



*Edited by Mark Gartside, East Bristol Partnership  
Coordinator*

Dear Partnership Congregations,

Greetings from the new partnership office here at St John's! We finally moved the office here on 27<sup>th</sup> June.

Our hope is that by moving the office to St John's it might become more of a partnership hub, as St John's is the church most central to the partnership area, and is very visible from the main road – Lodge Causeway.

For a trial period we will be opening the office Mondays and Tuesdays 10am – 3pm, and Thursday and Fridays 11am – 4pm, to see if people drop in to use the facilities here. The partnership photocopier is here now, and you can make copies for personal use at a very reasonable rate.

Also by opening the office for these extended times we will be able to keep the church open. We're hoping to get community groups interested in using the church space for activities and meetings during the week.

Do drop in to the office for a coffee and a chat if you're passing!

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### **Nicola Callen's Ordination**

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July I attended Nicola Callen's ordination service at Bristol Cathedral. Nicola has now been ordained deacon at St John's and in the East Bristol Partnership.

Bishop Lee presided over the service with input from many others. The cathedral was packed, as Nicola was being ordained alongside nine or ten others from the diocese. At one point in the service all the ordinands were presented with a bible as a symbol of their new office. There was

lovely music from the Cathedral Choir, and a very inspiring sermon from a visiting Bishop.

After the service we all met back at St John's church hall for a sharing lunch to celebrate. There was lots of food and wine and a beautiful cake. Nicola made a speech, and it was very moving.

We look forward to continuing to receive Nicola's ministry here in the partnership!

### **Nick Adam's Welcome Service at St Stephen's**

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June I, along with several others from the partnership, attended Nick Adam's welcome service at St Stephen's in the city centre, where he will spend the rest of his curacy.

It was a very interesting service, which began with everyone meeting in the church cafe before the service. There was coffee and croissants, and general chit chat from about 10.30am, until about ten past eleven, when Revd. Tim Higgins called us into the church.

We all sat in a circle around the altar at the front of the church. There is some beautiful, recently commissioned art work behind the altar, which is well worth popping in to have a look at if you're in town.

Unusually for St Stephen's they had a visiting jazz band and choir with them for this service, so the worship was interspersed and accompanied by very atmospheric and stirring contributions from them.

Revd. Keith Thomasson said a few words to introduce Nick to the congregation, and Nick and Helen Adams both spoke.

Although Nick is now based at St Stephen's, he and Helen will still be living in Fishponds, so I'm sure we'll see them around and about!

### **Keith Thomasson Leaving**

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July at 10.30am we will have a joint partnership service at St Mary's to say goodbye to Revd. Keith Thomasson before he sets off for Romsey in Hampshire.

This will be a chance to thank Keith for his ministry in the partnership over the last five years, to acknowledge how far we've come in this time as a partnership, to look to the future, and to wish Keith, Anne Claar and the children well in their new home.

### **Vacancy Process**

During July a task group set up by the forum has been meeting to discuss the vacancy situation in the partnership. Furthermore the task group has been discussing how ministry in the partnership might work in the future, paying particular regard to the agreements of the review document from last year.

In this way we have been trying to discern what kind of post we want if there is funding for one stipend, and potentially

what second post we want if there's funding for another. We hope to have a clearer idea of the situation by September this year, and to be in a position to place an advert for the first post even sooner than that.

In order to discern what we need from a post, the vacancy task group has been looking at what we already have in place. We acknowledged the wealth of experience and knowledge the partnership has accumulated in terms of young people's work and pastoral care, while also looking at gaps in our ministry where we would appreciate some more input.

We have been looking at a model where resources and expertise can be better shared across the partnership churches, which will enable us to join forces more often in mission initiatives. We hope this will lead to all the churches feeling more equipped for ministry.

### **Pattern of worship**

The departure of Susan, Nick and Keith within less than a twelvemonth period is making it increasingly impossible to sustain the pattern of Eucharistic services which we have been used to here in the partnership. It is a reminder that shape of the church is changing, and offers a chance to put into practice all that has been said over the years about congregations taking a lead with their own worship and spiritual life. This year David Jones has been facilitating alternative worship at St Mary's once a month on a Sunday afternoon. The possibility lies before us to rethink our worship across the partnership churches and to work together as a partnership in structuring a pattern of worship which is sustainable and looks to the future.

### **Holiday Bible Club**

From Monday 25<sup>th</sup> – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July every morning from 9.30am – 12.30pm the Holiday Bible Club will run at All Saints for the third year in a row! Led by an enthusiastic team from across two partnership churches, this year's programme is entitled 'Tell me a story', and for the first time has been designed by the team, rather than following an already written programme.

The holiday bible club attracts children from across the partnership area, and has been an excellent example of a cross church initiative which has inspired many to get involved with young people's ministry.

### **Arts at St Aidan's**

St Aidan's have continued to host successful concerts on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, showcasing a wide variety of musical talent. Some of the highlights from this year have been the Sweeneys Barbershop Quartet, The Arabic and Balkan Gypsy Band with Arabic dancing, and the Bristol Georgian Choir – featuring All Saint's own Alison Wren.

The long established monthly concerts at St Aidan's are a good example of how our church buildings can be used for community use, alongside being worship spaces. As St Aidan's doesn't have pews we're free to arrange the seating however we chose. This flexibility opens up many

possibilities for use of the church, which might help to keep our worship spaces going.

### **Areas of Ministry**

There's been a lot spoken in the last year about Ministry Leadership Teams. Keith ran a course on the subject during Lent this year. The Ministry Leadership Team initiative comes from the diocesan level, and involves each church having a ministry leadership team, with individuals having oversight for specific areas of ministry, such as pastoral care, or worship, or young people's ministry. These ministry leadership teams might have significant overlap with PCCs, although they don't have to.

Concurrently with the church Ministry Leadership Teams a partnership Ministry Team will operate, with individuals having oversight for particular areas of ministry across the seven churches, and initiating partnership wide projects. Hopefully the ministry rep in each church will know who the ministry rep in the partnership is if they need input in a particular area of ministry. For example, if St John's wanted to put on a holiday bible club, their young people's ministry rep could go to the partnership young people's ministry rep, and be informed that All Saints and St Mary's already have a lot of experience and resources in this area, and they could call on them for help. Thus meaning that St John's wouldn't need to start from scratch in setting up their project.

### **Joint service at St John's**

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May we had our 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday joint service at St John's, which tied in with the celebrations of St John's centenary. Former vicar of St John's Revd. Stephen Jarratt returned to preach, and many former members of the congregation were in attendance, as well as folk from across the partnership churches.

As well as many centenary events throughout the celebration week, St John's put together a detailed and very impressive exhibition of a hundred years of the church's history, photos from which can now be seen on the partnership website. The exhibition provided an opportunity to reflect on how we've gotten to where we are today, and provided many insights for newer members of our congregations.

### **An Old Celtic Blessing**

May the blessing of light be on you—  
light without and light within.  
May the blessed sunlight shine on you  
and warm your heart  
till it glows like a great peat fire.