

Issued no 2

Bishop: Rt Reverend Alan Wilson

Archdeacon: The Very Reverend Karen Gorham

Associate Area Dean: Rev Laurence Meering

Secretary Mr Geoff Ball

Diocesan Representatives: Rev Derek Witchell (Clergy); Rev Michelle Morton (Clergy); Annie Cooper (Laity); Gavin Merrylees (Laity)



Marsworth Flower Festival



Rev Carole Peters at the Marsworth Flower Festival

Welcome to the second Newsletter. I hope everyone has had a good summer and that you are feeling refreshed after your holidays despite complaints about too much rain. I have not heard how the farmers have fared with the harvest but the blackberries in the hedgerows are abundant. I am not one to complain about the weather. We have been to Appleby-in-Westmorland where we had sunshine interspersed with showers permitting walks, fun for the grandchildren and a good day fishing for grandpa. There was an even better day for the family dog at a Farmer's Market; Tilly (a springer spaniel!) managed to break into the Meat Stall reserves and snatch an early lunch of chicken wings.

In the Deanery we had a very successful day at the Bucks County Show, where we joined with the other deaneries of The Claydons, and Buckingham to man a display at the Bucks County Show on Thurs Aug 27th. We wanted to emphasise the role that churches have in rural communities and village life generally.

The highlight was the Charmfield Bell Ringers, with their very own mobile bell tower. Not only did they give a good display of bell ringing, but also they gave an opportunity for the public to try their hand at bell ringing. It also provided a very good conversation opener with passers-by.

There was also a cairn-building and prayer opportunity; palm prints and Bible stories for children (and adults!), a display of all our churches, together with contact names and numbers, as well as freebies of a prayer candle and fair-trade chocolate.

Quite a number of the general public looked in on our marquee:

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard at it (in particular, Bobbie Ward put in much time and effort, both before and on the day itself). We had several valuable conversations and even some prayers with people going by; bringing Christ into the market place is always our job and is what made the whole day worthwhile

The Associate Area Dean reports on the Deanery Re-organisation that it has been over a year since the provisional re-organisation was instituted. The legal processes for those parishes that feel their new situation is right are going ahead; however, there are still uncertainties about the middle parishes. We do want to get this right – the new configuration will outlast the tenure of present clergy and churchwardens, so we have a responsibility to future worshippers and villagers. Consequently, there will be a Saturday meeting for all PCC members of the

Stewkley and Wing benefices on October 17th, at Linslade church centre. If you are on one of these PCCs, please can you make every effort to get to this meeting! If you are unable to come, then feel free to make representations to the Associate Area Dean or to Bobbie Ward before the meeting takes place. There will not be space for more people – so if you are a parishioner in either of these benefices, then pass on your comments to your wardens; if you are in a different parish but have something to say, you are welcome to send an e-mail to the Associate Area Dean on laurencemeering@yahoo.co.uk. Everyone is asked to pray about this meeting and its outcome! The Lord has his Plan and Will for our deanery – its up to us to discern it.

Looking briefly to the Diocese, in November the New Synod will begin its three years and takes up its duties with many old faces and many new ones. On 3rd September the Induction Evening was held in Oxford, when members put themselves forward to serve on the Boards and Committees for the next three years. On 10th September a group from the Board of Social Responsibility led by the Bishop of Dorchester visited Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre at Kidlington. Gavin Merrylees is a member of this group which will be reporting to the Board for Social Responsibility. If you have views about the way aspirant immigrants and asylum seekers are treated in this Country, he invites you to contact him.

At Marsworth, All Saints Church has just had a very successful Flower Festival over the four days of the Bank holiday Weekend. This is held every two years. Although it is centred on the Church this is truly an occasion when all in the village work together. Some flavour of this is in the pictures above. Over £12,000 was raised for the Church.

Still with the Ivinghoe, Marsworth, Pitstone and Slapton Benefice Rev Carole Peters started her three year curacy on 12th July. She is settling in well and is already widely known. There is evidence of this in the picture of her at the Marsworth Flower Festival.

Cheddington with Mentmore held a Vicarage Garden Party on Sunday afternoon 6th September at the invitation of Rev Robert Right, the House for Duty Priest. This was extremely well attended and included some people from Marsworth; it was a great success. Also the parish continues to work with Marsworth in supporting Stapanavan in Armenia through the World Vision Churches in Partnership scheme. In October it is intended to entertain, and hear first hand from the Armenian Field Officer about the work being done and the effect on this small community of the devastating storm in August which wiped out the entire harvest for 2009.

Benefice of Newton Longville and Mursley with Swanbourne and Little Horwood and Drayton Parslow. Bishop Alan visited Mursley in July for a service celebrating marriage: couples came in their finery, - there were even some bridesmaids and page boys who had not yet grown out of their outfits. Photos of past weddings were displayed (did we really look like that so many years ago?) as well as a wedding dress. Two well-known couples from the village were interviewed on their advice for keeping a marriage going, and we all had an opportunity to renew our wedding vows. Coffee and wedding cake rounded the service off nicely.

Children's ministry is always important. In Newton Longville, we share a Songs and Rhymes (Parents and Toddlers, for the uninitiated) with the Free Church, and there is a monthly children's group JAM club. Our children's holiday club was one of the most successful we have held, and Drayton Parslow ran a children's Day, to back up their newly formed term-time 530 club. As we get back into term time, we thank God for all those willing to spend time and effort bringing the good news of Jesus to children and Young People – both in our benefice and throughout the deanery.

Dusty Saunders reports from St Michael's Stewkley with Soulbury and Drayton Parslow that following the last Synod meeting they have been inspired enthusiastically to investigate the possibilities for lay led worship. On Saturday afternoon and evening 12th September St Michael's had a Picnic in the grounds of the Grange in Mursley Road.

Two items which we all should be thinking and praying about.

1. On Monday evening, 7th September at St Mary's Church in Aylesbury there was a consultation at which all churchgoers were invited to have a say on how to safeguard the future of clergy pensions following a report that there is a black hole of £352m in the pension fund. This was one of many such consultations being held nationally to gather views from the parishes and deaneries on how to resolve this. Incumbents and Churchwardens have been sent information. The views of as many as possible are sought.
2. Woman Bishops was the subject of a balance analysis for discussion by Archdeacon Karen Gorman in the July edition of the DOOR.. What does Genesis 1 vv27-28 tell us about God's creation of humankind and his original purpose for humanity? How does Genesis 3 vv 1-19 add to or change our view of God's purpose? For humanity? In Romans 16 vv1-16 would you say that Junia, an apostle was a woman? What does this passage tell us about the roll of women played in the early church (in the original text v 7 is ambiguous? Are Cor 14 vv 34-38 and Tim 2 vv9-15 as a whole applicable throughout history and across cultures or do they relate to what was happening in those churches at the time of writing? **The Diocesan Synod will be discussing this, you are asked to tell your Diocesan Rep what you think.**

Date for contributions to the next Newsletter: By Sunday 1st November 2009. gavin.merrylees@tiscali.co.uk