

Rector's Letter - Rev'd Jeremy Trew - October 2024

Dear All

September is, as always, a busy month; full of all the meetings and events that the new school term generates. I'll let you in on a secret: I'm always glad when it is over. Now we come to October and the Church can pause for breath and take a look ahead at the various celebrations and commemorations to come in November through All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance Sunday, and beyond those; Christmas.



In October the Parishes of Debden and Wimbish, and the whole Team, will be welcoming our new minister, Rev'd Lynda Sebbage. Lynda will be licensed by Bishop Guli on Thursday 24th October at Debden Church. Please hold Lynda in your prayers. Lynda is an experienced Priest who brings with her many gifts that will strengthen her two Churches and support the wider Team. It may be tempting to hope that things will continue as before now a replacement priest is installed. But Lynda is not John. We trust that just as God called John elsewhere, God also called Lynda here, with her particular gifts and character. This is part of God's work of re-creation: "Behold, I will do a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19).

At the end of September we shall have said goodbye to Matt Williamson. Matt has worked in the Team for a number of years as our Youth and Children's Leader. He has done a terrific job of engaging with young people of all ages, in our churches, schools and the wider community. As with many ministers, much of his best work is hidden away from public gaze. I know that he has touched the lives of many with Gospel hope, and I am thankful for that. He goes to be Youth, Children and Families Advisor for this Diocese. Please hold him, and the family, in your prayers at this time. How shall we continue and grow what Matt has been leading? I hope we will recruit a new person, but their role will be necessarily different from the one Matt was recruited to. What should it look like?

I suspect that many churchgoers have a secret suspicion that their faith is irrelevant in a modern world; that they have nothing to say or offer. That is why their faith has become private and internalised and its expression must be preserved at all costs. Instead, we should have confidence to own our faith in the God who calls and sends, and seek to apply it in relevant ways. However, becoming outward looking can seem like an enormous task; one too big to tackle. We shouldn't be discouraged. Our Church celebrations and commemorations in Autumn only have meaning if we are able to look beyond them to the story of Christmas, of God getting off his throne and mucking in with our world in all its

faded glory. That's the beginning of the salvation story. God entrusted his Church to continue with what he had started; to put rich meaning into the events of life by getting our hands dirty a little. When we do that we church-safe Christians may find that we are indeed standing on Holy ground, wherever God may call us to be.

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19

Best wishes

Jeremy

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