



29 July 2015

**From Bishop Donald To the Clergy No 15**

*copied for information to diocesan staff, lay chairs, and the clergy of Yaxley Deanery*

Dear friends

Warm greetings to you. I hope you have enjoyed, or will enjoy, a restful and refreshing break this summer. Christian ministry is a great privilege; I hope you also find it a joy; but it can also be very draining. We need our weekly “sabbath rest” and our holidays.

Some items in this letter are reminders, not least because we have had quite a few clergy join us in the last few months. But for all of us reminders can be useful.

**Alex Tolley**

Congratulations to my PA Alex (née Low) who married Craig Tolley last Friday. Please note her change of name, and consequently her new email address: alex.tolley@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

**Bishops’ Visits**

Bishop John and I are very happy to be invited to parishes, just as much for “ordinary” Sundays as when there is something special to celebrate. In my case that includes the Yaxley Deanery of Ely Diocese as well. We are always willing to include confirmations (even with only one or two candidates) in a Sunday service. There is no need to wait until you have any particular number of candidates, or to wait for a Deanery or Cathedral confirmation. But we are equally happy to visit on a Sunday with no confirmations.

I am very grateful to Bishop John Flack who is giving extra help while Bishop John Holbrook is part-time Interim Bishop of Leicester (from now, probably until Easter next year).

Please contact my office if you want to book a visit from any of us. Alex and Chel (Bishop John’s PA) each have access to all three bishops’ diaries, so either of them can help you plan a date.

**Curate Training**

Guli Francis-Dehqani does a great job as our Curate Training Officer, but with a growing number of curates (Yes, we are continuing to increase our clergy numbers year by year despite national trends in the opposite direction) she needs some help. In the same way as we now have several part-time Assistant DDOs, we would like to recruit a few Assistant Curate Training Officers. These would probably be parish clergy, willing to give up to the equivalent of one day a month to this work. Full

training would be given, but the role is basically to do reviews with curates and write reports for Guli and me. As part of our curate training programme each curate has a full review every year, and that adds up to quite a bit of work. If you are interested, please contact Guli for a chat: guli.francis-dehqani@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

### **Safeguarding**

You may be aware that General Synod earlier this month passed some new rules tightening up our national safeguarding policies and practices. Some of this can seem bureaucratic, but I want to stress how important it is to do all we can to protect children and vulnerable adults in particular. It is vital that all those ministering in the name of our Church are properly trained and checked in this regard.

I remind parish clergy not to invite or allow retired clergy to lead worship, preach, or even robe for services, unless you know that they have our Permission to Officiate (there is a list on pages 58-68 of the current Diocesan Directory, but always use the latest edition of the Directory). For serving or retired clergy from other dioceses you must check with my office: we will get clearance from the relevant bishop and give one-off permission if we can.

Each of us has to undergo regular training, and to fill in the necessary online forms for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks when required. The online DBS checks are less bureaucratic and much quicker than the old paper-based CRB checks, but they are just as important. When you are reminded about training or renewing your DBS clearance, please do not delay: your licence to minister depends on your remaining up to date.

If you have any concerns about safeguarding issues, please contact our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Garry Johnson: garry.johnson@peterborough-diocese.org.uk or 01733 887041.

### **General Synod Elections**

The five-yearly elections to General Synod take place this autumn, and nominations are now open. Please think and pray about clergy and lay people who you might encourage to stand for election.

### **Bishop's Chaplain - 1 & 13 September**

Canon Tim Alban Jones joins us as my Chaplain at the beginning of September. His responsibilities will be many and varied, but in practice he is the first port-of-call in my office for matters to do with pastoral care of clergy, for ministry reviews, and for questions about the liturgy or content of services at which I preside. He will be getting round clergy chapters and taking other opportunities to meet as many clergy as he can.

I shall license Tim as Bishop's Chaplain at the 9.00am Eucharist at the Cathedral on Tuesday 1 September, then collate him as a Residentiary Canon at Choral Evensong at 3.30pm on Sunday 13 September. That second service is the more public welcome, to which members of his former parish of Soham are being invited. Clergy from this Diocese are welcome to either service, but for practical purposes it would help if you could let my office know if you intend to be present: bishop@peterborough-diocese.org.uk or 01733 562492.

Tim's contact details from 1 September will be: tim.albanjones@peterborough-diocese.org.uk or 01733 562492.

### **Pray for North Korea - 1 November**

We regularly pray for the persecuted Church, which is right and proper. But as I travel round many churches I often hear such wording as “in north Africa, the Middle East, and Pakistan.” Sadly persecution of Christians is all too common in those areas, but it is also endemic in North Korea, described in a recent United Nations report as the hardest place in the world to be a Christian. In view of our Diocesan Link with the Diocese of Seoul in South Korea, and their deep concern for their northern neighbours, I want to make the North Korea situation more widely known. You may know that I have spoken on this a couple of times in the House of Lords. I think now is the time to say something here in the Diocese.

On Sunday 1 November (All Saints’ Day, and a perfect opportunity to think about this issue) I shall preach at the 3.30pm Cathedral Choral Evensong about the persecuted Church, with particular reference to North Korea. All are welcome to that service. I shall make my sermon available afterwards. I do encourage you to include North Korea whenever you pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters.

### **Clergy Day - 12 November**

This year with no residential ministers’ conference we revert to our annual Clergy Day. I shall be inviting all licensed clergy to spend Thursday 12 November with me in the Cathedral. A cooked lunch will be provided, and we will pray and study together, encouraging each other in our pastoral ministry. Please book the date now, and ask local retired clergy (with Permission to Officiate!) to be ready to cover you for any funerals or other parochial duties. Further details of the day will follow.

### **Cathedral Confirmation Service - 14 November**

Twice a year we hold a Saturday evening Confirmation Service at the Cathedral: Easter Eve and a date in the autumn. This year’s autumn service will be on Saturday 14 November, probably at 6.00pm. You are welcome to bring candidates from any parish (including the Yaxley Deanery of Ely Diocese). Please let Canon Bruce Ruddock know numbers and names by Friday 30 October: [bruce.ruddock@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:bruce.ruddock@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk)

### **Communion by Extension - Christmas and Easter**

A reminder: each service of Communion by Extension needs the bishop’s specific permission, but for services on Christmas Day and Easter Day I give blanket permission across the Diocese, on condition that the service is led by a Deacon or Reader, and that the elements are taken from a service held on the Eve or earlier on the Day itself. I hope this will enable you to plan Christmas Day Communions in as many Churches and for as many people as possible.

### **Next Year – Dates for your Parish Diary**

Here are a few dates which I hope you will note. Further details will follow.

30 January - Discipleship in Action Day

12 March - Bible Day

24 March - Maundy Thursday Renewal of Ordination Vows

26 March - Easter Eve Cathedral Confirmation

With thanks for your fellowship in the priestly ministry of the Gospel.

In Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a prominent 'D' at the start.

**The Rt Revd Donald Allister**  
**Bishop of Peterborough**

01733 562492

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