

Gavin & Stacey

The TV comedy series 'Gavin & Stacey' tells the story of growing relationships between people from different backgrounds and life experiences. At times the course of true love runs smoothly at other times there are challenges and obstacles.

One of the much-repeated phrases in the series is 'What's occurring?', a desire to catch up on information and news. This newsletter is an attempt to keep churches informed about the Fit for Mission journey in Ormskirk Deanery. As we embark on the next stage of Fit for Mission there are some parallels with the TV series Gavin & Stacey as we work out what life together might look like. So please read on and find out 'What's occurring!'

Navigation Team



Following on from the Fit for Mission (FfM) votes in October 2023 there are six churches (St John's, Burscough; St Paul's, Skelmersdale; St Cuthbert, Halsall; St Thomas, Lydiate with Downholland; All Saints, Rainford and Christ Church, Newburgh) continuing to explore a partnership based on Fit for Mission. There are also other churches in the deanery who are considering connecting with the FfM journey.

In order to plot our way forward, a Navigation Team has been formed to guide the churches through the next phase of exploration. The Navigation Team contains people representing all the FfM churches and we are considering expanding the membership. The Navigation team is being supported in its work by Revd Canon David Banbury (Change Lead) and Andrea Urquhart (Change Facilitator). The Navigation Team meets regularly and has created a timeline of the tasks that need to be undertaken as we travel forward.

Prayer:



Try running an engine without oil and it will soon seize up, try doing anything for God without prayer and the results will be the same! Prayer must be the 'oil' that keeps everything turning on our FfM journey. We have created a deanery prayer which we encourage all churches to use on a regular basis

Loving Lord, you call us by name to follow. Inspire us to pray for Ormskirk Deanery with open hearts and hands. Give us a spirit of thankfulness, generosity and hospitality that through the outpouring of your Holy Spirit, we may see a bigger church making a bigger difference in every community, for you alone are the source of life in all its fullness. Amen

During Lent there are a number of opportunities for our church members to share together in a simple online form of compline. This short service will take place weekly and the login details are available by contacting: churchestogether0624@gmail.com.

The dates for the service are as follows

Monday 19th February 2024
Tuesday 27th February 2024
Wednesday 6th March 2024

Thursday 14th March 2024
Monday 18th March 2024

The Zoom meeting will open at 8pm for the opportunity to chat, and the service will begin at 8.15pm.

Pyramid Reviews and Buildings Reviews

We are in the process of conducting a series of pyramid reviews (a snapshot of the life of our churches) in partnership with the Cultivate Team in our diocese. These reviews/snapshots are a way of taking note of where we are and identifying our next steps. These reviews/snapshots will be done on a regular basis (6 monthly) as a way of helping us track our progress and help us identify the next part of the journey.



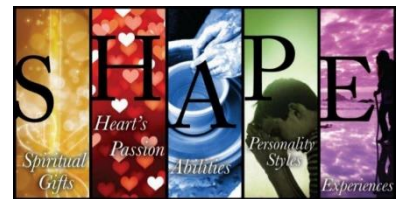
In the same way the buildings review is a way of understanding what buildings we have and identifying how best they can be used to serve God. Please don't see this as the first steps in closing churches. The review is very much focussed on how our buildings can best be used as a resource of mission and community engagement.

Growing and Learning Together



Churches who are bit further on with their Fit for Mission journey have found that two resources have been particularly helpful as they have travelled forward. These resources have drawn together people from a range of worshipping communities and have helped them look at Christian discipleship and God's mission through the SHAPE course and the Cultivate course.

SHAPE: looks at Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experience (hence SHAPE). The course actual does these themes in reverse order (EPAHS) but, trust us, it all makes sense when the course is run!



The course will run for six weeks and will run from w/c 15 April through to and including w/c 20 May. The course is six sessions long as it begins with an intro session (just in case you were thinking there are only five letters in SHAPE!). More details will be circulated very soon.

CULTIVATE:

This course has proved to be very popular with churches and deaneries across Liverpool diocese and the feedback from participants has very positive. Cultivate helps church members identify mission opportunities in their local area and it equips people to play a part in developing a 'bigger church making a bigger difference'. As a result of Cultivate many new worshipping communities and justice initiatives have developed. The course has had a very positive impact in raising the profile of mission in the life of churches who have participated. The dates for our Deanery cultivate course have been pencilled in as being w/c 16 Sept – w/c 11 Nov (with a break for half term).



The Journey Ahead:

There is a Native American proverb 'A journey of a thousand mile begins with a single step', as we make our first steps on this stage of our Fit for Mission journey there is much that still needs to be done and who knows where our exploration may take us. Let us resolve to continue to travel with prayerful hearts, good grace and an openness to the work of the Spirit.

To find out more about Fit for Mission www.Liverpool.Anglican.org/fitformission or use the contact details below.

Every blessing

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