

STARTER



You have just been elected or re-elected by your parish church annual meeting to serve for the next three years on your Deanery Synod, and thus also to be for the same period a member of your PCC. This means you are a vital link between your local church and the wider family of your diocese and the national and international Church.

Your first privileged responsibility has to be to give meetings of your deanery synod and PCC priority in your diary so that you can be that link - representing your parish and reporting back to it on what the synod discusses and decides, including the reports it receives from members of your diocesan synod and of the General Synod.

As a deanery synod member you have become an elector to decide next year who should represent your deanery on your diocesan synod, and in 2010 your diocese on the next General Synod. One diocesan bishop looking at the result of the 2005 General Synod election commented that those elected did not truly reflect the make-up of his diocese. Lay electors particularly need to use their vote prayerfully, and not be overly persuaded by the loudest lobbies with the deepest pockets. The next two years provide you with the opportunity to learn about the issues which will be on the agenda in that election.

A major concern which is likely to be referred to deanery synods in the next three years is the proposed Anglican Covenant, as matters affecting the relationship between the CofE and other churches must be referred to dioceses for their approval, and properly to deaneries too. Another might be the legislation to enable women to be bishops in the CofE. Both these will require careful thought and prayer.

On your Deanery Synod you will discover, if you have not already done so, that there is a wide range of understandings in the Church of England. It has been said that the Church needs both wings for the fuselage of the plane to fly. There are some who confuse the unity of the church with agreement on their own terms. Maybe St Paul had the answer: 'The shalom of God transcends human logic.' [see Philippians 4:7]

Footnote: if you can go on line, you will find more about Deanery Synod membership here - <http://www.parishandpeople.org.uk/synod.html>

SPRING 2008

NUMBER 61

Deanery Exchange

MISSION POSSIBLE!!!

Or *Ways to Realise Your Deanery's Potential*, is the title for this year's Deaneries Conference to be held at Swanwick (Hayes Conference Centre) from **Friday 17 to Sunday 19 October**. The conference is as much about urban & inner cities as it is about rural situations. How can rural Deaneries inform urban and inner city when it comes to mission and ministry and vice versa? Whilst some issues or problems are unique to rural areas, many are the same as those experienced in urban and inner city areas.

The main speakers are Dr Stuart Burgess, the Government's Rural Advocate, Rt Revd Gordon Mursell, Bishop of Stafford, and Caroline Forster from the Adventure Capital Fund, who will be looking at how to finance initiatives and access funding successfully. There will also be practical *help and how to* workshops. A booking form is enclosed for your Deanery with this Deanery mailing, so talk to your Area / Rural Dean or Lay Chair if you are interested in attending. Further details and booking forms from Tug Wilson on 01543 268678 or email conference@chdg.org.uk - you can also book on-line at www.chdg.org.uk

How to Become a Creative Church Leader is the title of **MODEM's** new book, the practical sequel to the very successful *Creative Church Leadership*, that is now in its second reprint from SCM-Canterbury Press. In this latest book a wide range of experienced church leaders and management gurus reflect on key components of successful church leadership. The bookshop price is £17.99 but it is available from the DX compiler / editor for the discounted price of £16, inclusive

of p&p. Another tome available from the same source is Malcolm Grundy's new book *What's New in Church Leadership* ? retailing at £16.99, but available to DX readers for £15, again inclusive of p&p. Cheques payable to **MODEM** to be sent to Peter J Bates at the address in the box on page 3.

ICIS - In Christ in Schools - a registered charity in Southwell and Nottingham Diocese, have a vision to provide positive role models to support the message of the

Christian faith through creative input into the National Curriculum. They do this by working closely with schools and their staff in the Mansfield area, using a team of locally based young Christian adults to help pupils get a better insight into Christian viewpoints on moral, social and spiritual development.

What do we mean by Vocation? was the question posed to Bridgnorth DS in Salop. Mary-Lou Toop, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, suggested it is a desire to do a serving sort of job; part of the nurturing and caring professions. All are called through our Baptism : God allows everyone to refuse but the call is there for everyone, for all of our years and all of our activities. Stop being just churchgoers and become disciples. God has sent each of us out into the world with a special message, song, action - no one else can do it for us.

Stafford Deanery held their 'meeting' in early December from 4pm to 8pm in Stafford Market Square. Members provided mince pies and chocolates for the general public while others distributed them on the evening - the Synod even provided Father Christmas for the event.

Towards Understanding Ageing is the title of a Saturday morning conference held by Godstone Deanery (Surrey) and led by **PSALM - Project for Seniors And Lifelong Ministry**. **PSALM** is based at St Pancras Church, Euston Road in London and takes ageing and faith seriously because we are all living longer than ever before. How to navigate the new longevity is a question that most people have to face up to and **PSALM** provides opportunities for participants to equip themselves for the journey through this new map of life with its extraordinary opportunities and challenges. Evidence shows that prayer and attending

church are linked strongly with a positive experience of growing old.

A bimonthly on-line magazine *Leaders-digest.com* has been devised by the Evangelical Alliance especially for leaders. It is available by free subscription through the EA website www.eauk.org and is dedicated to the needs of local church leaders. It has *changemakers* pages grouped thematically under leadership, change and discipleship.

ASPIRE - Assisting Spirituality in Residential Establishment - is the name of a project launched last Autumn in the Gillingham Deanery (Rochester Diocese). They obtained a grant to pay a co-ordinator for one day a week for three years and her task is to help the churches in the deanery to respond to the spiritual needs of those who no longer live in their own homes and are in sheltered housing complexes, residential care or nursing homes. They aim to do this by having people available to hold services in homes, to make or arrange pastoral visits and to offer training to those who would like to be involved in that ministry. The project has been established initially within the Anglican Church but has the support of other denominations in the deanery. For more information contact the **ASPIRE** co-ordinator, Sister Julia Crathorn, on 01634 571197 or by email to juliacrathorn@blueyonder.co.uk

Tailor Made: Communications Training to suit you is the programme offered by the Archbishops' Council, and is tailor made to help charities and churches harness modern media opportunities for maximum impact. For a brochure with full details of the 2008 and 2009 programmes call 020 7898 1465 or email comms.training@c-of-e.org.uk

A Risk Worth taking by John Cox, former

Archdeacon of Suffolk, explores the fundamentals of faith. The book contains an eight session course designed for deanery or parish groups, or for individuals, to explore the way faith and everyday experiences interact, especially in those areas that raise some of the sharpest questions for faith: suffering, natural disasters, horrors of war and violence, personal agony, the question of luck and rewards. A final session considers the place of prayer in all this and the way we pray. *"There is risk in voicing our doubts and questions. There is risk in exploring surprising places and entering unexpected territory. There is risk, too, in entering the experience of other people whose views differ from our own. But, in the end, it is risk worth taking"*. Kevin Mayhew Ltd 2007. Obtainable from Christian Book Shops - ISBN 978-1-84417-830-8 @ £9.99.

In Evangelism - Which Way Now, from Church House Publishing in 2003, Mark Booker defines Natural Church Development as an approach which offers a mirror for the Church by which to see the things that we might otherwise overlook and also provides a starting point for sustainable church development. He identifies eight characteristics, all of which are needed to ensure a healthy church and integrate spiritual and structural dimensions. They are : 1) Empowering Leadership; 2) Gift-oriented Ministry; 3) Passionate Spirituality; 4) Functional Structures; 5) Inspiring Worship Services; 6) Holistic Small Groups; 7) Need-oriented Evangelism; and 8) Loving Relationships.

Caring for People in Ministry is the purpose of the Society of Mary and Martha. Their aim is to create excellent space to nourish you in body, mind and spirit. They offer a wide programme of retreats, reading weeks, quiet days, working parties and

holidays for people in ministry and others. 2008 is their 21st birthday year, so the programme includes some 'festival specials'. For full details write to Sheldon, Dunsford, Exeter EX6 7LE, telephone 01647 252752 or visit their website at www.sheldon.uk.com They are publishing this year *The Fat Pigeon Flies*, about the history of the charity.

Cutting the Carbon offers practical guidance and support to church organisations and individuals as they take each of the first three steps along the *Shrinking the Footprint Path*. These three steps begin with assessing your energy use, becoming more energy efficient and then signing up to a Green tariff where one is available. Resources can be found on the *Shrinking the Footprint* website : www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican/ctc_links.php (what a mouthful !).

Mailing enclosures with this issue BOOKLET "Local Preachers and Readers" by John Cole BRIEFING - "Three Lay Roles"

If you would like to see these ask your rural/area dean or synod sec. To order copies yourself contact:

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e-mail PandPeople@tiscali.co.uk
web - www.parishandpeople.org.uk

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