

# WORCESTER Diocesan News



December 2008 - January 2009

## The Christmas Crunch



So you're a young couple working hard in low paid jobs, with two kids, no savings (and no opportunity to save) and the winter heating bill comes in or the fridge breaks down – who do you turn to? Debt comes to

people in all sorts of forms, negative equity, extravagant spending on credit cards and oversized loans, but in Worcestershire it is estimated that 35% of families are in debt through low income rather than overspending. With around 11% of households not having a bank account and 17% officially living below the poverty line, access to the mainstream financial institutions is limited for people in difficult circumstances. Christmas is a particularly difficult time for families on low income, with bills from last year's celebrations clouding the enjoyment of this year's festivities. So who can they turn to for a small short term loan with affordable interest rates?

Credit Unions are not-for-profit organisations which reach out to help people struggling with financial difficulties. Black Pear Savings & Loans ([www.blackpear.org.uk](http://www.blackpear.org.uk)) is the Worcestershire credit union with offices in Worcester and Redditch and MoneyPoints in Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Malvern and Droitwich. Black Pear is owned and run for the benefit of its members, currently over 2000 of the people of Worcestershire. It offers the members somewhere to make secure ethical savings, which are then used to fund loans to other members, keeping money within the local economy and offering affordable interest rates.

Black Pear also now offers a DebtBuster service for people whose debt is mounting, about which lenders are giving them a hard time and they feel they are in a spiral of debt they can't escape. As an almost entirely voluntary organisation from the Board to the cashiers, the credit union is also always looking for people able to offer time and expertise. Worcester is also lucky to have 'Worcester CASH' ([www.worcestercash.org.uk](http://www.worcestercash.org.uk)) a Christian charity

committed to providing a service to persons living in Worcestershire who are in positions of financial hardship regardless of ethnicity, religion, race or disability. It was formed in 2002 to respond to the serious growth of debt in the UK and to help people deal with the demoralising and stressful effects of debt. The charity understands the stressful effect of debt and the difficulties faced by those struggling to survive on a low income and can help with household budgeting, benefit entitlement, negotiating with creditors and assisting with bankruptcy.

We are all living in financially precarious times, and Christmas can be a time of great strain for people trying to meet the demands of a commercial Christmas. The simple message of Christmas is about God's love for us, and the best way to celebrate Christmas may be to reflect on that; but for those who find themselves in the Christmas Crunch, it is reassuring to know that there are people there to help.



**Black Pear Credit Union –**  
**01905 612197**  
**(Worcester)**  
**01527 63310 (Redditch)**

**Worcester Cash – 01905 27001**

**Citizens Advice Bureau Dudley –**  
**01384 816222 - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

## Are you ready for Peru?

The Peru Task Group is planning a diocesan visit to Peru in 2010 but unlike previous visits this time the mission team will be 'doing' not just observing. You could be involved in anything from painting a newly built mission, to helping to build a classroom, working with children or teachers in the diocesan schools, helping with the administration of a medical campaign or in the centre for children and people with disabilities. Ideally, the team needs to be made up of the young, older and more mature

people with a variety of talents and skills from right across the diocese.

Mission teams usually go to Peru for two to three weeks. At least one week is spent working on a project but there is always time for getting to know the wonderful people, sharing in the fascinating culture and seeing unique sights of Peru.

Usually the team pays for their own travel and accommodation, often with some help through their own church; in addition the team takes materials needed to

undertake work planned. We also ask that volunteers attend essential preparation days during 2009 – but don't let this put you off if you feel it is something you would like to do! It's a great way of getting involved with world mission and our own link with Peru.

Watch this space for details of an information event in the New Year or contact Margaret Rutter on 01905 – 732816 or [mrutter@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:mrutter@cofe-worcester.org.uk)



## Goodbye to...

**The Revd Owen Woolcock** has left her post at St John the Baptist church Claines to take up a new post in the Diocese of Leicester.

**The Revd Peter Furber** who will retire from Christ Church, Malvern on December 31st.

## Congratulations to...

**The Revd Eva McIntyre** who has been elected to represent the Diocese of Worcester on the General Synod.

**The Revd Jan Moore** who is to take up a new post from January, for Guildford Diocese as Faith Coordinator/Chaplain to Surrey Police, and not retiring as previously stated.

## Bill Hopley

Bill Hopley was working at Worcester Hospital Contributors Association when diagnosed with cancer, having recently retired from his ministry as a Police Chaplain. Born in Worcester in 1950, he studied theology at Kings College London, and St Augustine's Canterbury, before serving as curate at St John's, Kidderminster. In 1986 he moved to Whittington, as priest and member of the Worcester Industrial Mission. From 1995 until retirement he was chaplain to West Midlands police. He went into hospital in December 2007, and spent his final weeks in St Richard's Hospice, Worcester.

*Bill was a terrific colleague and was ever opening up new avenues for the mission of the church and building new connections, in short, irrepressible, full of energy, with an earthy humour that broke barriers and brought people together, a focus and commitment second to none, giving an urgency to what he did, courage at all times, and a spirituality that drew on vast resources and his wide reading that put hopes and aspirations, penitence and prayers into words that we could all use. Immensely loveable. We shall all greatly miss him – John Gathercole.*

**Jesus of Nazareth, courageous, obedient, chaste,  
As the Christ of my salvation, subdue my body,  
Control my fear. Transform my terror of pain.  
Lead me through the blackness of this night;  
Take my hand as I confront the bleakness of your cross;**

**And bless me with a glimpse of that light beyond  
By which the Holy Spirit will beckon me,  
Into the presence of Almighty God.**

# True Security



All that has transpired since the credit crunch first began will continue to cause anxiety, pain and distress for some time to come but I hope that good will come of it, too. At the very

least it should prompt people to ask where true security is to be found. The common phrases 'safe as houses' and 'safe as the Bank of England' sound somewhat ironic in the present environment. The market has brought great good in increased prosperity for us all but the attitude to it of some has been almost idolatrous: 'the market will solve all our problems.' It is now quite clear that it will not.

All this presents a great opportunity for us as Christians to share the good news of God's love in Christ. In order to do so, we need to be firm in our own faith. Advent is a time for that faith to be renewed. We prepare to celebrate once again the great

truth of the incarnation of the love of God in Jesus: 'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.' (John 1.14). We look back to his birth but we also look forward to his coming again in glory and remind ourselves of St Paul's conviction that 'the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us'. (Romans 8.18).

It is only in Jesus that our security is to be found for 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord' (Romans 8.38,39). If we can take to heart this immeasurably good news we shall have something of infinite worth both for ourselves and to offer to those for whom the recession is causing pain and distress.

**God of all grace,  
You have shown us your glory in Jesus Christ  
Whose birth we prepare to celebrate  
and whose coming again we await.  
Renew our advent hope in him,  
For he is our one true security,  
And enable us faithfully to proclaim in our lives  
The triumph of your love in him.**

**Bishop John**

# Dr Denise Inge

## An Interview with the Editor

Denise Inge is a mother, teacher and writer; she is an authority on the 17th century Herefordshire poet and theologian Thomas Traherne about whom she has written 3 books. The latest 'Happiness and Holiness' was published by Canterbury Press in the Autumn of 2008, and is receiving excellent reviews. She was born and raised in Pennsylvania America, amongst Mennonites and in England is a keen gardener who has created four open gardens.

Denise and her family have been in Worcester for a year now; she admits to being a country girl at heart, growing up in rural Pennsylvania where her ancestors have been farmers, teachers and pastors since 1763 (leaving Switzerland at that time for new lives) and she has found the people of the diocese equally warm and welcoming.

'All the churches we have visited have had provision for children, which has been great.' She has two girls, Eleanor 9 and Olivia 4, who are also very happy with their new home in the city.

Denise met John Inge at Lancing College in Kent, where he was chaplain. Denise was a volunteer in the parish of Bexhill, helping her brother with Young Church Union holidays, which Bishop John found himself involved with too. They married when he was working as a chaplain at Harrow School, and have had their share of interesting parishes, both with the closure of the Swan Hunter shipyard when they were in Tyne and Wear and the Soham murders when Bishop John worked in Ely.



The Enthronement has been one of the highlights of Denise's year. She was exhilarated by the unique experience of the past and future coming together on one day. 'The past you know, but the future is coming to meet you; you know you belong to it but are not quite sure what that will mean,' she comments, 'we were just surrounded by love and support.'

Lambeth Conference was also one of Denise's high points this year – she took part in the spouses' conference and was humbled by her courageous peers who struggle to live out their faith amidst danger and poverty. She remarks, 'When we all met together this summer, it was a reminder of what a beautiful thing the Anglican Communion is, and how important it is.'

She is looking forward to a family Christmas, making a gingerbread house, a tradition from the United States, and baking cookies. 'Christmas is the moving simple miracle of God becoming one of us' she says, 'I cherish our children as part of the story of that continuing life.'

# I'm dreaming of a Green Christmas....

Christmas is a time of celebration and no one wants to spoil the fun, however Christmas is also a time of great consumption, and as in the Diocese of Worcester we are committed to Caring for the Earth, it's worth a look at how we can practically do that this Christmas.

150 million cards and packets are delivered each day during the pre-Christmas period. It is estimated that up to one billion Christmas cards (17 for every man, woman and child) could end up in bins across the UK. Seven and a half million Christmas trees are bought and only about one million are recycled. It is estimated that over Christmas as much as 83 square km of wrapping paper will end up in UK rubbish bins, enough to cover an area larger than Guernsey. Here are some tips for a greener and more thoughtful Christmas:

1. The tree – real ones are better than artificial, especially if they are grown on managed farms. If you can, buy a tree in a pot and use it year after year and then plant it out when it has grown too big. Shredding Trees? If you want to buy an artificial one, buy a good quality one that will last for many years.
2. Decorations – encourage children to make decorations and again buy good quality ones and store them well throughout the year.
3. Cards – consider sending an electronic message instead of a card and recycle any that you receive, remembering to save the stamps for charity.
4. Food and Drink – avoid buying goods with unnecessary packaging, and try to buy food wrapped in packaging that can be recycled. Take your 'bags for life' back to the supermarket and don't overfill any of them with things you don't need, saving money and reducing waste. Avoid disposable plates and glasses if you are planning a party.
5. Presents - Buy gifts which are durable and avoid buying (or requesting) presents which rely on disposable parts, including batteries. Always look for alternatives, e.g. a coffee maker that uses a washable filter rather than throwaway paper ones,



or a wind-up/solar powered radio. Look out for unusual gifts made from recycled materials, [www.recycledproducts.org.uk](http://www.recycledproducts.org.uk). Support your local charity shop, buy presents from charity catalogues and look for Fair Trade alternatives.



....and turn off your lights, telly and computer, at home and in church. A computer left on all night can produce enough energy to print 800 A4 hymn sheets.

We are all living in an unsustainable way and Christmas contributes a great deal to our environmental problems, particularly if it is not managed with thought and some restraint. And if you have heard all this before and are living as thoughtfully as possible, please make sure that you are encouraging others to act responsibly, because someone is making a mess of our planet.

Three vicarages across the Diocese of Worcester have been fitted with solar panels following an environmental audit. The vicarages at St. Mark's in the Cherry Orchard, Lindridge and

Amblecote have all had the panels installed, along with new energy efficient boilers, hot water cylinders and additional cavity wall and loft insulation wherever appropriate.



*Solar Powered Vicarages*

# Worcester Cathedral

**Services Daily** (except Wednesday):  
7.30am Matins, 8am Holy Communion,  
5.30pm Evensong (except Thursday when  
Evening Prayer is said).

Tuesday: 1.05pm Prayers for Healing.  
Wednesday: 8am Matins, 8.30am Holy  
Communion, 1.05pm Holy Communion: Friday  
11.30am Holy Communion.

Please note new Contact Details for the Cathedral:  
01905 732900 and [www.worcestercathedral.co.uk](http://www.worcestercathedral.co.uk)

## Sunday Services

7.30am Matins and 8am Holy Communion,  
10.30am The Cathedral Eucharist,  
4pm Evensong, 6.30pm Compline.

Contact the Chapter Office: 01905 28854,  
[info@worcestercathedral.org.uk](mailto:info@worcestercathedral.org.uk)

Details of all events and services can be found  
at [www.cofe-worcester.co.uk](http://www.cofe-worcester.co.uk) or tel 01905  
732900

## Events at the Cathedral in December

### Lessons from Lambeth:

Drawing on their experiences of this year's Lambeth Conference, the Revd Christopher Oxley, Monsignor Andrew Faley and Bishop John Inge will reflect on how we may be challenged by the Advent Christ

i) to listen to the other, ii) to receive the prodigal son, iii) to be a light to lighten the Gentiles.

7.30pm -9pm, Tuesdays 2, 9,16 December in the Guesten, College Green, Worcester WR1 2LH. More information: [www.worcestercathedral.co.uk](http://www.worcestercathedral.co.uk)

### 24 November – 23 December – Exhibition by Robin Holder – Dean's Chapel

### Wednesday 3 December – 7.15pm – Mencap Carol Service – all welcome.

**Saturday 6 December, 7.30pm –  
Worcester Festival Choral Society  
Concert 'Handel's Messiah'**. Tickets  
£22.50-£6 with concessions from Worcester  
Live Box Office – 01905 611427.

**Monday 8 December 7.30pm -  
Worcestershire Life Carol Concert** with  
Worcester Cathedral Choir. In aid of Cancer  
Research.

**Friday 12 December, 7.30pm – 'The Spirit  
of Christmas' Carol Concert** in aid of  
Muscular Dystrophy.

**Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir:  
Vacancies** please contact 01905 732900 or  
visit the choir website  
[www.eyesonme.co.uk](http://www.eyesonme.co.uk).Worcs for more  
information

**Friday 19 and Saturday 20 December,  
7.30pm – 'Son et Lumière'** – A Christmas  
Concert with Music and Light by Worcester  
Cathedral Arts – with Worcester Festival Choral

Society, Worcester Cathedral Choirs and  
others. Tickets from Worcester Live Box Office  
– 01905 611427 and in person from the  
Cathedral gift shop. Tickets £18-£7.

**Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 December –  
7.30pm – Cathedral Carol Service – no tickets  
required**

**Wednesday 24 December – 3pm – Crib  
Service for children of all ages.**

**Wednesday 24 December – 11.30pm –  
Midnight Eucharist**

**Thursday 25 December**  
– 10.30am – Christmas  
Day Eucharist

**Thursday 25 December**  
– 4pm – Christmas Day  
Evensong with carols



### Cathedral Shop -

put your order in now for your 2009  
diary to avoid disappointment,  
and take a look at all the other great  
Christmas gifts on offer too

## Holland House

**Vouchers** are now available. They make an ideal gift ranging in value from £5 - £25 and come tucked inside a lovely card of Holland House.

They can be used to pay for books, cards, meals, drinks and overnight accommodation at Holland House. We can issue them by post after receiving payment and a forwarding address, alternatively - just drop in to collect. They're on sale now in the Holland House bookshop.

**Christian Aid Lunch** on Thursday December 4th. Led by Revd Mark Townsend who led an extremely popular Quiet Day earlier in the year. This year, the theme is St Clement, and begins at 11 am for coffee with Traidcraft Stall, 1pm lunch followed by reflection by Mark, finishing at 4pm with afternoon tea. Price is just £10 per person with all profits to Christian Aid.

**Canon John Everest celebrates the 40th anniversary** of his Ordination on Sunday December 21st at 10.30am in Halesowen Parish Church. The Preacher will be Canon David Tilley, a fellow Curate from Brighton. The Sung Eucharist will be followed by a Finger Buffet in Church. All are welcome. Those coming from outside the Halas Team Ministry are asked to let the Parish Office know on 0121 550 1158, so that there is enough food!

**St Barnabas with Christ Church, Worcester – Music Director and Organist wanted**

We are looking for a talented musician

who will also wish to become part of our church community, open to introducing new styles and contemporary repertoire into our worship as well as the traditional. Are we asking for the moon? If not, please contact Sheila Bright on 01905 29281 for our full information pack.

**Leonie Barrett – a local talented Christian artist** who has been nationally published has produced some beautiful and thought provoking images which can be bought as cards. Her aim within her visual ministry is to share and make available as much of her work as possible to a wide community. To find out more about her and her ministry and [www.leonie.marklew.net](http://www.leonie.marklew.net)

**Liquid Mass** – a new twist on Fresh Expressions, is looking for a worship leader based in the north of the diocese, for the 1st Sunday evening of the month at 7.30pm to help develop fresh, new and exciting music - contact Mike Rutter 01384 634321 or [LiquidMass@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:LiquidMass@hotmail.co.uk)

**The Well Counselling Service, Malvern** is offering a Certificate in Counselling Skills (franchised from St John's College, Nottingham) commencing January 2009 for one year's duration. More information: 01684 573702.

**New Conference Centre** - Lineholt House, Worcester. A friendly personal service for small groups (4 -8). Syndicate facilities . 3 rooms and use of garden. All home cooked and seasonal food. Coffee+ Lunch+ Tea Daily Rate from £15 pp. Contact: Annie Morphy 01905 422007

## DECEMBER 2008

### 24 November – 23 December –

Exhibition by Robin Holder – Dean's Chapel

- 2 Advent Explorations** in the Guesten (see page 6) – listen to the other
- 3 Mencap Carol Service.** 7.15pm at Worcester Cathedral
- 4 Christian Aid Lunch "St Clement"** £10 at Holland House. More information: 01386 860330.
- 4 Great Malvern Priory 'Lunch Box' Christmas Concert – The Children of Malvern Parish School.** 1pm. Bring your own lunch from 12.30pm. Teas and/Coffee available. More information: 01684 561020.
- 6 Worcester Festival Choral Society Concert 'Handel's Messiah'.** 7.30pm. at Worcester Cathedral. (See page 6).
- 6 Crafts for Christmas** at St Michael's Church, Stourport. 10am-1pm. Crafts to buy, refreshments, beautiful modern church open for visits, Morning Prayer 9.45am each session. Everyone very welcome.
- 7 Sunday Afternoon Organ Music at Holy Trinity Parish Church, Wordsley, Stourbridge with Paul Carr.** Organ Music for Advent and Christmas – Leroy Anderson: Sleigh Ride and other festive works by J.S. Bach, Handel, Daquin and Dupré. 3pm.
- 8 Worcestershire Life Carol Concert** with Worcester Cathedral Choir. In aid of Cancer Research. 7.30pm at Worcester Cathedral. (See page 6)
- 9 Advent Explorations** in the Guesten (see page 6) – to receive the prodigal son
- 11 Flower Demonstration Evening.** Flowers and faith for Christmas with Peter Brownjohn at St Mary's Church, Kingswinford at 7.30pm. Tickets

£5 with ALL proceeds to Birmingham Christmas Shelter for the homeless. Tickets and more information: Margaret Penn 01384 270806.

- 12 'The Spirit of Christmas' Carol Concert** in aid of Muscular Dystrophy. 7.30pm at Worcester Cathedral. (See page 6)
- 13 Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir 'A Christmas Celebration'.** 7.30pm at Worcester Cathedral contact 01905 732900 for further information.
- 13 A Pre-Christmas Candlelit Concert** at St George's Church, Kidderminster at 7.30pm. Music, song and massed handbell ringing, St George's Church Choir in concert with West Midland's Handbell Ringers. Tickets and more information: Chris Tew 01746 780788.
- 13 Crafts for Christmas** at St Michael's Church, Stourport. 10am-1pm. Crafts to buy, refreshments, beautiful modern church open for visits, Morning Prayer 9.45am each session. Everyone very welcome.
- 13 "Emmanuel - a celebration of Christmas"** - concert featuring songs, readings and carols with Lexie Stobie (All Saints, Worcester), Nia Price (Gorsley Baptist Church) & Phil Simpson (St Paul's, Worcester). St Paul's Church, Worcester. 7.30pm. Tickets £5 in advance. For info - 01905 358199 or 07801 735501.
- 13 Bewdley Choral Society:** A Christmas Concert under its new musical Director John Swindells: Mozart Mass in C Minor, Benjamin Britten – 'Gloriana' choral dances, John Rutter - 'Sprig of Thyme' folk songs, with orchestra. Tickets £10 (£9 concessions). 7.30pm at St Anne's Church, Load Street, Bewdley.
- 16 Advent Explorations** in the Guesten (see page 6) – to be a light to lighten the Gentiles

### 19-20

'**Son et Lumiere**' – A Christmas Concert with Music and Light at Worcester Cathedral. 7.30pm. (See page 6)

### 22 and 23

**Cathedral Carol Service** – no tickets required. 7.30pm.

**24 Crib Service for children** of all ages at Worcester Cathedral. 3pm.

**24 Midnight Eucharist** at Worcester Cathedral. 11.30pm.

**25 Christmas Day Eucharist** at Worcester Cathedral. 10.30am.

**25 Christmas Day Evensong** with carols at Worcester Cathedral. 4pm.

## JANUARY 2009

**5 Pershore Abbey welcomes Saltmine Theatre** performing their festive comedy - "An Angel's Delight". 7.30pm. Tickets £8/£6 (concessions) by post (with sae) Abbey Office, Church Street, Pershore, WR10 1DT. Cheques payable to "Pershore Abbey PCC"

### Worcester Diocesan News

Editor: Rachel Edwards.  
Contact: Jacci Hunt at The Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester WR1 2JE.  
Fax: 01905 612302 or Email: newsletter@cofe-worcester.org.uk.

Deadline for copy:  
December 19 for February 2009 Issue and January 18 for March Edition

Printed by: Offset 55  
Tel: 0121 707 9441.

The text of this publication is also available in large print on request to Rachel Edwards 01905 20537 or email redwards@cofe-worcester.org.uk.