

Autumn approaches after a busy summer with lots of baptisms and weddings at our churches. It is such a joy to share the happiness of families on these occasions. As the evenings begin to draw in, we need to be mindful of neighbours who may be anxious about venturing out. Please let us know via the Parish Office if you are aware of anyone who might welcome a visit from our Pastoral Team.

On 3rd September I have a young Austrian student, Laura Schellenberg, coming to stay with me for a month, at the request of her Area Bishop, Frau Greiner. I hope many of you will meet her during her time in the Parish. She will be planning and leading an act of worship in Findon Church towards the end of her stay, on Sunday 24th September at 4pm, and I hope many of you will join us for this, with refreshments afterwards. There will be sign-up sheets in the churches so we have an idea of numbers to cater for! As many of you know, I have been involved with exchange visits and conferences in Bavaria for many years, and we set up a Link with a Lutheran Church in Schney nine years ago. The Minister there, Tanja Vincent, has now moved Parish but a group of people there are keen to continue the link with us. I would very much like to invite them over next year to celebrate 10 years of the Parish Link, so please speak to me or Irene Adams if you would like to be involved. Depending on how many people from Germany show an interest, we would need some families to be prepared to host, as we put up visitors in our homes. A reciprocal visit to Schney the following year could be planned when they are here with us. These visits are a wonderful way to build new friendships and to experience family life and worship in Europe, as well as for our young people providing experience of a different culture and a great way to develop their German language if learning it in school.

Laura will be with us for Findon Sheep Fair, which will be a great opportunity of traditional English country life for her to experience! There are a record number of farms coming this year and in addition to the sheep, I hear some camels are coming! The Friends of Findon Church will have a stall on Saturday – do support them and buy some refreshments there during the day. We will host the usual Songs of Praise with music led by the Salvation Army Band on Sunday afternoon in the marquee, enjoying fellowship over light refreshments afterwards.

There is a Worthing Deanery Confirmation Service in early November, at St Matthew's Church in Worthing and we already have 5 candidates from our Parish preparing to make their baptismal promises for themselves during the Service, which is very exciting! Bishop Ruth will be presiding and will lay hands on each candidate as she prays for God's Holy Spirit to come down on them, after which they will take Communion (the consecrated bread and wine representing the sacrifice made for us all by Jesus on the cross). Please pray for those preparing here, and in other churches in the Deanery, and if you or anyone you know would be interested in taking this next step in their Christian journey, speak to me or Colin.

Every blessing,

Helena