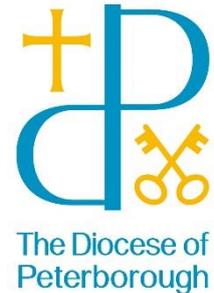


BISHOP'S LETTER No 42 29 May 2022

From Bishop Donald

To: *Licensed Clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers, Clergy with PTO, Bishop's Council, Diocesan and Cathedral Staff, Diocesan Registrar, Churchwardens, Deanery and Diocesan Lay Chairs, final-year Ordinands, final-year Lay Ministry students; copied for information to Yaxley Clergy and Lay Chair*



Dear friends

Warm greetings in these days of prayer and mission between Ascension and Pentecost, and as we approach the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. I have a lot to share with you: some more relevant to some recipients than to others, but all I think important.

I haven't changed the list of recipients at the top of this letter, but for this issue only I am including PCC Secretaries. Thanks to them for all they do. In particular, I wanted to draw to their attention, for sharing more widely, the information about the Prisons Awareness Day, the Holy Land Pilgrimage, and the Celebration of Lay Ministry.

Prayer for the Lambeth Conference: Sunday 12 June

The Lambeth Conference is the ten-yearly (twelve-yearly when delayed by covid) gathering of Anglican Bishops from round the world, taking place this year in late July and early August. The Archbishop of Canterbury is asking churches to pray particularly for it on Trinity Sunday, 12 June. There is a prayer guide [here](#).

Prisons Awareness: Saturday 2 July

The Revd Helen Dearnley, an experienced prison chaplain, is Anglican Adviser in the Prison Service, responsible for overseeing Anglican prison chaplains round the country, and also my Adviser in Chaplaincy. She writes:

***Everything you wanted to know about prisons but were afraid to ask!
10-12.30 Saturday 2nd July Bouverie Court.***

Have you ever wondered what it is like to live or work in prison? If the answer is Yes then this session, which is open to anyone and everyone, is for you.

The morning will include reflections from a prison governor, a former prisoner and a prison chaplain. Together they will give insight into prison life, answer all of the questions you have and hopefully both challenge and inspire your thinking and your prayers.

This session is free and all are welcome, though you do need to book in advance. Refreshments of tea, coffee and donuts will be provided, I can promise that there won't be porridge!

I'll be there, and look forward to a good morning. Details of how to book are [here](#).

Holy Land Pilgrimage: 17-25 September

I am delighted to report that last Sunday Israel relaxed all its covid entry restrictions, so testing at airports and mandatory isolation while waiting for clear test results no longer applies. Travel to and from Israel and the Palestinian Territories has therefore returned to normal. I hope this will make it much easier for people to consider joining me on my twice-postponed Holy Land Pilgrimage this autumn.

Full details are [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Joanne Gibson](#) my PA. If you decide to book, please make sure you reserve the morning of Saturday 20 August for a pilgrimage briefing, and let [Joanne](#) know so we can keep you up to date with plans.

Celebration of Lay Ministry: 15 October

We are resuming our annual Lay Ministry Day at the Cathedral this autumn, and this year's will include the three-yearly relicensing of all Readers, Lay Ministers, and Lay Workers (lay people in full-time paid ministry roles). Those who are due to be relicensed should already have the date, but everyone will be welcome to the afternoon licensing service: a good opportunity to encourage and celebrate lay ministry and lay ministers.

Ministers' Conference: 7-10 November

A reminder that our residential conference for clergy and lay ministers will take place at Yarnfield Park, Staffordshire, in November. Because of covid, this will be five years rather than three since the last one. Previous conferences have been excellent occasions of worship, learning, fellowship and relaxation, and I am confident that this one will be too. Further details and booking forms will be out in a while, but please keep the dates free. I expect full-time clergy to be there, and warmly invite part-time licensed clergy and all lay ministers and lay workers.

Safeguarding Sunday: 20 November

This might seem a long way away, but we are encouraging parishes to mark Safeguarding Awareness day on 20 November. Thirtyone:eight, the organisation we use for our DBS checking, has some very good resources on its website, which I warmly commend: see [here](#).

Hospital Visits

Hospitals are now re-opening for visits by patients' relatives, and by clergy and church lay ministers.

[Peterborough City Hospital](#) welcomes visitors from 2.00 to 4.00 and from 6.00 to 8.00pm.

[Kettering General Hospital](#) and [Northampton General Hospital](#) will return to their pre-covid visiting patterns this week. Click on the hospital name for further details.

National guidance for hospital visiting is changing all the time. The latest for England includes:

- visitors are required to wear masks (no longer the case in Wales);
- visitors will be asked about their own health/symptoms;
- a record of visitors will be kept in case there is a need to trace;
- individual wards may be closed if covid is present, so you are advised to phone beforehand to check that visiting is ok.

We have chaplains in all three hospitals. They are always willing to take Holy Communion to patients if requested.

Cadet Chaplaincies

Bishop John and I try to support clergy and lay ministers in chaplaincy roles as well as those in parishes. We have quite a lot of full-time and part-time chaplains in the schools, hospitals, hospices, prisons, military bases, police and fire services of our diocese. I am aware of a significant gap in our knowledge about people who serve as part-time chaplains to army, navy or air force cadet units. If you are one of those, or know somebody else who is, please let Bishop John know: [here](#).

Ministry Hardship Fund

You may have seen that the Church of England is trying to provide help to support its clergy and lay workers in the face of steeply rising energy prices and more general inflation. As a diocese we have received a grant of £47,000 to be divided among those with particular needs. It will not be an easy job to share this out: we cannot simply give an equal amount to each priest and lay employee, or it will become taxable. If the amounts are calculated according to need, it becomes non-taxable discretionary grants.

A lot of people are eligible, so this amount won't go very far, but I hope it will make a real difference to some.

Those eligible to apply are:

- stipendiary clergy, including curates;
- "house for duty" clergy;
- salaried lay workers employed by the diocese or by parishes in pastoral or missional roles, including those working with children or young people;
- retired clergy carrying out a ministry role at the request of a bishop or archdeacon.

There is an application form attached to this letter. If you would like to apply for a share of this grant, please fill it in and return it to Andrew Roberts our Diocesan Secretary at the Peterborough Office, by the end of June.

Clergy Support Trust

On a similar line, you may know of the Clergy Support Trust (formerly Sons and Friends of the Clergy). They have funds to distribute in a variety of ways to help clergy in need. Do be aware of the sort of help they can give: their website is very informative, not least the “Financial support” and “Health & Wellbeing” sections. See it [here](#).

With my heartfelt thanks for our shared ministry

+ Donald