

November 2020 Lay Ministry Matters

GREETINGS TO YOU ALL,

This comes to you after Saturday's Lay Ministry Conference by Zoom, as we find our churches closed for public worship once again. It was great to see so many of you signed up - although it was sad not to be able to spend a day together in person, there were silver linings in not having to leave home after scraping frost off windscreens, and driving to Orpington hoping to get a parking space somewhere in walking distance from the church!

The conference was recorded, so if you were not able to join us (I know at least one parish was hastily recording Remembrance Services in the light of the many and varied guidance put out by Government last week!) or if you were one of the people who tried to join but their WiFi let them down, the plan is that the conference (minus the small group discussions) will be posted online in due course.

For those of you who were not at the conference, as well as those who were – I commend to you Bishop James's letter – attached - about the launch of the Evangelism network. Those of you who are Commissioned, or Associate Evangelists are obvious candidates to join up, but this is not limited to Evangelists and I know many LLMs, Readers and PAs have a passion for Evangelism too.



For those who were inspired by Diana talking about Care Home Ministry and who would like to know more, her email is dianaepattison@gmail.com and if you want to contact Becky to find out about more about how the Hayes Foodbank developed, her email is beckywilloughby@virginmedia.com



The link to Becky's video we saw is

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/175odwq2owmgm5l/Hayes%20Community%20Foodbank%20Video%20%28short%29.mp4?dl=0>

And there is a longer 10 minute version at

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/e4mg55x3z8d4k30/Hayes%20Community%20Foodbank%20Video%20%28HD%29.mp4?dl=0>

If you want advice on the setting up of a foodbank or community larder, Caroline Clarke would be happy to help too – her email address is caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org

That leads me into Caroline's notice this morning about homelessness, and the fact that Winter Shelters are not able to open this year (dormitory sleeping is not safe). The summary of what is happening instead, and how far this has got, is also attached with this mailing. Some of you are already involved, others are not able to get involved, but please find out what is happening and be praying for this new initiative.

SAFEGUARDING.

General Synod will meet later this month (also by Zoom) and one of their agenda items will be safeguarding, in the light of the IICSA report. This may lead to renewed media coverage of the report, and you might be wondering how to address this in church (or online). There are some prayers on the CofE website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/safeguarding-prayers>

There are also some resources on thirty-one eight's website:

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/news-and-events/safeguarding-sunday/resource-pack/>

These resources can be used whether you have five minutes or a whole service, so even if you just want to acknowledge that you are a church who take safeguarding seriously, you might want to use the prayers, or the safeguarding pledge.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team have made impressive progress in catching up with the backlog of people due to do the Leadership Module this year, and there are now a couple of training dates at the end of this year and the start of next year which have spaces.

I have been asked if Pastoral Assistants with PTM, who don't have a leadership role still have to do this module. Currently the national guidance is summed up below:

Leadership (C2)

Required for anyone who has safeguarding leadership responsibilities or responsibility for leading activities involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

Including but not limited to:
 Clergy, Chaplains (including Chaplains to the Armed Forces and Lay Chaplains), Lay Ministers (licensed, commissioned, authorised etc.), Readers, Safeguarding Officers, Members of the DSA, Safeguarding Lead on PCC, Churchwardens, those who are in paid employment or a voluntary role which involves leadership work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, lay persons appointed to exercise pastoral leadership within a local church, Bishops visitors, Directors of Music, Bell Tower Captains, Bell-ringing Teachers, Curates, Succentors, Ministry Interns, Learning Centre Teachers, Sunday School Leaders, Departmental Directors, Lay Chapter Members, Home Visitors, Ordinands and LLMs prior to leaving Theological Education Institutions, Support and Link Persons, those working alongside clergy in a wellbeing/support structure, Spiritual Directors, House Group Leaders, and those who regularly sit on interview panels including Bishops Advisors and DDOs.

If you are reading this newsletter the chances are that you have a licence, an authorisation, a commission, or the Bishop's Permission, and therefore you are required to do the training.

LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

The Living in Love and Faith project has created resources that will help the Church to learn how questions about human identity, relationships, marriage and sexuality fit within the bigger picture of what it means to embody a Christian vision of living holy lives in love and faith in our culture. There will be a range of resources in a variety of formats and the project aims to make sure these are accessible, helpful and attractive to a wide range of people.

Living in Love and Faith: MOSAIC conference

An online conference to launch the Rochester Diocese branch of **MOSAIC** - Movement Supporting Anglicans for an Inclusive Church - and to introduce the Church of England Resource: *Living in Love and Faith*

**Tuesday 17 November, 2020
 9.30am to 1.15pm**

To register visit:
www.livinginloveandfaith.eventbrite.co.uk

Living in Love and Faith is a project to help the Church of England to understand better the current questions around gender, sexuality and identity.

The project is led by the bishops of the Church of England because of their particular responsibility for upholding and teaching the Christian faith. In addition to the online diocesan conference in the green square on the previous page, there is more information on the CofE website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/general-synod/bishops/living-love-and-faith>

ST BENEDICT'S CENTRE



For those of us who feel able to go out, and who need a quiet day/mini retreat, St Benedict's Centre is still open again for day guests. The cost is £10 because they cannot offer refreshments at the moment. There has been a full risk assessment, and people who have been to the centre have felt very safe and commended the risk assessment.

To book, email

bookings@stbenedictscentre.org

ONLINE DOWNLOADABLE RETREATS

For those who are clinically vulnerable and have no wish to leave home any time soon, or are not able to for other reasons, you could download a retreat! Some Lay Ministers in Rochester Archdeaconry will remember Brian Draper coming to lead an Archdeaconry day back in 2016. Others of you will have read his books or heard him on Thought for the Day on Radio 4. Brian has recorded an inspiring audio retreat for autumn this year, to replace his popular walking retreats in Winchester. If you want to find out more – or sign up for his Advent email series – check out <https://www.briandraper.org/>

CMD

These LLM training modules are beginning in January and there are still limited spaces for existing Lay Ministers to join as CMD on each of these modules:

Anna Chaplaincy – people can join the module to become an Anna friend or an Anna chaplain

General introduction to chaplaincy – students have a placement in an area of chaplaincy they are interested in

Christianity in a world context – exploring Christianity sits within different cultural contexts

Community engagement – looking at how the local church engages in mission through social action

Reimagining Church – exploring new ways in which the church exercises ministry and mission responding to the social and cultural changes around us

If you are concerned at the safety of signing up at present, much of the training is currently by Zoom and I imagine this will be true of these modules.

Anyone interested in joining one should contact jane.winter@rochester.anglican.org who will give you more information including the dates/venue.

AND FINALLY

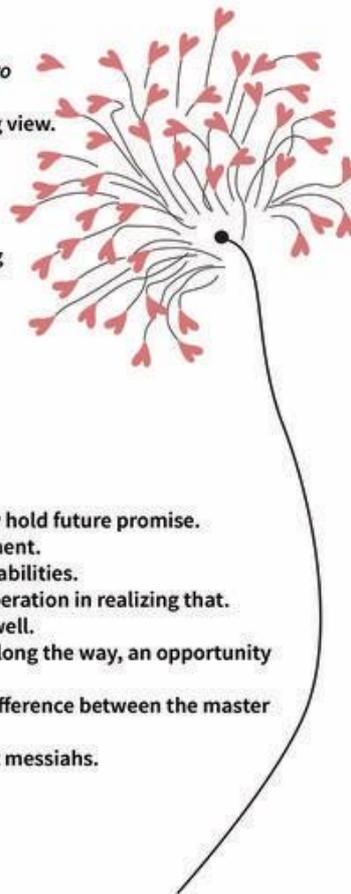
In my last letter I wrote that if you are still shielding or isolating, please remember that you are called first and foremost to be a disciple not a minister, and you are still able to pray for those who are currently working out how to serve the church in a very different context. Since then we have once again stopped public worship, and Advent is near, so many more of us will be staying home and doing what we can, thinking it isn't enough. This prayer which Hilary read at the conference is worth revisiting.

A Step Along the Way

*A prayer by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw
on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Oscar Romero*

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.
This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.



There were lots of contributions to the chat at the conference, and along with the deputy wardens I will be looking at that, and especially at any common themes that arise, but that will be after my week off!

Meanwhile, thank you all again, for all you are doing, and all that you are.

Keep on praying – lockdown prayer resources are here in case you haven't seen them yet: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches/call-prayer-nation..>

With my prayers and best wishes for you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kase'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.