

The Deanery of Burnham and Slough

News from around the Deanery

January 2024

Issue 19



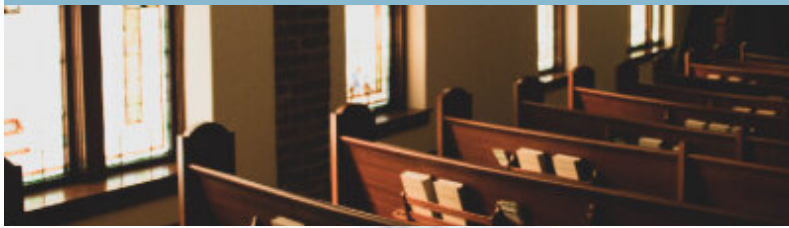
Upcoming dates for your diary

Clergy Chapter catch up 2-3pm Monday 15th January online - zoom link sent separately

Mission and Pastoral committee 7.30pm Tuesday 23rd January - Colnbrook Vicarage

Finance and Standing committee 7.30pm Wednesday 31st January - Colnbrook Vicarage

WHAT MAKES A CHURCH EFFECTIVE?



“they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

One of the distinguishing marks of the early church was its dedication to prayer. The early church exercised prayer in light of who God is, what He has done, and what He has promised to do. It is vital that we do not grow complacent toward prayer; it is through prayer we develop strength against evil.

As we enter 2024, reflecting on the early church's dedication to prayer, reveals its timeless relevance. Prayer was pivotal for the early Christians, fostering a deep connection with God, guiding their actions, and strengthening their community. In today's fast-paced world, prayer remains crucial for the church, offering solace, direction, and a strong sense of community. When a church embraces prayer like the early church, it becomes a powerhouse of faith and unity. Prayer aligns the congregation's will with God's, leading to transformative actions and compassionate outreach. It fosters a supportive community where members bear each other's burdens. Miraculous changes, both within individuals and in broader society, often follow a praying church. Prayer is a divine dialogue that nurtures faith, invites divine intervention, and sustains believers through challenges. Embracing prayer as the early church did can lead to a spiritually rich and unified church. As we enter 2024, adopting this commitment to prayer can revive the church's spiritual vitality and impact the world in profound, and positive ways. We start the year with a number of vacancies in our parishes you are invited to join us as we pray for our deanery this year Janet Binns Area Dean

THE DEANERY'S BID FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK FUNDING

Following two productive meetings, we are advancing our deanery's proposal to secure funding for Youth Workers across our deanery. A standout aspect of our collaborative vision is the development of holiday clubs and school outreach programs. Our last meeting was a hub of enthusiasm and creativity, underscoring the significant impact of these initiatives when executed with passion. By combining our collective resources, expertise, and innovative ideas, we aim to greatly enhance the reach and impact of these youth programs.

Currently, five parishes are actively involved in this initiative, and we welcome additional participation to strengthen our proposal. We firmly believe that this focus on youth ministry is pivotal for our parishes this year. Our next meeting is scheduled for 7.30pm on Thursday, 18th January, at St Mary's Farnham Royal. If you plan to attend, please inform the deanery via email. Your involvement could be instrumental in enriching the lives of families within the deanery of Burnham and Slough.



DEANERY PRAYER

Our weekly prayer session meets at 4pm every Thursday, during term time. when we pray for all aspects of our Deanery. Please join us on Zoom, Login: Meeting ID: 845 3616 6987 Passcode: 043287.

STATISTICS FOR MISSION RETURNS



Thanks to all parishes who took part in the October 2023 project and submitted your Statistics for Mission. I am told that all the answers given then have been saved, so you do not need to enter them again, but do need to complete the return. The national deadline for churches to complete the Statistics for Mission returns is 31 January 2024. We would be very grateful if you could complete your return as soon as possible.

Your churches have all the information needed to complete the archdeacon's Articles of Enquiry the deadline for this is 10 April, Please focus on the Statistics for Mission first.

Thank you in advance for completing what is a onerous but important data collection task for the Diocese.



LENT COURSES

As the conflict continues in Isreal and Gaza the period of Lent as with Advent provides a time of reflection for us as Christians. If you are running a Lent course please let us have details to be shared in the February newsletter as other parishes may wish to join you.

Email Judy : sloughburnhamdeanery@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Navigating the Christmas period with numerous vacancies posed a significant challenge, especially in covering all of our services, events, and activities. A heartfelt thanks to all - clergy, licensed lay ministers, parish representatives, churchwardens, and others - who contributed tirelessly to the life of all our parishes across the deanery. Your efforts ensured that our visitors experienced a warm welcome, illuminated by the light of Christ. Your support is invaluable in making this festive season a joy whilst being mindful of the darkness of our world. It's also worth mentioning that a number of parishes experienced increase attendance for the first time since the pandemic. Thank you.

2023 PARISH SHARE CONTRIBUTIONS



We acknowledge and appreciate your contributions towards the parish share in 2023, understanding that it represents a significant financial commitment for many, if not all, of our churches. Regrettably, we closed the year with an unexpected deficit of approximately £100,000. This shortfall may partly be due to late payments from a few parishes, which could potentially improve the final financial position once accounted for. Looking ahead to 2024, while we anticipate similar challenges, we kindly encourage your continued support. Maximizing your contributions and considering the direct debit option for payments is advisable, as any rebate, however small, is beneficial.