

St Peter and St Paul Church, Dinton

The Romanian Orthodox Church &
The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Dinton

We have been praying for our beautiful church of St Peter and St Paul to be used more as a place of prayer and worship and God has answered our prayers in a most unexpected fashion. The Romanian Orthodox community have been praying for a place to worship for their congregation gathered from Aylesbury, and Wycombe.

Fr Julian was driving on the Lower Road, saw our church and called in. He was welcomed by Rosemary and from there we have discovered that God is working among us.

The Romanian congregation wishes to worship on the Sunday mornings when we are not currently using the Church, which is primarily the second and fourth Sundays each month, on Tuesday Evenings and for the major festivals – some of which (Christmas and Easter) they mark with overnight vigils. Our worship patterns seem to fit together like a jigsaw.

The community is overseen by an experienced priest in Oxford and they have a contract with an Anglican Church there so we can replicate written agreements. Indeed, a formal Legal Agreement is being prepared currently which outlines all the relevant aspects of our working together such as cost sharing, storage, church availability, building and grounds maintenance and so on. The Agreement will be initially for five years with annual reviews built which will ensure full clarity in our ongoing relationship.

The Romanians have brought in icons (holy pictures), candle holders and some other items but the space for our worship will be respected. They are eager to assist with the care of the church and churchyard and indeed, carried out a very thorough clean of the church for us on Easter Saturday which was much appreciated. They are keen to join in fundraising for a sound system and are also keen to pay their way as guests and pay a service and usage charge to cover additional costs we will encounter.

The PCC met with Fr Julian and four other members of his congregation and we shared a time of prayer together for Ukraine and especially the plight of refugees, many of whom are in Romania. Fr Julian shared about how his mother is welcoming refugees.

Following a discussion, we enthusiastically agreed to move to a formal relationship which will be developed as previously mentioned utilising our Diocesan Legal specialists to draw up the Licence.

We have been welcoming the Romanian congregation to worship as visitors since 27th March and this flexible arrangement for now will enable us to ensure that the partnership will be good for both of us before we sign formal agreements.

Please pray for this exciting development. It reminds us that the church must be diverse because humanity is diverse; it must be one because Christ is one.

Revd Nigel Featherston & Revd Canon Phil Groves

