration and churches could find out what their local community is doing in relation to this. Visit [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

**Use your imagination** - The Jubilee celebration period is simply a great opportunity to hold any event which may encourage engagement with the community. Cobham & Luddesdowne parish, for example, will be organising guided tours of the church, a jazz concert, a cricket match and Black Tie dinner as well as several other events, all during the June Bank Holiday week.

With thanks to Kaizen Antiques & Jewellery Ltd in Rochester for providing the photo.

