Dear Churchwardens and PCC members

Changed Lives ➔ Changing Lives... changes everything!

2020 is a year we will never forget! There is not much in the rhythm of our church year that has not been changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We begin, then, by saying a HUGE thank you to you as Churchwardens, and to your PCCs, for your continued faithful and care-filled service throughout this very challenging time. We know that, with many delayed APCMs, so many of you have continued in office much longer than you expected. Thank you!

We know also that our closed church doors have inspired a creativity and care in mission which has flourished as, also in partnership with others, you have continued to serve your communities. We have enjoyed worshipping with you online and we know that this is one place you have seen growth in those connecting with you.

What has not changed throughout 2020 is our God who is love and who continues to journey with us in our changing world. He calls us to be people who, knowing God's transforming love in our own lives, seek to be bearers of it in our communities and God's world.

In light of all this in the months ahead, with Bishop Rose, we look forward to praying and talking together as we seek to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. How is God calling us to shape God's church to grow faith, flourish in mission and be sustainable for the future? Changed Lives ➔ Changing Lives... changes everything!

Thank you again for all you do as Churchwardens. We hope that APCMs can go ahead later in 2020 and we will be in touch about Archdeacons’ Visitations. We look forward to seeing you and please be assured of our prayers and support.

Jo Kelly-Moore, Darren Miller, Andrew Sewell and Stephen Taylor

Bishop Rose writes

The role of the bishop is often equated to that of a shepherd. So as a new bishop, it is naturally John’s gospel that I reach for – that now most infamous passage where Jesus declared “I am the good shepherd” (Chapter 10).

As such, he would be single-minded in his care for the sheep; the sheep knew him and would respond to his call. There would be nothing covert or hidden about his role as the shepherd; he knew he was looking after the sheep given into his care. He was committed to them and his desire was for the sheep to flourish.

I am deeply privileged to have been called to the role of being your shepherd – and I have committed myself to getting to know you in every corner of our diocese where you are to be found. The coronavirus pandemic has prevented much of our physical gathering – but I am willing to be with you virtually until it is possible to be with you in the flesh. Together we will explore how we will truly become the people of God in our parishes, benefices and teams, living abundant lives. Together, our changed lives will change and shape the lives of others through the power of the Holy Spirit – in our homes, our churches and our communities. I am excited about being on this journey with you here in the Canterbury Diocese.

My mission priorities are for us to deepen our prayer lives; to become more mature in our faith as we study scripture together; to develop a generosity of life, springing from God’s generosity, and to become more confident in sharing our faith (telling the Good News of Jesus Christ). Together we can change the story of our diocese to one that is flourishing spiritually and financially. I look forward to getting to know, to love and to serve you.

Bishop Rose
Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury

The Venerable Darren Miller
Archdeacon of Ashford

The Venerable Jo Kelly-Moore
Archdeacon of Canterbury

The Venerable Stephen Taylor
Archdeacon of Maidstone

The Venerable Andrew Sewell
Acting Archdeacon of Maidstone

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www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmatters
The Stewardship Adviser writes

Contactless Giving

As we seek to be Changed lives → Changing lives, Bishop Rose is calling us, in her four priorities, to live generously. At this time of COVID-19, we give thanks for all the ways in which we have seen communities living generously to care for one another.

In the months ahead, we are here to support you as you focus on generosity in your parishes to ensure that your ability to serve your communities is sustainable into the future. I hope that many of you were at Diocesan Synod in July to hear more about how to make generosity part of our DNA, as well as hearing about a number of new initiatives to support you in this.

In the wider charitable sector, new forms of giving are growing fast. This is particularly true amongst younger givers, but many older givers give through digital giving means as well.

Although regular, planned giving is the bedrock of support for most churches, one-off donations are a very useful addition to this. Enabling people to make a one-off donation by card can really increase the amount your church can raise for specific appeals and one-off events.

The ability to receive contactless donations can be particularly useful for fees, concert tickets, cups of coffee, or for taking donations at services and events when you have people who are not regular members of the congregation. These might be weddings or baptism services, Christingle and other Christmas Services; Easter or Mothering Sunday.

There are a number of different card readers available. Some can be rented while others are purchased outright. All charge a small percentage of the transaction. While many of the card readers need a Wi-Fi or 3G phone signal to work, some can store the transactions to be downloaded later.

The card readers are purchased through parishbuying.org.uk, and further information can be found by contacting me at: emullins@diocant.org, or at: https://www.parishresources.org.uk/digital-giving/receiving-card-payments/

Liz Mullins
Stewardship Adviser
We have donated more than £325,000 to churches around the UK

Trust130 is a special promotion to increase our support to local churches and their communities. It was initially introduced as a one-off giving programme in 2017 to celebrate and thank our church customers for trusting us over the previous 130 years.

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If you or your church family would like to know more, or to get a quote, simply call us on 0800 783 0130 quoting AVNEWS20 or visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Has your church benefited from one of our Trust130 donations? We’d love to hear how the money has helped your church. Please send your story to: trust130@ecclesiastical.com

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Taking a sabbatical in 2021?

Ecclesiastical’s Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and we are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2021. You can find out more about the Awards, check the eligibility criteria and apply on our website. Find out more: www.ecclesiastical.com/mba

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The first stage of our Parish Pixels competition is complete. Congratulations to our nine Regional winners. Now our judges would like your help in deciding the overall National winner. Please ‘show your support’ for your favourite entry by voting online at:

www.ecclesiastical.com/parishpixels

1 Scotland
St Cuthbert’s: Like the ice appears to break the window, we are a beautiful church in a broken world doing our best to live as Jesus commanded.

2 North East
St Stephen’s C of E Church: We are a church family that is open and active every day to support our local community through the beautiful chaos of life and help people to discover the love and grace of God.

3 North West
Freedom Church: We may not have our own church building and we may live in an area of deprivation, but we believe that it doesn’t matter where you meet to worship God, as long as you meet to worship God.

4 East Midlands
St Stephen’s: We will not be beaten by metal thieves!

5 West Midlands
St Luke’s: The St Luke’s family has been sparkling like a diamond at the centre of the community of Kingstanding for over 80 years, shining out the love of God for all to see.

6 Wales
St Teilo’s: A place for quiet reflection.

7 Eastern
St Paul’s: We are open every day of the week, welcoming all, offering space, time and hospitality to our local community and beyond.

8 South East
Parish Church of St Stephen: Inspired by the angels, our choir fills our beautiful building with uplifting music to worship the Lord and feed our souls.

9 South West
All Hallows: We celebrate our faith joyfully.

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**Another million pounds to support church youth work**

Another million pounds is being made available by Allchurches Trust – owners of Ecclesiastical Insurance Group – to support churches and Christian organisations to connect with young people.

The latest round of grants took the total amount of Growing Lives funding awarded by Allchurches Trust to over £1.3 million pounds, benefiting more than 140 projects. St Margaret’s Church in Aspley, Nottingham, has a £7,000 Growing Lives grant to develop its ‘Bee family’ programme – an after school community group aimed at young families who live on the local estates.

With demand for grants still high, Allchurches has decided to continue the Growing Lives programme into 2020, making another million pounds available.

Allchurches Trust chairman, Tim Carroll, said: “Our Growing Lives grants programme supports a wide range of projects with young people at their heart. It’s always inspiring to read about the innovative ways in which the organisations we fund are working together to meet local need and realise the power of young people to strengthen community.”

Under Growing Lives, grants of up to £25,000 are available and the amount depends upon the cost of the project and the level of need in the community, ranging from 10% of project cost to 80%.

Churches can apply for a grant under this programme even if they have received funding from Allchurches in the last two years, as long as it is for a different project. The programme is also open to cathedrals.

You can find out more at: www.allchurches.co.uk/growinglives

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**Keeping in touch**

More than ever, it’s important to keep in touch. We hope that you, your church and community are well and finding new ways to stay connected.

We send updates and useful advice by email once a month. If you or anyone else in your church would like to be added to the list, please visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/signup. If you no longer wish to receive them, you can unsubscribe at any time.
The extreme changes to our society as a result of Covid-19 and the lockdown have brought many challenges to the work of the Communities and Partnerships Team, much of which relies on social and pastoral contact in order to care for the lost, the lonely and the unloved. Our post-lockdown world may be an unfamiliar one, but the crisis has highlighted the many ways in which parish and community engagement with social justice and care for the vulnerable has blossomed. Innumerable imaginative and responsive initiatives have been set up around the diocese, which have demonstrated the enormous desire and ability of our Christian communities to care for those locally in most need. By so doing, a mutual learning and joint ministry has flourished, whereby those who minister to others are thereby ministered to. In the helping, one is helped.

What we are noticing and learning from the past few months is that the Spirit of God is at work in our society, changing both it and us. We have an opportunity now to discern the work and location of that Spirit, to learn from it, and to adapt our wills and our ways to it. So, as we move out of 2020 and into 2021, we will respond to a changing world that cries out for environmental and social justice for God’s creation. We aspire to work alongside with community and church groups to become carbon neutral by 2030 and, together, bring environmental justice into the public square. As a whole diocese, we will respond to the social issues surrounding migration and refugees, of debt, hunger, homelessness, modern slavery and exploitation, the rehabilitation of ex-offenders, and rural justice. We will continue striving to re-imagine church and ministry with our pioneering Ignite projects, attended by many struggling with poverty and addiction. We will build more partnerships with many non-church organisations across the UK, Europe and as far as Madagascar in order to enrich our communities, share the Gospel and build the kingdom of God. In 2020, our lives, like our world, have changed forever – but we press forward in hope and faith that our redeeming Lord will fulfil his purposes for our planet and its people, and that we in turn will continue to have our lives changed so that we can reach out to transform attitudes and prejudices which seek to limit God’s mission to the world.

Revd Dr Jonathan Arnold
Director of Communities and Partnerships

Children, Young People and Education

Courageous advocates in caring for God’s creation

‘We children are doing this to wake the adults up. We children are doing this for you to put your differences aside and start acting as you would in a crisis. We children are doing this because we want our hopes and dreams back. I hope my microphone was on. I hope you could all hear me.’

Greta Thunberg, speech to MPs at Westminster, 23rd April 2019

Empowered children and young people can be our most effective missional disciples.

We must encourage them to be courageous advocates for change; looking beyond themselves, thinking globally about life, developing an understanding of the exploitation of the natural world and engaging in social action and challenging injustice. There are many inspirational examples of environmental awareness in schools, with pupils and students seeking action on the climate emergency, and churches which strive for people of all ages to seek transformation and grow in service together.

Common to these examples is the presence, voice and determination of children and young people, and there are some straightforward questions which can help evaluate our existing understanding and practices:

- Are children and young people treated as equal members of the Church, being encouraged as leaders and represented in decision-making processes?
- How do we encourage and hear those insistent, challenging young voices seeking transformation; speaking out for the vulnerable, against injustice and advocating for those with no voice?

In answering those questions, we are looking intentionally at what every area of our work as a diocese means for our children, young people and families, envisioning them growing in discipleship and making a significant contribution to God’s creation through the community of faith.

Quentin Roper
Diocesan Director of Education
We hope that as a church or a group you have begun having Changing Lives conversations: “How is Jesus at work in your life?” and “How can we help each other to be 24/7 disciples?” Where these questions are being used, we’re hearing stories of even PCC meetings being transformed! They go to the heart of what CL is trying to achieve – helping us to become more comfortable talking about Jesus and more aware that being a disciple is not just what we do in church on Sundays.

My first draft of this article was written before the word ‘lockdown’ became part of our vocabulary! I was going to tell you that eight of our Ignite plants, aimed at reaching disadvantaged communities, are up and running, and that since we began, nearly 600 new people have been coming along – people who wouldn’t ordinarily consider finding their way into our churches! And I would have said that each week about 100 people are attending across these new worshipping communities – some have come to faith in Jesus and many are on the journey. Unfortunately, our physical Ignite plants have had to close temporarily due to the pandemic. But the story so far has given us lots of encouragement of how the model can work in a variety of different contexts.

Our first Youth Hub, based in the Sittingbourne Deanery, has started really well. Over 100 young people have been along to Zeal, with a core group of 30 on Friday evenings, many of whom do not come from a church background. 20 have attended a Youth Alpha Course.

We’ve started an after-school club, Blend, based on the GK Church model in Goudhurst. Many of our Christian young people have also been encouraged to take on leadership roles. Unfortunately, Zeal has also had to temporarily close but is maintaining a social media presence and some meetings are taking place online.

Our second wave of Missional Learning Communities has begun (despite lockdown), with the first wave entering the second of three years. There are great stories coming out of how this is invigorating mission in the participating churches. And we’ve introduced the ‘Canterbury Diet’ for all new incumbents to offer a programme of support and development for them in their ministry, including their well-being.

Prayer remains a vital part of all that we do and there has been great feedback on our Seasonal Prayer Cards and revitalised Calendar of Prayer. We hope that many of you joined in our online Diocesan Day of Prayer and Pilgrimage on 30 May and the Novena reflections that led up to it.

Diocesan Synod has resolved to add ‘Care for the Environment’ as a sixth strand to our Strategy and plans are being developed, particularly around how we might reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. To help us reach this goal, it is vital that as many churches as possible register for the Eco Church scheme – and we ask that you encourage your own PCC to do so, if they haven’t already. We’re pleased to say that we have achieved Bronze Eco Diocese status, based on the number of our churches registered and the awards they have achieved. There is also now an Energy Footprint tool available in the Online Parish Returns System and we hope that every church will complete this to help us build a complete picture across our diocese. Our schools have been leading the way on this agenda and we know that the environment is a major concern for our young people.

Apart from the bigger initiatives above, we’re also hearing lots of great stories of what God is doing in local congregations across our diocese too! There is a strong sense that God is on the move! Although lockdown has brought many challenges, it is encouraging to note that, in many places, attendance at online services is significantly higher than our normal congregations.

We’re now starting to look ahead, envisaging what a thriving Church might look like in 10 years’ time, and what we might need to do to get there. This will involve wide-spread discussion this year – please do join the conversation wherever you get chance.

More details about Changed Lives → Changing Lives can be found on our diocesan website at: www.canterburydiocese.org/strategy

Colin Evans
Strategic Programme Manager
The Diocesan Secretary writes

My first draft of this article was written many months ago and is now so gloriously inappropriate for the challenging times we are facing during the COVID-19 crisis.

Our church buildings have been closed for over three months now and most have seen their income significantly decrease as a result of these closures. Additionally, with the uncertainties over jobs and the economy at this time, many of those who would normally give to our churches have found their own personal circumstances very challenging indeed and have not been able to give as much. This has meant that some churches do not have the money available to pay everyday expenses, including Parish Share, and some have had to cut back.

A very worrying situation for many.

Our diocese has also been financially challenged and it has seen decreases in income especially through reduced Parish Share income. Whilst we have been able to save some costs – especially through furloughing 50% of our diocesan officers – these reductions are not expected to completely offset the anticipated deficit. With barely any financial reserves, our diocese does not have the resilience to withstand these financial storms on its own.

That has in turn raised worries in people's minds about the implications for future priestly ministry in our parishes.

Yet one of the lessons we are learning in all this is that God knows what He is doing. He is teaching us so much about being a Church for today already – and we pray that these lessons would continue to be heeded. We very much want to discern his voice amidst all that is going on and trust Him to bring us to a new and better place.

The generosity of many people and parishes has been truly outstanding as many look to ensure our diocese has the means to pay for our ongoing ministry. Generosity is a theme, echoed by Bishop Rose in her episcopal priorities, which we will hear much about over the coming season. My hope, though, is that our local generosity will, in due course, be supplemented by some financial help from the national Church and institutions. But more than anything, I hope that we can continue to let our changed lives be used by God to change the lives of others who don't yet know Him. And above all, I pray that we will trust in an awesome God to provide for our needs, according to his glorious will!

Julian Hills
Diocesan Secretary

The Director of Mission and Ministry writes

Praying in a time of uncertainty

At our last Churchwardens' Conference, prayer was something that came up a number of times, in conversations and in written feedback. Now, in a time where literally the whole world is facing the threat of COVID-19, and many are bereaved through the loss of loved ones, how are we to pray? This question has been further complicated by the closure of church buildings, so that we have not had the opportunity to come together to be part of the prayers offered each Sunday. And praying in front of the computer screen in Zoom services has, for many, felt 'odd.' Fortunately, we have spiritual resources which are not often employed except in times of crises. Here I refer you to the Psalms of Lament which populate the book of Psalms but which are not often prayed in regular services, nor in individual prayers. Psalms of Lament aren't so much psalms that you say or pray or sing when you're sad, or hurting, or feeling depressed – they are tougher than that, meant for times of desolation, anger and bereavement. They are designed to hold God to account. Perhaps you wince at this kind of language? If you had an upbringing like mine you would have been told that God is holy and righteous and just and powerful, and to criticise or harangue or argue with God is just so out of order, dangerous even. But consider Psalm 44 – it begins (verses 1-3) with grand statements of how God had delivered and saved their ancestors and given them land, next (verses 4-8) are lines about God’s saving power and expressions of thanks. But from verse 9 there is a dark turn, and a long list of how God has rejected and abased us, scattered us, made us a taunt and laughingstock, and enemies have plundered us. This is particularly galling because we have been faithful and true. The psalmist rouses his courage and points his (or her) finger at God with bold accusation, ‘because of you we are being killed all day long’. This is God's fault! And more, the psalmist tells God what to do, ‘Rouse yourself, why do you sleep O Lord… rise up, come to our help.' Have we ever dared to accuse God of sleeping on the job?! The Hebrew Scriptures teach us that every thought, every emotion, every pain, every bemusement can be addressed to God. This God is big enough for every human experience. The very last line is key, 'Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love.' Packed into this little sentence is the whole of the Bible. There is plea, no matter what pain we are in, we turn to God. Redemption is sought, God alone can help us through, and the New Testament shows us that in Christ Jesus we have the Great Redeemer who accompanies us in every pain. And the prayer is to save us for the sake of God's steadfast love, it's God's reputation that is at stake! ‘Steadfast love’ is one word in Hebrew, hesed, and means continuous, everlasting, non-stop faithful, powerful, good, all-encompassing love. In the New Testament, it is translated into Greek as eleos, which is the word used of the Good Samaritan who saved the man beaten by robbers and ignored by the priest and Levite. May this line be our prayer in this season of stress, disaster, fear and uncertainty – redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love.

Canon Neville Emslie
Director of Mission and Ministry
The DAC office writes

New Lists A and B for works to churches

Changes to the way faculties are dealt with have been agreed by General Synod and came into operation in April 2020. Although much of this is about the details of the system, the good news for parishes is that the system continues to be made easier to use, particularly in terms of Lists A and B. These are the lists of works to churches and churchyards which can be implemented without a faculty. List A works need no consultation with the DAC and these have increased; List B works can also be undertaken without a faculty, but subject only to consultation with the Archdeacon.

The main changes are that the distinction between the works in new Lists A and B will be much clearer, with faculty reserved for matters which really might change a church, and parishes left to deal with those things which don't. The result will therefore be that changing something like-for-like will now be more clearly a matter for List A, changing something which might have a bit more of an impact will be in List B and more extensive changes will be a matter for full faculty. Similarly, List A will be lighter in its requirements on works inside unlisted churches, than on listed churches.

This means, for instance, that:

- Works of maintenance, repair and adaptation, which don't amount to substantial addition or replacement, to existing heating systems, gas, water and other services and electrical installations, including lighting systems, are now in List A and can be done by the parish without faculty. However, more far-reaching changes to such systems will still need faculty.
- Therefore, whereas the replacement of a boiler in the same location and utilising an existing fuel supply and existing pipe runs will not need a faculty and is therefore in List A, the replacement of a boiler in the same location utilising a different fuel supply or pipe runs is a matter for List B.
- List A has been updated to include various items of new technology, such as portable audio-visual equipment, Wi-Fi routers and equipment for card payment systems.
- And other matters have been moved from List B (needing the Archdeacon's approval) to List A. An example is routine maintenance of walls and lychgates, which have been moved from List B, with fences, gates and stiles added, while repair of fences and gates is also now in List A. However, repairs to lychgates, walls and historic railings are in List B because of the greater likelihood that such work may affect something important.
- Again in List B, the Archdeacon's approval can be sought for works of repair to historic church fabric, and not just maintenance, as long as the repair does not involve the substantial replacement of a major part of the building or of historic material.

These are only examples and there is much more in both revised lists, but the direction of travel is clear — the system is becoming a little more relaxed with only those works which would really affect the historic and architectural interest needing faculty. There is a lot of detail in the lists, so do look through them when proposing works, but, as always, Edmund and Charles are happy to answer your questions where anything is unclear.

Richard Morrice, DAC Chair
Edmund Harris, DAC Secretary

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