

WHAT'S ON

Bishop's Bible Day, 11 June

At the High School Hardingstone. I for one will be there .
Having heard Bishop Donald on quite a few occasions I look forward to this day. See you there.

Lay Pastoral Ministers Annual Eucharist

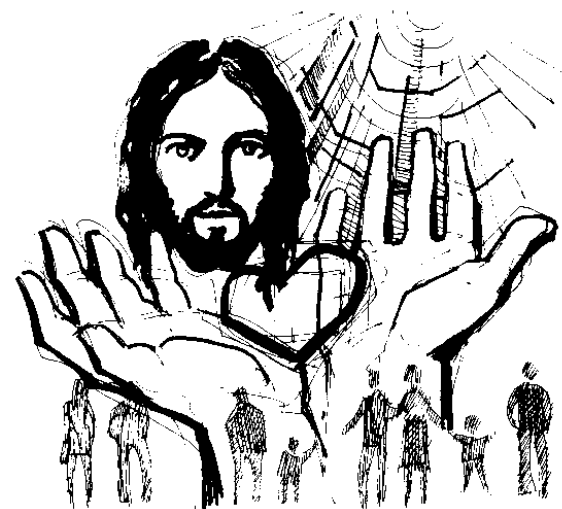
Tuesday 19 July

7.30pm at St Mark's Wellingborough

Don't forget to put it in your diaries Our Warden David will be celebrating and preaching. And for those who haven't heard him yet he is very captivating. It will also be a time to greet our new Assistant Warden Liz.

Diocesan Ministers Conference

5-8 December



Barnabas

When they had finished eating Jesus said to Peter, "do you truly love me more than these"? He answered, "yes Lord you know that I love you". Jesus said, "feed my lambs". Again Jesus asked him, "do you truly love me"? He answered, "yes Lord, you know that I love you". Jesus said, "take care of my sheep". The third time he said to him, "do you love me"? Peter was hurt because Jesus had asked him a third time. He said "Lord you know all things; you know that I love you". Jesus said "Feed my sheep".

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Please contact us with any items for publication. David



An interview with the new LPM Assistant Warden – Liz Kelly

Tell us a bit about your background Liz.

I have lived in various houses just off the Wellingborough Road in Northampton since I was seven years old and, after passing the 11+ exam, I went to Notre Dame Convent School and then studied Psychology, Zoology and Botany at the University of Reading. The next thirty years were spent in secondary teaching, from which I took early retirement in 1997 so I could spend more time with my husband who was in poor health.

Have you always been a regular church attender?

As a child I worshipped at St Edmund's Church, which was demolished in the 1970s, and at Grove Road Methodist Church. As a teenager I attended the churches of St Giles (Evangelical) and St Laurence (Anglo-Catholic), so I had a very varied experience of what the Church of England has to offer! I continued going to church when I first went to university but then I entered a long atheistic/agnostic phase. I was sure that science had disproved God and life was so busy that, sadly, I have to confess that I gave the matter little thought. I went occasionally to church but not that often.

So, what brought you back to God?

There were a number of things. My husband liked to debate theological issues with me and I always found myself sticking up for the existence of God and proclaiming that Jesus was

God and not just a good man. Not quite what you'd expect of an atheist! Also, there was a growing awareness of a presence that was supporting me through the hard times of Bob's terminal cancer.

He died at home in March 2006 and my mother, who lived with us and whom I also nursed at home, died in December the same year. This was the lowest point of my life but it is wonderful how God begins to work at such times. I remember walking my dog in Abington Park and praying day after day the same prayer, "Lord, you'll have to show me what to do now. I'm completely lost. I have no idea what you want, but I'll keep listening until you tell me." He answered my prayer and brought me back home.

I started worshipping at St Peter & St Paul, Abington, as I had got to know Revd Sue Gardner, who was the curate then, through Bob's and Mum's funerals. I did the Alpha Course there and began to think more deeply again about the existence of God and experienced a genuine reawakening of my spiritual nature which had been ignored for so long. Without knowing it, I had been in the wilderness for about thirty years.

So what led you into lay ministry and why pastoral ministry in particular?

When I was asked if I would consider training as an LPM I have to confess that I had never even heard of Lay Pastoral Ministry and knew nothing at all about what LPMs did! But after getting over the shock that someone might think me suitable, I decided to find out more about it and you could say that I had a 'Road to Damascus Experience'. This exactly answered my search for a meaningful role for the next stage of my life. I suddenly realised that all the knowledge and skills that I had gained through teaching and caring, together with my early Christian roots, were a preparation for my work as an LPM.

One of my favourite verses is Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the plans I have for you”, declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* I have found this to be the case and His plans are so much better than any I could have devised!

You were licensed last year. What have you been doing since then?

I keep busy in my parish doing all the usual things: visiting, home communions, study groups, prayer groups, bereavement support, and so on but I also love working with the elderly and I take regular services in two local care homes. I have been a member of the Enabling Elderly Group for some time and our aim is to encourage churches in their ministry to older people.

Since September last year, I have been helping with Lay Ministry Training at Bouverie Court, which I am finding very exciting as well as intellectually and spiritually stimulating.

How do you see your role as Assistant Warden?

Well, I’m obviously there to support David, our Warden, and to deputise for him when necessary, and I see my role as a combination of administrative and pastoral duties. I want to come to some of the Area Support Group meetings so that I can meet as many LPMs as possible and find out what you are all doing. I hope people will find that I am approachable and I can assure you that I’m always willing to listen. If you have good ideas worth sharing, suggestions for training or quiet days, any grumbles or difficulties, any concerns at all, I hope you will get in touch with me about them.

Is there anything else you want to add?

Just to encourage everyone to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit, wherever they might take you. Twelve months ago I had no idea what He had in store for me but here I am and being a LPM is the best job in the world! I pray that you will all find fulfilment and joy in your ministries.

The New Bishop of Brixworth

It’s good to know that Canon John Holbrook is to be consecrated as the Bishop of Brixworth soon at Westminster Abbey. We send him our felicitations and pray for his ministry among us.

The refurbishments are now complete and Launde Abbey is now open once more as a retreat house. I’m sure we all look forward to spending some time there. Remember, that although we keep giving of ourselves we do need quiet times to reflect and recharge our batteries and Launde is an ideal place for that.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Chris Peck

as he prepares for ordination this summer. Although he has given up his role at Bouverie Court we shall still be seeing him but in a slightly different role.

I don’t know how many people have passed through Adult Training since Chris came to us but we all have gained more insight into not only ministry but working in groups and many other things. We shall miss the ting of those bells Chris. May God bless you in your new ministry.



Chris will be ordained on the 3rd of July at 11.00am. He will be the Assistant Curate at Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Abington Park, Northampton.



Emergency planning

Some of you will have been invited to become part of the Emergency Resources Team for the Diocese. Led by the Reverend Robert Hill training is now underway for something we all hope may never happen but for which we should be prepared. The last training evening a few weeks ago was about working with children and young adults affected by trauma. On these training evenings we are part of the multi faith group working with the emergency services as well as members of Northampton Borough Council.

Because of the training we all received as we trained for ministry we find some of the things talked about easier to understand. Thank you to the training team.

Prayer – a reflection

As a Christian prayer is part of the fabric of my life. I hope that it is the same for you. As Ministers in whatever circumstances, we often find ourselves praying with and for people; it is a natural part of the work to which we are called. It is part of our personal walk of faith, part of our discipleship as well as part of our public ministry. It is what we do. Although I know words of the hymn 'what a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer' as well as you do, sometimes I find myself caught out by prayer.

Some time ago, several years, in fact, I spent some time with a family, not a church family; it was a pastoral encounter, and the details of that are not the important thing right now. During the course of our time together I said a prayer for a particular situation in their life together. It felt like the right thing to do. (Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't but that is a reflection for another time). What struck me, as I reflected on our time afterwards was their response. They were profoundly moved that someone should pray for them. I should imagine that no one had prayed for them, by name, specifically in their lives before. Now, I am not the most eloquent of pray-ers but they described the words as (and this has stayed with me) 'beautiful'. For them it was a new experience and they were deeply touched by it.

When people, especially the people nearer the fringes of our Christian communities, say to us, 'remember me in your prayers', or 'please pray for...' or even 'say one for me' as they see us walk past on a Sunday morning, what do you think they are asking?

Rev David Kirby



Have you been to the pictures lately and watched the latest movies in 3D wearing your special glasses?

Last night I went to see our curate Marcus and he was telling me about what he had planned for his sermon on Sunday. He showed me a short film clip

and it was all about special glasses. The story revolved around a man as he left for work. He couldn't get off the drive because someone was passing behind his car, he got stuck in a traffic jam and was moaning at the other drivers for holding him up, (strike a chord?). Then someone drove into his parking space just as he was about to reverse into it. And when he went to get his morning coffee at the local café it was packed and he had to wait a very long time to be served, all the while mumbling under his breath about all the people in the café. Then just as he was about to be served someone jumped the queue in front of him. As he sat down with his coffee someone handed him a glass case. It wasn't his but out of curiosity he took out the spectacles and tried them on. As he looked at the people sitting there in the café he saw alongside them a message.

One said, Just been sacked, another said husband has just left her. To another it said, battling addiction. And wherever he went alongside each person were a few words describing their suffering. He hurried home and no matter where he looked each person had their own burden to carry.

It made me think. That's just what we need to deal with the many people who we see. We help many but just how many do we miss. We all see what's in front of us but how often to we take a step back and think of the other person before ourselves.

David