

## From the Diocesan Secretary

### New Life Emerging

*David Pain writes:*

In my kitchen on the windowsill, I am growing herbs from seed. For several weeks, the seeds were hidden in the soil, and now they are emerging. Different herbs are coming out at different times – the basil and oregano first, the parsley yet to emerge.

As we emerge from the lockdown of the pandemic, our life and work as a church and diocese is changing. In some ways that are clear, and in others that are yet to show themselves. For the diocesan team, our job is to be responsive to change taking place in the life of the local church and to serve and resource in ways that are needed for the future and not the past.

Among these we are developing new approaches to resourcing mission and ministry, we are considering what the next steps need to be in digital communications and engagement, we are developing thinking about the service we provide in property and thinking further about what effective governance needs to be in the context of church life.

The Easter story has the central narrative of dying to be born afresh in a new way. The seeds are crucially active while still hidden beneath the surface, and it is their roots that will sustain them in the future. In the dark obscurity of the unknown, new life takes shape.

The summary of our Mission and Pastoral Plan includes a number of discussion questions, one of which is: *Where is God growing new things – and what might need cutting back?*

In coming weeks, we will be preparing draft budgets for 2022 to discuss with the Bishop's Council and ultimately the Synod. The budget is a window onto our priorities – where we put priority in our resourcing. We could also individually and collectively do a budget of our time, or indeed of our energy and attention: what merits our attention now, and what is no longer important?

As we reflect on what is growing in importance, and what is dying back I hope we can attend to the signs of new life emerging as we respond to God as an Easter people.

David Pain

27th April 2021