

It is important to recognise that these arrangements will give us more opportunity to work collaboratively, not for its own sake, but so that we can grow and support one another in the ministry entrusted to us across the parish. The focus is always on our neighbours who are not yet aware of God's love in Christ, and how we best serve our community. We are confident that God always blesses our best efforts, and will honour the changes we make that may feel uncomfortable, when we offer them in a spirit of openness and trust.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please do contact your vicar, or either of us. Please pray for each other and for us, as we move through these uncharted waters together.

Rev Rachel

Amanda Boucherat

Rev Rachel C Webbley, Team Rector, Whitstable Team Ministry
Ms Amanda Boucherat, PCC Vice-Chair, Whitstable Team Ministry

Wednesday 29 July 2020

August is a quiet month but our Daily Office online continues on Facebook at 9am and 5pm most days and Compline also on some evenings at 8pm.

The venues will be different this month due to various people taking annual leave so please keep following the Facebook page Whitstable Team Ministry Resources to find out where the next online service will be taking place and at what time. Thank you.

Material for September's edition should be sent to Rev Simon Tillotson at simon@teamvicar.org by 25th August. We are still not yet printing Unity Update but this may change in the next month or two.

UNITY UPDATE

AUGUST 2020

Rev Rob Tugwell writes:

I wonder how you would describe your relationship with singing?

I enjoy singing and (in my mind) can hold a basic tune. However, I was never in line to be a worship leader and the thought of leading Sung Matins makes me weak at the knees.

For a few years, when in the car or in the safety of our home, I would attempt to sing harmony parts for the 'benefit' of my family. However they didn't seem to delight particularly in the cacophony offered up. That being said, I do remember the one time that I sang four correct harmonies in a row and completely freaked myself out..!

In church, singing is what we do. In some expressions of church, singing is, undoubtedly, the primary activity. And, as the deputy head used to boom out to the pupils of a previous school in which I worked, 'As St Augustine said, 'To sing is to pray twice..!''



So what do we do in a period where we cannot sing together? How do we express ourselves? Well, on a practical level, there are many expressions of worship. Silence is a most profound experience for a start. Meditation is life changing. Do try it!

But maybe, as many of us take tentative steps back into some form of social circulation, we can let our lives be our song.

Don't forget that, on average, one in four of the people we will see each day will have accessed some form of religious service through the pandemic. How wonderful if the song of our lives and the joy in our hearts could serve as another step in pointing them towards the Lord.

'Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.' Isaiah 12 v 6

To the churches of All Saints Whitstable, St Alphege Seasalter, St Alphege Whitstable, St John's Swalecliffe and St Peter's Whitstable, from our Team Rector Rev Rachel Webbley and Lay Chair, Amanda Boucherat

Grace and peace be with you all. We continue to pray that you keep well and strong, both physically, mentally and spiritually, in these challenging times. Thank you for all that you are doing in keeping in touch with each other and your vicar, and finding new ways to practice your faith and worship God.

Interim Ministry across Whitstable Team Ministry from November 16th 2020 until completion of the review of parish structures and resources¹.

Due to the pandemic, the scheduled start of the parish review has been delayed. The initial teaching and prayer morning that was due to be held on 16th May has been rebooked for Saturday 17th October 2020. The current plan is for all PCC and DCC members to attend this event at Seasalter Christian Centre where we anticipate restrictions around social distancing will by then make this possible. The morning will be led by Rev Peter Ingrams (Diocesan Local Ministries and Growth Advisor) and Canon Neville Emslie (Diocesan Director of Mission and Ministry) with Archdeacon Jo Kelly-Moore accompanying us. This will be the first step in a longer process of discernment that is still being formed, and must be guided by prayer and vision, informed by an honest assessment of resources, in close collaboration with the wider Diocese.

The parish cannot afford its current model of priestly ministry (3.2 stipendiary priests). Prior to lock down each District Church reviewed whether it would be able to contribute more to square this circle and all concluded that this would not be possible. Therefore it is necessary to plan to structure priestly ministry across the parish differently.

Rev David Vannerley's planned retirement from his role as Team Vicar at St John's Swalecliffe on 7th June 2020 has also been disrupted and the transition complicated due to the lockdown. Fortunately, Bishop Rose has granted David permission to officiate (PTO) with immediate effect, to facilitate the recovery phase of the lockdown. His working agreement incorporates on-going ministry on Sundays and two other days of the week, in collaboration with the church wardens and DCC at Swalecliffe St John's. His title for this next stage is Interim

Priest in Charge at St John's Swalecliffe in Whitstable Team Ministry and his final Sunday with us will be 15th November 2020.

Clearly, **interim** provision needs to be made for the parish as a whole after David finally leaves the parish, and while the review process is going ahead. The following proposal is offered as an interim arrangement:

District of All Saints

Rev Simon Tillotson

District of St John's Swalecliffe:

Rev Simon Tillotson

District of St Peter's Whitstable:

Rev Rachel Webbley

District of St Alphege Whitstable (with St Andrew's Church Centre):

Rev Rachel Webbley

District of St Alphege Seasalter:

Rev Paulette Stubbings

This suggestion retains an expectation of continuity in worship-leading and administration where PTO and lay ministry is well-established. All the clergy team anticipate some greater flexibility in deployment across the parish, while still remaining the focal leader in their respective District Churches. The parish is committed to nurturing lay leadership in all areas of church life, including exploring the possibility of sharing chairing strategic meetings, e.g. PCC, and modelling collaborative ministry in as many ways as possible. The detail of each respective relationship is to be agreed locally, particularly where there is an adjustment in clergy oversight.

One of the strengths of the Whitstable Team Ministry is the locally-led arrangements in mission and worship for each district. Within a deeper understanding of our shared identity across the parish, this diversity can still flourish, while helping the church in Whitstable to be more streamlined and focused in the ministry God has entrusted to us and the service to our community. This proposal is a temporary and interim measure to secure consistent pastoral care, smooth provision of worship and supportive administrative oversight in all five districts, while the parish review takes place and the churches adjust to reduced stipendiary priestly ministry for the foreseeable future. (continued overleaf)