



Diocese of
Hereford
Proclaiming Christ + Growing Disciples

HEREFORD DIOCESAN READERS' ASSOCIATION



The Bulletin

January 2019



MIKE'S MUSINGS

Mike Wilkinson (Magnis Group), HDRA Chair

Hopefully everyone had a blessed Christmas, if not restful, and may I wish you all the best for 2019. May the LORD continue to bless you mightily and challenge you to go on to greater things in His name.

Early in December, I was pleased to be involved in delivering *Experience Christmas* to Years 1 & 2 of our local primary school. This took place in Credenhill church. It is always a joy to do this with such delightful children. And it's a joy, too, that those members of staff and volunteers who came also heard the Christmas story again. We were similarly privileged to attend the Key Stage 2 Nativity, performed by Year 4, when they told the story behind **Silent Night**. Over the Christmas period I was able to lead and preach at two of our Carol services, as well as preaching on Christmas Day.

Maggie and I go into a residential home on a regular basis to do a *Thought for The Day*. In December we led some carol singing with a number of the residents. We were joined by two of their relatives – adding something special to the occasion.

A new venture, which I am pleased to let you know of, is that I have been accepted as a **Police Chaplain** – following a long-winded vetting process. The requirement is a minimum of 8 sessions per month, but you can do more if you so wish. I may even be able to go on a 'ride along' at some point, which will be interesting, giving me an insight into the pressures on the police officers and other staff. **The lead Chaplain for the West Mercia force also has responsibility for the Fire Service and would be keen to recruit other chaplains.** If anyone is interested in this ministry I can put them in contact. Please get in touch.

On another note, the charity that oversees *Street Pastors*, *Family Pastors* and *Lean on Me* in Hereford, of which Maggie and I are part, was awarded the Queen's Award for Volunteering – the equivalent to the MBE for Voluntary Organisations. This was presented by the Lord Lieutenant in December at a civic type service with various dignitaries present.

We are in a new year, so let us all with renewed vigour spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in all places and to all people whenever the opportunity arises.

God bless you all

Mike

Comments and contributions to Jonathan Kemp, Clare Cottage, Stitwell Close, Bucknell, Shropshire SY7 0DD – jonathan@janekemp.plus.com

THE WARDEN'S NOTES

Rev'd Preb Dr John Daniels

At the end of last year, I had an agreeable overnight stay in Salisbury at a gathering related to Reader Training.

There I met **Ruth Haldane**, who has recently been appointed by the Central Readers' Council to act as **Reader Training Project Manager**. Originally from Scotland, Ruth now lives in Blackburn Diocese, where she was admitted as a Reader in 2015. She has since become Deputy Warden in that diocese.



Ruth's post has been created to take forward the three themes emerging from last year's CRC consultations:

- Readers as teachers of the faith
- Readers as enablers of mission
- Readers as leaders in Church and society (mentors and coaches)

I gather the materials she will be assembling will be aimed, in the first instance, at established Readers, rather than those in initial ministerial training or post-admission training. This will be particularly helpful in a diocese like ours that has not, historically, provided any Reader-specific continuing ministerial education.

I was very impressed by Ruth, [[Read more here, Ed: https://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org/crc_whos_who_details.php?679](https://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org/crc_whos_who_details.php?679)] and encouraged by what I heard from her. I look forward to our using some of these materials in our own diocese as they become available in due course.

John

COMMUNICATION BITS

Jonathan Kemp (The Middle Marches)
HDRA Comms

• LOVE the new Reader leaflet, thanks John! Print off lots and put them in peoples' hands...

• Noting the Safeguarding information in Suki's mailing, it struck me that Readers can be really useful in ensuring our PCCs take Safeguarding seriously. Our influence and experience from the world of work can help folks understand that this IS important.

Jonathan



BOOK TOKEN BROWSEINGS

Sue Chidwick (Alveley & Quatt), HDRA Vice Chair

The familiar joy of walking into a bookshop enveloped me and I know I smiled, despite my lower back complaining that I had been on my feet for far too long. It was the Saturday before Christmas. We were in Sheffield, visiting our son for the weekend, and completing “The Christmas Shopping experience” of 2018. It was late in the afternoon and the aforementioned back repeatedly said “Go back to the house and rest me!” But there in front of us gleamed Waterstones, brightly lit, busy and beckoning... My husband tolerates these forays into the world of books, our son understands why I love going inside, so neither of them stopped me. I browsed – continually making a mental note of this or that book for possible later purchase, regardless of knowing that I did not need any more books and we had spent enough that afternoon already.

Another table loomed in front of me with offered titles like wriggly worms on the end of a fishing line, hauling me in. I picked up one... The bait had worked and I glanced at the blurb about *The Light in the Dark, A Winter Journal* by Horatio Clare. I turned to the prologue and read the first line: *The last days of August were beautiful and the nights ethereal, glowing long after sunset.* The bait had not only worked, I had to have this book. I loved the prose immediately – and so had Patrick Barkham as a chosen critic on the back cover, who extolled its virtues as ‘magical, moving and deeply atmospheric’.

I clutched the book possessively, remembering how many card receipts lay accusingly in my wallet. Then I remembered my **Book Token** also hidden in my wallet, recently received in the Christmas Post. Mmm, I mused, it’s not a ‘Religious Book’. Tiny slivers of guilt as I looked for something to persuade me that I could use my token of gratitude for being a Reader. Another reviewer said, ‘This sensuous evocation of winter darkness is a startlingly honest escape from seasonal depression. Horatio Clare beams through his own despair by exposing the intimacy of family love in the fiercely shafting light of his glittering prose.’

A shaft of light reminded me that I had explored the section on RELIGION and been very disappointed by the lack of choice. I also remembered that if I want a book for my ministry, I look in Christian bookshops, second hand and charity establishments, or even the website with the same name as a South American river. Indeed, only that year in August I had purchased in Sheffield’s CLC shop Margaret Silf’s *At Sea with God* (much discounted) and earlier in June, when in a Walsingham charity shop, I had found *Best Sermons Ever* compiled by Christopher Howse. This latter has been a fount of inspiration and pleasure, especially Lancelot Andrewes from the 16th/17th century.

So, armed with the recollection that I do spend my own cash on continuous ministerial improvement, I made my way to the till, my splendid Book Token in my hand and obtained the much wanted ‘glittering prose’. I read it over the Christmas holiday and will re-read it again next winter, when the darkness invades and you need to grasp any light pushing through. **I love having my Book Token:** it is a Big Thank You for my much loved, but purely voluntary Ministry, a token of light in the darkness of the wintry season. Almost as inspiring as **Lamentations 3:22-24**.

Sue



Comments and contributions to Jonathan Kemp, Clare Cottage, Sitwell Close, Bucknell, Shropshire SY7 0DD – jonathan@iankemp.plus.com

SECRETARY’S NOTE

Ray Evanson (Condover), HDRA Secretary

Following the announcement about Bishop Richard’s retirement, I have already been approached by Pam Brown, on behalf of Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, in his role as chairman of the **Vacancy-in-See** Committee, inviting small groups of Readers to take part in two (15 minute) consultation meetings.

It was felt right that the HDRA Committee should take the lead on this: there was, actually, little time to come up with anything else. Accordingly, the following will be meeting the Appointments Consultation Committee, as follows:

- **5th Feb, Bishop's Palace, Hereford @ 10.15am: Chris Webb, Sue Chidwick and Ray Evanson.**
- **6th Mar, Parish Centre, Church Stretton @ 1.15pm: Jonathan Kemp, Rebecca Wood and Anne Ingham.**

The Appointments Consultation Committee will comprise Richard Tilbrook (the Prime Minister's Deputy Secretary for Appointments), Caroline Boddington (the Archbishop's Secretary for Appointments) and Brad Cook (C of E Senior Appointments Team).

So that your colleague Committee members can feel truly representative, you are invited, please, to make contact with them (refer to Suki’s recently circulated listing for details) and convey any points you may wish to be taken into account in making this key appointment.

Additionally, there are open consultation events that any Reader or parishioner (why not take a group?) may attend:

- **4th Feb, St. Peter's Hereford, 7.00-9.00pm,** and
- **6th Mar, St. Lawrence's, Church Stretton 4.00-6.00pm**

You can find many more details about the appointment process on the Diocesan website here:

<https://www.hereford.anglican.org/vacancy-in-see/> as well as helpful resources for prayer, including this:

May we all be guided by the Holy Spirit as we listen and pray together to hear and discern God’s will for the future leadership of our diocese.

And in particular, most immediately:

- For +Richard and Kay; for Richard’s continuing leadership of our diocese over his remaining months with us as our bishop
- For the members of the Vacancy-in-See Committee as they prepare our Statement of Needs and elect our representatives for the Crown Nominations Commission
- For the many individuals who will contribute to the Vacancy-in-See process
- For the Crown Nominations Commission when they meet in June and July

Ray

..and just in case it escaped you:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul,
‘therefore I will hope in him.’

Lamentations 3:22-24