

September 2018
Pastoral letter 4

Over the summer Julie and I clicked our six-month anniversary with you, which is mostly thrilling! August tumbleweed hasn't happened this year for us with lots to be attending to and to contend with for the months and years ahead. We're excited by more new guests with children joining us on Sundays, Holiday-at-Home encouragements, weddings and seeing God at work in a number of contexts.

Ian Carpenter continues to bring appreciated help in preaching and pastoral ministry but is stepping back from the leadership of **the Pastoral Care Team**, while continuing to serve in this area. Pauline Pearson has kindly agreed to take on the leadership of the Pastoral Care Team and is already engaging well with this. Establishing teams, developing capacity and encouraging healthy leadership are some of the continued task areas over the next year for me.

We continue to pray and **seek God for the provision of leadership in our work with children and families**. Would you pray for the leaders of the specific age groups and all who contribute in these really significant ways. Glow Worms - 0-3yrs, led by Michelle, Sparklers - 3-5, led by Debbie, Lighthouse - 5-11, led by Gemma and Youth - 11-17, led by Gemma

It's a delight to have Eleanor Eavery and Tom Brown join us as Pastoral Apprentices for the next year. They'll bring lots in co-working, team work and individual areas of work. Pray and cheer them on please!

Emerson Park is the 4 acre, 200-person care facility that's been developing over these last years on Rowhill Road. They've always been amenable to us, and it's a delight to partner for the first time with Cinnamon Care in having me formally as their chaplain. This will look like 100 hours each year, serving staff, residents and patients, in a time of pastoral care, residential forums, emergency help and regular communion services.

Our ongoing pattern of **Wednesday morning, 7am** prayer feels to be a really significant. Consider this as part of your weekly pattern?

Our monthly PCC gatherings matter! Please pray on for our PCC in the substance of what we are engaging with over the coming months. There's much for us to seek God's mind and heart about. I've deferred our vision launch from 9th September till Sunday 13th January 2019, so that we can be settled and clear about the shape and detail of this.

Alpha is being planned for the autumn on Tuesday evenings. Please do pray and think of a handful of people in your life who would value being invited?

The building project continues and there's a separate detailed note for your attention and prayers. The level of church commitment in this is so very appreciated.

The additional £151K pledged by the church family over the six weeks is reported on and with ongoing gifts I trust might reach closer to £200K by the end of the year to allow the completion of the works, by next summer. *The goal is not a larger church so much as a better served community!*

We've been working on **our website refresh**, as we work out how to tell our story, recognizing that this is an important external 'shop-window' for us. Sam Ball's help in this is appreciated.



We all have God-given 'time, talent and treasure!' How might you use these at St Peter's and St Paul's? There are volunteering gaps across church life from children's work to seniors groups, hospitality to spring cleaning. Prayerfully reflect on this if you might and let Sue H know of your willingness!

Looking ahead into the autumn we'll have a stand alone preach on 9th September and, on the following Sunday, 16th September, we'll launch an eleven part series in 1 Thessalonians. *There'll be notes to accompany this, for both personal and life group use.*

We'll be with our friends at Hextable Methodist for a Covenant service on Sunday 23rd September at 6.30pm at Hextable Methodist Church, Main Road, BR8 7RA, and so there'll not be a St Paul's evening service on this occasion.

We're looking forward to hosting our Women's Amazing Conference again this year on Saturday 13th October. Plan to be there and invite others for this great morning gathering.

Bishop James Langstaff will lead a **confirmation and baptism service** with us at St Peter's Hextable at 6.30pm on Sunday 18th November, with no evening service at St Paul's on that occasion. Is there some public step of affirmation of faith that you need to make? Let me know of your interest asap!

Overflow has been refreshed and is held on the first Sunday night of the month. Our first morning Overflow conference gathering is set for Saturday 10th November.

On 2nd December it's a privilege to host the Churches Together in Swanley District Advent Carol Service at St Peter's at 5.30pm, in addition to the Overflow congregation that evening.

God continues to graciously and consistently speak to us in worship, word and pictures. I believe He's asking what are the Jericho walls that need to come down? We're called to be great lovers of God and servers of people. *Psalm 25:4-5 "Show me your ways Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour!"*

Julie and I'll look forward to welcoming you at the Vicarage in the cold of Advent when that comes around! We'll have sign-up sheets as before.

Love and thankfulness from us both,
Pray for us as we pray for you,



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