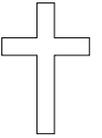


NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Rev Amanda

Amanda is our new Mission Enabler. As in the last Newsletter we are pleased to introduce her and hope to find out a little more about her by asking the following questions and requesting very brief replies

1. Who are you and what is your role in the Deanery?
2. What brought you here -or 'why did you decide to take up the role?
- 3 and 4. a selection of two from these questions:
 - How do you like to spend your free time?
 - What was the last book you read?
 - If you could switch places with anyone for a day, who would it be and why?
 - if you could have dinner with any three historical figures, who would they be and why?
5. What are your hopes for 2026?

Amanda's contact details are: Mobile phone 07544 527649 and email: revamanda.strattondeanery@gmail.com

REV AMANDA EVANS



1. I am Amanda Evans, Mission Enabler for the Deanery and I've been here almost 10 months now.
2. I am passionate about mission and being Church in our communities so this was the ideal role when I saw it advertised at the back of a church!

3 I love walking, growing my own fruit and veg, swimming (though I wimped out of cold water swimming this winter) and travelling - I'm working on improving my very rusty Spanish at the moment as well as training to be a Lowland walk Leader with Mountain Training.

4. My hopes for this year are for us a world to start to move towards peace and a shared sense of humanity - there is a Ugandan expression that says that even one person can make a difference in the world, "if you think that you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito!"

DEANERY SYNOD 12TH MARCH 7PM AT THE BRAY INSTITUTE, MARHAMCHURCH

Your Deanery Reps are asked to attend Deanery Synod Meetings and then to report back on proceedings there - do make sure that they are given the opportunity to do so! The March meeting will concentrate on updating the Deanery Plan with decisions made by the Deanery Implementation Team (DIT) and changes due to progress that has already been made. We have to report regularly to the Diocese and prove that our plans are both fruitful and sustainable. Fruitfulness is measured by our success in increasing

opportunities for discipleship and sustainability is inevitably, connected to finance. Can we pay our way via MMF and is the money being directed towards our plan from the Diocese and the National Church being used sensibly and productively?

Our Deanery has always been at the forefront of innovation, co-operation and development and has until recently been amongst the best 'payers' in the MMF (Mission and Ministry Fund) league tables. All the churches in our Deanery are very rural find it really hard to pay for what we get in terms of clergy and Readers. (Continued over)

Deanery Synod continued..

The only way to make this easier is to increase our membership - again not easy in these days of declining congregations due to an older demographic, which of course gradually reduces numbers and the huge range of ways that younger people can be engaged with other non-church interests. Our plan to increase discipleship includes Rev Amanda (overleaf) enabling new mission initiatives and a series of working groups to investigate ways to attract people to find faith and join our church communities. We are being financially supported in this by Mission Funding

from our Diocese and 'Lowest Income Communities Funding' (LICF) from the National church. We couldn't do any of this without that funding - which does not come out of our pockets. The key to our success is that we work together as a Deanery, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the funding and learning and accepting support from each other.

At this Synod we will be announcing ways that individual parishes and benefices can apply for funding from our allocation of LICF in order to start new mission projects. I urge you to talk to your Deanery Reps, find out what is going on across the Deanery, share your own faith and to get involved
Lesley Booker (DIT Member)

EIGHTEEN MONTHS IN: A RECTOR'S VIEW FROM THE HEART OF THE BENEFICE

Eighteen months into the role as Rector with Oversight, the rhythm of parish life has begun to feel both familiar and ever surprising. What started as a season of introductions, learning names, and navigating inherited patterns has grown into a ministry shaped by trust, shared responsibility, and a deepening sense of place. Oversight ministry has brought its own distinctive texture. Rather than being rooted in a single congregation, the role has required a wider lens—one that sees the benefice as an interconnected whole. Services, pastoral care, governance, and community partnerships now form a tapestry that stretches across villages and worshipping communities, each with its own character and needs. The work is as much about joining the dots as it is about leading from the front.

There have been moments of joy: baptisms that filled churches with young families and schools, festivals (Revels, Easter, Harvest and Advent), that drew communities together, and quiet pastoral encounters that reminded me why vocation matters. There have also been challenges—balancing expectations, nurturing volunteers, and guiding churches through the realities of limited resources and finances and changing patterns of attendance.

Yet these challenges have become opportunities to encourage new voices, empower lay leadership, and reimagine what sustainable ministry can look like. Perhaps the most significant shift has been relational. Eighteen months on, conversations feel less like introductions and more like partnerships. I have become a familiar presence in our schools, community groups, and parish councils, helping the church take its place not only as a spiritual home but as a steadying presence in local life.

Looking ahead, the focus is turning toward longterm flourishing: deepening discipleship, strengthening collaboration across the benefice, and continuing to build a culture where ministry is shared, hopeful, and outward looking. If the first eighteen months have been about listening and learning, the next chapter promises to be about shaping and growing—together.

Ephesians 4:11-12

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

A reminder that ministry is shared: leaders are called to equip the saints for works of service, so the whole community grows.

Revd David Saunders

Bude Coast and Country Benefice

CONTACTS

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WHAT'S YOUR NEWS?

The Deanery is very keen to share news of your activities, successes and challenges. Please contact the editor for inclusion in the next Newsletter.

NEXT EDITION - POUNDSTOCK QUIET GARDEN AND EASTER GREETINGS