

Clergy Wellbeing Day, 19th Sept 2023

PROGRAM

Introduction by Bishop Martin

“We are again indebted to Paul Wenham for welcoming us to Ashburnham. It is a place that ministers to us in varied dimensions: through the ingenious beauty of its setting, the quality of the material hospitality we receive, and the confident Christian faith that inspires its life and work.

These dimensions are also characteristic of our work as ministers of the gospel. Laura Steven offers them to us as resources for our refreshment, together with Sam Wells and Jane Williams helping us to reflect on how we live out our calling.

Someone recently shared with me an anxiety about a senior cleric (not in this diocese) as 'having no interests: passionate about the faith, but no interests'.

The anxiety was legitimate. Our vocation as priests and deacons is to be fully alive to all that God is, and to all that God makes possible. I pray that this wellbeing day will give you time, a place, and encouragement for interests in life that will sustain every aspect of your life.”

+Martin

Welcome – by Laura Steven and Paul Wenham in the Great Hall

DoC Head of Wellbeing for Clergy and Families, Laura Steven, and Ashburnham Place General Director, Paul Wenham, offer a warm welcome to this day of rest in the beautiful setting of Ashburnham Place in the rural heart of East Sussex.

We will spend a relaxed morning together, learning from the combined wisdom and experience of Revd Dr Sam Wells and Dr Jane Williams. After lunch, guests can enjoy a stroll around the Capability Brown-designed gardens and lakes, ancient deciduous woodland, take part the optional workshops, have a cream-tea, or receive the ministry of prayer in the on-site Church.

Laura Steven is on hand if anyone wants to ask questions or seek support for their own wellbeing, or that of their family.

At the end of the day, we will gather again in the Great Hall, to share and reflect on what we have received. We will conclude with a prayer and blessing, led by Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer.

As last year, tickets offered on a ‘pay what you can’ basis via Eventbrite.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/diocese-of-chichester-clergy-wellbeing-day-2023-at-ashburnham-place-tickets-487067440827?aff=oddtcreator>

See below for details of talks and workshops...

First Keynote Address: 'Who am I? Living a Holy Life,' Revd Dr Sam Wells

Revd Dr Sam Wells has been Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, since 2012.

Sam has served as a parish priest for 25 years – 10 of those in urban priority areas. He also spent 7 years in North Carolina, where he was Dean of Duke University Chapel. Sam is also Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics at King's College. He is a regular contributor to Thought



for the Day on BBC Radio 4's Today programme. He has published 44 books, including works on Christian ethics, mission, ministry, scripture, liturgy, and preaching. Sam is married to Jo Wells, who is Bishop for Episcopal Ministry in the Anglican Communion. They have two adult children. Sam's keynote address will focus upon the theme of identity.

Second Keynote Address: 'Disciplines of Grace,' Dr Jane Williams



Dr Jane Williams, author, lecturer and theologian, Professor in Christian Theology at St Mellitus College.

Jane is one of the founders of St Mellitus College and has held a number of roles within the college before being appointed to the professorship, she is widely published author. Jane has travelled extensively within the Anglican Communion, lecturing and preaching; she has a particular interest in the flourishing of women. Jane's keynote address will consider practices that enable us all to live in grace.

Afternoon 'Sacred Space': Accompaniment, Listening and Prayer, facilitated by Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer

Rebecca is Director of Apostolic Life for the Diocese of Chichester, she has oversight of the training and assessment of curates, support for curates moving to a post of first responsibility and of initial and ongoing training and support for Training Incumbents.

Rebecca will be facilitating 'Sacred Space' – i.e., accompaniment, a 'listening ear' and prayer, 2-4pm, on-site in St Peter's Church. Open to all, please maintain respect for one another's space and privacy.



Afternoon 'Renewing our Vision through Art' facilitated by Vanessa Chamberlin

Vanessa is a theologian, artist, writer, and spiritual director, based in Hastings, East Sussex. Vanessa spent 15 years working to serve those on the margins of society. Her main interest now is finding ways to be inspired and resourced by a 'biblical imagination'. Art has come to the foreground; alongside painting, she writes, talks, and hosts gatherings and workshops that encourage people to think and live more creatively.



This is a hands-on, outdoor (or studio-based), art workshop; art materials supplied, no prior experience, or confidence is needed. We will use various materials to make art in response to the trees, water, weather, and landscape. We will reflect on how creativity enables us to become more alive to the voice of God.' Max. 10 participants. Venue tbc.

Afternoon 'Radical Rest,' facilitated by Revd Steve Gendall

Revd Steven Gendall was born and brought up in Zimbabwe. After ordination as an Anglican Priest in 1990, Steve was Rector of a remote parish in south-east rural Zimbabwe. In 2002 Steve and his wife felt God leading them to move their family to England, where for 10 years he was a Vicar in the Diocese of Southwark. Steve now serves as Senior Chaplain of Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre, East Sussex, where he has been for 11 years.



Do nothing! Is it possible? After Sabbatical last year Steve found his personal tank was full. He has discovered that the lessons he learnt may be applied to everyday life, resulting in ministering from a place of overflowing. We will reflect on trusting God, rhythms and doing nothing, as we read in Psalm 46, 'Be still, and know that I am God'. Hopefully, the experience will contribute towards our own healing journey. Max. 20 participants. Venue: the Great Hall.

Afternoon 'Homecoming; Remembering Who We Are In God' facilitated by Dawn Mead



Dawn has a background in the creative arts and television. She is now a spiritual director, police chaplain, course assistant at the London Centre of Spiritual Direction, and retreat facilitator, with 30+ years experience in serving the Church and journeying with God. Dawn offers an engaging and ecumenical spiritual direction practice in West Sussex.

This prayerful workshop offers an invitation to return to our core-identity, remembering who we are in God and a sense of homecoming. Based on Scripture and the teaching of St Ignatius of Loyla, with the aim of rediscovering the presence of God in the ordinary and everyday. Max 15 participants. Venue: the Library.

'Taste and See that the Lord is Good' facilitated by Tim Young

Tim taught theology and philosophy for 20+ years in schools and has degrees in theology, art, and sport. He loves to bring generations together to ignite a love for the land.



We all eat. Of all the things that people do, nothing more clearly or regularly communicates the complexity and the tightly woven character of our living than the act of eating. Eating roots stitches us to God, the world, and others. This session explores how we might eat faithfully, find rest in the outdoor and ignite a way of grounded living that helps to nurture the lives that nurture us. It is hand-on, outdoor and in the soil and follows the story of food from the ground to the table and then back to the soil. We will be gathering, preparing, cooking, eating, replenishing, and sharing whilst allowing moments for reflection, prayer, delight, wonder and wholesome conversation. Max 20 participants. Venue: the Kitchen Garden.

'Icons as Invitation' facilitated by Revd Earl Collins



Revd Dr Earl Collins is Vicar of St John the Baptist Hove, and Officer for Continuing Ministerial development in the Diocese of Chichester. Earl is author of *The Glenstal Book of Icons*, and *Meeting Christ in His Mysteries*. He was for many years a Benedictine monk and teaches mystical theology and Jungian psychology.

Christ is the original icon of the invisible God. Earl offers a warm invitation to those familiar with iconography and to those for whom it will be unfamiliar territory. Come and consider how icons might bring together the heavenly and earthly realms, offer a sign of transfiguration and awaken us in prayer to a realisation that we are enfolded in the presence of God. Max 20 participants. Venue: the West Room.

Further Options:

- Take a prayerful walk into the woods. If you are quiet enough, you might spot the herd of resident roe deer.
- Stroll with a friend around Broad Water Lake, the path is an accessible 2km/15-30min.
- Slow down. Find a bench to simply sit, gaze and be still.
- Listen for the 'whisper of God' on the breeze, in the trees and long grass.
- Take a mini-hike to the experimental, straw-bale 'tiny house' in the woods. Built by hand with straw, clay, lime, and cedar.
- Bird-spotting – look out for British woodland birds, including Firecrests, Marsh Tits and Red Kites. Plus, a wide variety of insects and small mammals live within the wildflower meadows.
- Have coffee, cake, or a cream-tea in the Orangery Tea Room.
- Visit the bookshop, next to Reception.



We conclude with a plenary in the Great Hall

to share what we have gathered and gained, and to depart with a shared blessing.