



THE OLIVE BRANCH

SUMMER 2024

The Association of Friends of Cyprus and the Gulf

Welcome to a first edition of the Olive Branch in a new format. For many years the Olive Branch has been a lovely glossy magazine full of articles and photographs; when it started, it dropped regularly through the letterbox. There were no such things as websites or facebook, or even emails. But we clearly live in a very different world of communication now, and it seemed appropriate to the Friends Committee to review our own communications. This has been particularly prompted by the most recent editor of Olive Branch, Ron Maitland, after ten years at the helm, feeling that it is time to step back. He has increasingly struggled to get original material and found himself scouring the Diocesan website for articles and photos which, by the time the magazine has been printed, are often months out of date. We are hugely grateful to Ron for his years of service and to all who have edited the Olive Branch over its history.

The aim of this newsletter initially will be

- to provide news of the Friends,
- to highlight significant events in the Diocese, and
- to flag up particular concerns for prayer.

It will initially be produced three times a year and the Committee will keep it under review.

The main way to keep in touch with Diocesan news is through the Diocesan website:

<https://www.cypgulf.org>

*Next Zoom prayer for
the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf*

*Wednesday 29 October 2024
at 2pm (GMT)*

Comings and Goings



At the AGM at All Hallows by the Tower on St Swithun's Day, Monday 15th July, Anne Lloyd stood down as Secretary of the Association. As Secretary, she has been at the hub of the Association of Friends and we are grateful for all the love, time and energy that she has given to this. Anne is

happy to stay on the Committee.

We were also delighted to welcome Bishop Sean as our new President and Jenny. +Sean presided and preached at the Eucharist as well as giving his initial first 50 days' impressions in his Diocesan Report.

John Worton-Griffiths stood down from the Committee. He and Jenny have been regular members of the Friends and served for over twenty years as *swallows* to and from Kyrenia; they were a regular presence at the Diocesan Synod.

Sue Parks offered to represent Exeter Diocese until the new Bishop of Exeter made an appointment



We were delighted to welcome Linda Smith as our new Secretary at the AGM. Linda went with Ian to North Cyprus in 1986, was Churchwarden of St Andrew's, Kyrenia for 14 years and continues to visit regularly.

Zoom Prayer for the Diocese

One of the core aims of the Friends is to *pray for the work of God and ministry throughout the Diocese*. This has been endorsed by Bishop Sean, who joined us when we gathered this way in June. JMECA have included +Sean's prayer requests on their website. A Zoom link is sent out a week before.

Consecration and Enthronement of +Sean

Friends were present for both the Consecration and Enthronement Service in St Christopher's Cathedral in Bahrain and the Enthronement Service in St Paul's Cathedral in Nicosia.



Grant and Angela Murray with Chris Butt were representing the Friends in Bahrain in what was a very impressive service conducted in four languages (Arabic, Tamil, Hindi and English) representing the cultural diversity of the Diocese. In addition to Archbishop Hosam Naoum of Jerusalem, who led the service, the Bishops of Europe, North Africa, Hereford and Bishop Anthony Poggo, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion were present as Consecrating Bishops and there were special greetings from His Majesty the King of Bahrain, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the USA.

Ian and Penny Calder formally represented the Friends, with several other Friends present, at the moving Enthronement Service in St Paul's Cathedral, Nicosia at which +Sean gave his charge to the Diocese. The diversity of our Diocese was once again apparent: The Rev'd Deborah Moorgas, from South African as Bishop's Chaplain and the Rev'd George Vidiakin from Russia serving as Deacon; it was wonderful to see ecumenical partners and a Muslim Imam.



Coming Events for the Friends

The next event is the Northern Gathering of the Friends in the beautiful City of York, kindly arranged by Ron Maitland for Wednesday 16th October. As before, we will be meeting at the Bar Convent which is a gentle walk from the Railway Station. Southerners are very welcome, but the aim of these regional gatherings is to make it possible for Friends living in different parts of the country to come together, for worship and prayer for the Diocese, to meet with one another, to share meals together and see something of the city. For those staying overnight, Ron organizes a venue for a curry on the Tuesday 15th evening.



A Gathering will be held on Tuesday 11th March, 2025, in either Gloucester or Birmingham (tbc).

Full details of these programmes will follow, but please put the dates in your diary.

Obituary Notices

We were sad to hear the news of the deaths of Rev'd Michael Houston, formerly Chaplain of St Andrew's Kyrenia. *"He was such a lovely person, and worked so hard during his time here, to bring unity and harmony to our community."* Also, of Hazel Pond, who with Ivor lived and worked in Bahrain for nearly thirty years. Hazel taught at St Christopher's School and other schools. While Ivor played the organ and piano at St Christopher, *"Hazel did just about everything else!"*

May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Our condolences go out to June Houston and Ivor Pond in their sad loss.

Subscriptions

With our AGM comes the start of our membership year. Financial support enables us to give regular donations to our Bishop's Discretionary Fund: this year £1000.