

WE ARE COMMITTED TO
LOVING GOD
GROWING FAMILY AND
INCREASING HOPE!



**ST PETER'S
& ST PAUL'S**
HEXTABLE &
SWANLEY VILLAGE

Pastoral letter July 2019

Dear church family,

I trust you are able to enjoy these summer days and for those of you about to embark on holiday times with loved ones, may you have a wonderful time! As we head towards a lighter August, the church office will be irregularly staffed from 22nd July, although Sue is always available on her mobile or by email if you have need of her.

This has been a bittersweet time in the unexpected recent waves of death, with two of these being the much loved and respected Winnie Clark and Doreen Hadley-Rowe. Whilst we have the assurance that the death of the saints is a beautiful thing we continue to pray for those particularly affected by these losses. As with most families alongside the sorrows come time of joy with the start of the wedding season and as many of you have commented:- "We do grieving and celebrating very well!" Given there are many things on the horizon, I wanted to take the opportunity to update you...

Adam Graver will be joining us informally during August to boost the Worship Team numbers following Sam and Gemma's relocation to Hampshire following their wonderful wedding and new chapter ministry start there. Adam is our next Pastoral Apprentice with a three fold emphasis on worship, Children & Youth and wider ministry. **Emma Jane** joins him as the much anticipated lead for our Children's and Youth Ministry and will formally join us on Monday 2nd September. We intend to have a commissioning service on **Sunday 8th September** at St. Peter's at 1830. In order that as many people are able to come as possible there will be no St. Paul's service that evening so do please plan to be there! . Please pray for Emma and her husband Jack as they prepare to move into the area in late August.

The staff team will also increase significantly through a volunteer revolution, as wholeheartedly affirmed in our June 2019 PCC mtg.

Ian Carpenter will join in a formal Associate Pastor role, sharing in the breadth of pastoral ministry with me as your vicar, reflecting the love and respect felt for this good man,. Ian will share in preaching, prayer and wider pastoral leadership, around the edges of his continuing employment role at Thirty-One Eight.

Julie will join me following her early retirement in detailing more of our Sunday church life activity, bringing vicar admin & serving across wider projects! We would value your prayers for us in this joyful and anticipated transition. Sue will therefore have more of an admin bias towards wider community life and support of the Annexe project.

Angela Chapman is also taking early retirement and will be serving part time exploring community outreach, prayer and schools work.

Dave Grimshaw will be assisting in operations and wider projects with Sarah continuing to contribute with appreciation in preaching and other projects.

I want to record my grateful thanks for Jenny Bracey & Dawn Freeman, who faithfully provide occasional admin help and patiently type notes from the books I occasionally plunder through! Together we are growing capacity in serving and sharing in God's unfolding story in the parish and this is a matter of delight. Might you commit to praying for us on a Monday morning as we'll gather together as a team.

We plan to commission these new staff volunteers on Sunday 8th September at 1030 so do plan to be around for both 1030 and 1830 at St Peter's.

By God's grace, there appears to be positive movement in the log-jam previously felt impassable. Please pray on for the finish and capacity for the Annexe to be all God would desire it to be. Heartfelt thanks to all those who have honoured their pledges towards the Annexe. Should you not be one of those who made a pledge but would like to contribute towards the completion of this community space, please see Sue or Chris or direct your gift to St Peter's Building Fund, Sort Code: 20-25-42 Account: 73932516

We're aiming to plant new life-groups, have prayer ministry training, host an alpha course and another Overflow morning conference in addition to the Amazing Conference, sharing more of our 2025 vision, establish more teams, love, serve and grow further together as God's people this autumn. *We want to see God do Ephesians 3:20 for us individually, as households, as a church family and in our wider community! More life from the hand of our good, good God!*

In our life-group on Thursday night past we had a really precious conversation answering the question "...in what ways has your thinking & living changed over the last six months?" So much goodness was discovered and we dared for more in the weeks and months ahead! Together we are citizens of a heavenly Kingdom, being ever transformed by the heavenly King!

With my thanks for your partnership in God's unfolding story,
May August be kind to you and yours.



Revd Johnny Douglas
Vicar & Chair of the PCC,
vicarjohnny@gmail.com
07799072845