

The Rev'd Toby Wright
Area Dean of Witney

18 December 2014

Witney Deanery - Newsletter Christmas 2014

First, I want to thank all the members of the deanery for a wonderful year. It has been a privilege to serve as your Area Dean. I've greatly enjoyed getting to know the deanery better. The travelling round to each of the 38 churches was a tremendous day - well Ron and I made it to those I hadn't been to often anyway... It's been a privilege to work more closely with the members of our Chapter, lay and ordained who offer such gifted ministry and support across the deanery; to be involved in lots of new appointments (welcome to those who've joined us!) and to support some difficult situations which need our prayer and our care.

Second, I want to thank the team who help me - Ron the Assistant Area Dean, Mandy the Area Dean's Administrator, Kevin the Lay Chair, Sue the Treasurer and the members of the Deanery Standing Committee and Pastoral Committee. It's a real delight to have such an outstanding team working alongside me. It's often said that the leader is only as good as those around her/him and if there's good stuff happening - I point you to them!

Third, it is important to celebrate the fact that not only did we achieve payment of 50% of our Parish Share in June - a huge achievement. This was then topped off by Sue's *immense* work as our Treasurer to secure full payment of the Deanery Parish Share (using some very generous extra contributions and loans). This has enabled the rebate to be received: the first time for a long time! Huge thanks to all.

Fourth, looking forward! We have an agreed framework looking within the deanery at Mission Action Planning, Schools' Ministry and Men's Ministry. There's a team developing each of these areas. The parishes are all invited to return a brief Mission Action Plan summary by 20 January to me (do please plug this). The reason for this timing is to ensure we can then develop it at the deanery residential in February, when 18 of the Deanery Sub-Chapter are booked to have three days together in Lincoln. Do please keep this in your prayers.

Finally, prayers and blessing as we celebrate the gift of the Incarnation once again. I know it's a very busy and demanding time. I hope, though, that in the midst of the many demands you can find space for your soul. That in this space each of us may strive so that, in the words of Augustine, 'We shall rest and we shall see, we shall see and we shall love, we shall love and we shall praise.'



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