

# September 2022

## Lay Ministry Matters



Greetings to you all,

My last letter was sent around Pentecost time, and it's been a busy Summer with renewals of Licences, Authorisations and Commissions in the Bromley and Bexley Archdeaconry, and more significantly the renewals of Permissions across the diocese, for those Lay Ministers over the age of 70 who have PTO or PTM.

To all of you who renewed permissions – thank you for your patience as the process has taken longer than I hoped. If you haven't had your renewal letter and were expecting one, please do get in touch. Some of you need to catch up with safeguarding training – do let me know when you have completed what is required.

As in previous years we have taken the opportunity to invite everyone with PTO and PTM to a Thank You tea in their Archdeaconry, and at all three occasions those who attended were pleased to catch up with old friends and colleagues – many of whom hadn't met since 2019.

In 2019 Archdeacon Andy was the new Archdeacon in the Diocese, and this Summer, the tea in June at Christ Church Chislehurst, was an opportunity for those in Bromley and Bexley to meet their interim Archdeacon Katrina – known to many of them from her time as vicar in the Archdeaconry.







On another hot afternoon in July, Rochester Lay Ministers met at St George's Gravesend



At the Tonbridge Archdeaconry tea at Hildenborough in August – and it was still very hot – Archdeacon Sharon had an opportunity to meet with lay ministers from her Archdeaconry as she wielded the teapot – sadly that photo opportunity was missed!



This year we have said thank you to more retiring lay ministers than in previous years – another consequence of Covid, at least partly, I think. Many of these men and women had served the church for decades, and have given a great deal of themselves and their time and care over those years.

There is a shortage of volunteers across most churches, and who knows what forms of ministry will be most needed in the future? But if you have people in your congregations considering whether God might be calling them in some particular direction it's not too late for them to sign up for this season's 'It's Your Calling' day.

**[www.rochester.anglican.org/events-and-training/ministry-training/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/events-and-training/ministry-training/)**

Many of you reading this will have started your own journey to Lay Ministry at one of these days, but if your beginning pre-dates them, It's Your Calling is aimed at those exploring where God may be calling and looks at our journey and the gifts that God has given us, as well as the Biblical understanding of vocation. The day gives an opportunity to meet others on a similar quest and to take time to think about where God could be calling. After 'It's Your Calling', there is an opportunity to make contact with a Vocations Adviser, for an informal chat.

Those in ministry should now be praying for those who will follow us, whether or not their ministry is much like ours. Please pray too for the 15 people who are beginning the Bishop's Certificate course this month.

Back in July, another cohort of 14 students received their Bishop's Certificates, from Bishop Laurie Green who was one of the tutors on their course. Some of them are continuing to train as LLMs, others are taking a break and listening to God, others have been called in different directions. They all completed the course under tricky circumstances – and spoke about how they had been a group for a long time before they met in person, having only met on Zoom for a proportion of the course.



# **The Lay Ministry Conference**

## **8<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

### **9.30am for 10am – 3pm**

### **Christ Church Orpington**

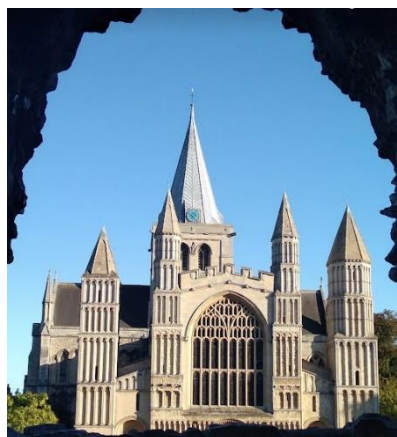
I know that the conference is just 2 weeks after The Service of Welcome and Inauguration of Bishop Jonathan as Bishop of Rochester, but the conference is a much appreciated opportunity to be challenged and encouraged, and to network and chat with one another.

## **The hope that we have**

Is the theme for the day as we face the prospect of a cold winter with a rapidly rising cost of living, and uncertainty about whether Covid will reappear.

Nevertheless, we are people of hope, and hope is in short supply just now. Bishop Simon will be with us for the day and will be starting the day off. Cheryl Trice will talk about ministry to families, at a time when many parishes are pleased to see an occasional family but really don't know how to include them. Many of us have experience from years back leading in Sunday School, but the world has changed since then! Graham Wilkinson, Tonbridge Archdeaconry Growth Enabler, will be talking about how we can encourage health and well being in our communities, and there will be opportunities to hear from other Lay Ministers about what God is doing in other places in the diocese.

A few months back Tricia sent out an email on behalf of the Cathedral, whose chaplaincy volunteer numbers had dropped significantly since 2019.



A massive Thank You to those of you who responded to that email and have joined the Chaplaincy team, from parishes near and far, from Strood to Southborough.

One of the great advantages of our Cathedral not charging an entry fee is that people with no connection to church come in looking for help in a crisis, and Lay Ministers already involved in Chaplaincy have often told me what a privilege it is to be present to listen, and to pray for those visitors. May the new Chaplains be blessed in their ministries as they are a blessing to the people they meet.



## Safeguarding Training

If you haven't done the Leadership safeguarding module, your C3 module will be 3 years old by the end of this year, so you will need to complete the Leadership course.



All of the Leadership courses for this year are now fully booked, but the booking links for modules for the first three months of 2023 have just been added to the website

[www.rochester.anglican.org/events-and-training/safeguarding-training](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/events-and-training/safeguarding-training)

If you know you need to do this, please book now, because if you leave it until after Christmas the chances are that the spaces on these courses will have been filled and you will be waiting until after Easter – and this module is a requirement for everyone with the Bishop's licence, authorisation, commission or permission.

The other requirement for us all is the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse module which is online at [safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org](http://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org). This takes around an hour and a half to two hours, but can be done in parts. In fact there is a point in the course where you are encouraged to take a break, and come back later.

A couple of people have confided in me that they were reluctant to do this course because they had been involved in abusive or coercive relationships, but having done the course they were pleased to have done it as it helped them. If you are putting off doing this for such reasons, please talk with your incumbent or a fellow minister, or call me – don't just feel anxious about it.

### **There is more to training days than safeguarding courses!**

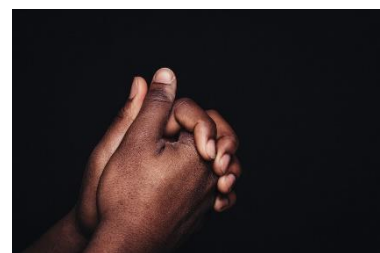
For example - Intercessory Prayer with Margaret Wooding- Jones, who asks "Do you feel like your prayers are more like reciting a 'shopping list' of problems or people? Do you feel that your prayers are just bouncing off the ceiling and not really being heard and changing things? Are you bored of your own prayers?"

Then this morning is for you!

**Date:** 12 October 2022. **Time:** 10.00am – 12.30pm.

**Venue:** St Benedict's Centre, West Malling ME19 6HX

**Tickets** can be booked via this link: <https://bit.ly/3T7VqPX>





### **Matthew Matters (Preaching): Looking ahead to Year A**

Innovative ideas to revitalise and inspire your Gospel preaching this coming lectionary year. Different ways to approach those familiar passages; use of language that makes people sit up and listen.

How to grab the attention of your congregation, preaching tips, yours and ours. Get ahead for Year A!

**Date: 19 October 2022. Time: 09.30am – 1.00pm.**

**Venue:** St Benedict's Centre, West Malling ME19 6HX

**Tickets:** can be booked via this link: <https://bit.ly/3yd4uea>

There are plenty of opportunities for courses beyond those offered by the Formation & Ministry Team.

**The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity** offer a range of online and in person events – check out their website or better still join their mailing list.

For those who preach, **The College of Preachers** offer a range of courses including online opportunities:

**“Preach the Good News to all creation”:  
preaching to promote creation care**

**Saturday 1 October, 10.30 | on-line via  
Zoom**

Workshop leader: Jennifer Brown

This workshop will explore the theology that underpins the notion that Christians have a duty as bearers of God's image to care for God's creation and will consider ways in which we can make that theology accessible through our preaching.

**Preaching for Christmas and Epiphany**

**Wednesday 30 November, 10.30 | on-line via  
Zoom**

Workshop leader: Ian Paul

This workshop will explore approaches to preaching for Christmas and Epiphany, thinking about ways we can bring the texts to life for our congregations, including those whose only contact with the Church may be at this special time of year.



Further details and booking information for all workshops can be found on the College of Preachers website:

**[www.collegeofpreachers.co.uk/events](http://www.collegeofpreachers.co.uk/events)**

These letters are never written in a day – or even a working week, and this one was begun in the Elizabethan age. So much has been said about the late Queen and her faith this week, but as ministers of the Church, the reflections this week remind us all of the power of a life lived following the call of our Lord Jesus.



The scriptures read and the liturgy used over a lifetime have shaped the Queen's character, and character was what has been most highly remembered and commended over the last couple of weeks.



We have heard of the deaths of several Lay Ministers this year, and pictured left is Pat Oliver, authorised as a PA in Edenbridge in 1998. Sue Oldfield (one of the current PA's at Edenbridge) emailed to say that Pat died in hospital on Friday 16<sup>th</sup>.

Sue continued:

I visited her last week, and we enjoyed a 40 minute catch-up together, though she was clearly frail and failing. So often in the past few years her memory loss has limited her ability to engage in two-way conversation, but this time 'the old Pat' was there, her typically stoical black humour making light of her predicament and sending love to all who knew her.

Peter Stotesbury, Reader at Shortlands died this week after being ill for several years. He will be much missed at Shortlands.



Anne Maillardet, Evangelist at Frindsbury with Upnor and Chattenden also died this week after a very short illness. Anne was also a lay Chaplain at Abbey Court School. Please pray for the school and the congregations in the parish as they adjust to this sad news. Especially pray for Anne's husband and family in their loss.

May Pat, Peter and Anne Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory

With my prayers and best wishes for you all,

