

'Saying Yes to Life' – Lent and Lambeth 2020

This summer, almost 1,000 bishops from all over the world will be gathering in Canterbury for the Lambeth Conference. Some of the bishops, including from our link dioceses in Korea, will be spending a few days beforehand at Launde Abbey with Bishop Donald and myself.

A key theme of the conference will be the global climate emergency that is already impacting the dioceses from which some of the bishops serve. For example, low-lying areas flooded by rising sea-levels and conflict triggered by expanding deserts, forcing people to move and compete for scarce land. Archbishop Justin has recorded a short interview highlighting this aspect of Lambeth 2020. You can view it [here](#).

As we approach the season of Lent I'd like to commend two ways in which we can engage with these important matters from the perspective of our Christian faith:

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book, [Saying Yes to Life by Ruth Valerio](#), is a brilliant exploration of what it means to look after God's world, reflecting on creation themes including light, water, land and seasons alongside environmental concerns. It's full of good stories and great insights. Archbishop Justin says that this book "is perfect for individuals and groups to reflect, pray and be challenged together". Copies are currently available for loan from the Bouverie Court Library.

The Church of England's Lent Campaign, [#LiveLent – Care for God's Creation](#), has produced challenges for

40 days in adult and children's versions that are available as a pocket-sized booklet, via an app or

by email. The aim is to broaden our view of Christ's redeeming mission. The campaign has distributed over 13,000 sample copies – your church may have some. The daily Bible readings, reflections and suggested actions link with Ruth's book. I think both versions are really inspiring and great fun! If you wish to order copies of these books, contact environment@peterborough-diocese.org.uk.

In this diocese, we are aiming to make 2020 a year of greater focus on our stewardship of God's earth as the fifth of the Five Marks of Mission – tell the good news of Jesus; teach the faith; tend for all in his name; transform society in line with Kingdom values; *treasure God's creation*. Throughout 2020, look out for new initiatives from the Diocesan Environmental Team.

With my prayers and best wishes for a holy and world-changing Lent.

Yours



+John
Bishop of Brixworth



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“I think these belong to you”



The items are safely returned to St Giles

St Giles Church in Desborough enjoyed “a Christmas miracle” during the festive season when stolen silverware from the church turned up in a neighbour’s garden!

The discovery was made during a TV interview about the burglary. St Giles’ Assistant Priest, the Revd Canon Neil Clarke, takes up the story:

“We were filming a piece for ITV Anglia News when a person who lives near the church walked in with a plastic shopping bag and said ‘I think these belong to you!’ All of the lost items were in there. It was amazing. He just saw the bag over the fence at the end of his garden.”

The items in question had been part of the fabric of the church for generations, including one item from the 16th century.

“We had lost three silver chalices – the oldest we believe is from 1577, the other two were donations from the 1960s. There was also a metal chalice, two silver patens, one metal paten, a silver ciborium and a

silver flagon.”

The robbery was the second of two thefts to take place at St Giles during December, and it was Neil who discovered that the church had been burgled once again.

“The previous break-in was on 13th December. During the first break-in, one safe was damaged and two doors. Other than that, there was no loss,” explains Neil. “But when I went to the church at 8.45am on Monday 30th December to prepare some wedding returns, I found the church had been broken into for a second time.”

This time, the damage to the church was far more substantial, and ongoing repairs are needed.

“Two safes were broken into and are not able to be repaired. The church main door, back door and vestry door were also broken and need repair. The thieves also took £107 in cash. It’s thought to be the same criminals that came back for the main safe.”

But this begs the question of why the thieves left the silverware behind

– an outcome which has baffled both Neil and the police.

“We initially thought the objects would be melted down for their scrap value. The items may have been left to collect later. Maybe they were abandoned because they thought that they could not be sold. The police have no thoughts on that. Either way, we’re delighted at the recovery – a Christmas miracle.”

Northamptonshire Police remain on the lookout for the perpetrators of the break-ins. Anyone with information or who may have witnessed this incident is asked to call Northamptonshire Police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Revd Andrew Farrington (left) and Revd Canon Neil Clarke with the returned silverware

Will you be registering for the 2020 Northamptonshire Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme?

The Northampton-based charity The Wildlife Trust has announced its 2020 Conservation Churchyard Award Scheme, which aims to help churches to increase the wildlife in their churchyards or gardens. Churches can register for the scheme and will receive an advisory visit on making the most of their trees, shrubs, grasslands and meadow plants, as well as on providing habitats for a variety of animals.

Registered churches can then work

towards receiving Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. The Bronze award is aimed at churches who are starting out managing their churchyards for wildlife. These churches will need some form of management plan, and to have made a start on some conservation work. The Silver award is aimed at churchyards whose conservation management is up and running, and starting to

Story continues on back page

benefit a range of wildlife, while the Gold award is aimed at the best churchyards for wildlife, where conservation management is well established across a range of habitats and species, and benefiting a host of wildlife.

Each award lasts for three years, after which churches can reapply or go for a higher award. Applying for an award costs £5. To request a visit or apply for an award, please contact the Wildlife Trust for an application form. You can email northamptonshire@wildlifebcn.org or phone 01604 405285. The closing date for entries is 28th February 2020.



February events

Sat 1 Feb: Concert by Peterborough Cathedral Choir at St Mary the Blessed Virgin, Warmington, PE8 6TE. 7.00pm.
Free and all are welcome.

Fri 14 Feb: Cathedral at Night: Photographers' Evening at Peterborough Cathedral. 6.30pm to 10.00pm. £5 per person for a 60 minute slot. [Book online here](#) or call 01733 355315.

Sat 15 Feb: The Love of Flowers at Peterborough Cathedral. 1.00pm to 3.00pm. £10 per person, including both the demonstration and afternoon tea. [Book online here](#) or call 01733 355315.

Sat 22 Feb: Bishop's Bible Day at

Peterborough Cathedral. 9:30am to 4.00pm. Free (donations are welcome). To book a place, phone 01604 887049 or email bookings@peterborough-diocese.org.uk.

Sun 23 Feb: Ashley Snowdrop Walk at St Mary's Church, LE16 8HF. 12 noon to 3.30pm. All are welcome. £5 adults / £3 children aged 12 and under (this includes hot homemade soup and a bread roll).

Launde Abbey has a series of retreats happening throughout the year. For more information or to book a place, visit www.laundeabbey.org.uk, phone 01572 717254 or email info@launde.org.uk.

Visit www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/events
to find events happening near you.

For **Safeguarding training** at all levels: www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/news-and-events/events?tags=safeguarding.