

OnnyCamlad Parishes

**Rev Norman Morris, Rector of Wentnor with Ratlinghope, Norbury, Myndtown, Lydham,
More & Snead, & Priest in charge of Churchstoke & Hyssington**

01588 650244

David Jelves, Reader 01588 620434

Jon Price "Fresh Expressions"

Community Evangelist 01588 620693

The Rector writes... What is the Church of England? This may seem a very obvious question that everyone should know the answer to! But like a lot of simple questions there is more to it than meets the eye. Back in June/ July we had our "Church looks Ahead" process: services, led by the Local Ministry Team, and very good they were too, culminating in a Ploughman's Supper at Lydham Village Hall on Friday 4 July. Some 60 people attended from all the parishes. More details about the evening are recorded elsewhere in the magazine. One of the many questions that arose concerned "identity" – identity of the church, and, in particular, "the Church of England."

What is the church? This can be answered in terms of a "building". However, as was emphasized by our "Church looks Ahead" process, "the church", is also, more dynamically, "the people of God" and the "body of Christ" – the body of local Christians. Christianity is a social religion.

"The Church of England" is one church amongst many (regrettably we do not have "one Church") BUT it is unique in England because it is the National Church, defined territorially rather than doctrinally, although it does have foundation documents like the Scriptures, the Creeds, the Book of Common Prayer and the 39 Articles of Religion.

Everywhere in England, and in the Welsh Marches, is within a parish; and everyone is a parishioner. Of course, not everyone is a Christian or a Churchgoer but, because we have a National and Established Church, it means that "the church" is "a broad church" encompassing a wide range of views, opinions, and interpretations which rather mirrors the pastoral care of the C of E which extends to all sorts and conditions of men and women.

Anglicanism is the worldwide Anglican Communion made up of churches all over the world, including other countries of the United Kingdom, which historically have developed from the C of E. Space prevents me from saying any more but perhaps "the last word" might be that the C of E, like all Christian bodies, tries to commend and bring into being the Kingdom of God proclaimed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY SERVICES

SUNDAY 29 AUGUST TRINITY 13

10.30 Benefice Holy Communion More (Presentation of the Local Ministry Review by Rev Celia Rees)

6.30 Evening Prayer Norbury

SUNDAY 5 SEPTEMBER TRINITY 14

8.00 Holy Communion Lydham

9.15 Holy Communion Hyssington (Julia Francis)

9.30 Family Communion Churchstoke NEW

10.30 ALL AGE SERVICE & Holy Communion Ratlinghope (David Jelves)

11.15 Holy Communion Norbury (Julia Francis)

3.00 Christening Churchstoke (Milo Tonks-Lawson)

6.30 Evening Prayer Wentnor

BANNS (3) Stephen Bryan Hudson (Bishops Castle) & Diane Mary Wood (Wentnor)

SATURDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

WEDDING: James Lea Stuart Gilchrist & Lucy Rebecca Overton BC 1.00pm

SUNDAY 12 SEPTEMBER TRINITY 15

8.30 Holy Communion Ratlinghope

9.45 Holy Communion Wentnor

10.00 Morning Praise Hyssington

11.15 LYDHAM HARVEST FESTIVAL Preacher: Bishop of Hereford.

1.00pm Harvest Lunch (Lydham Village Hall)

11.15 Morning Praise Churchstoke (Jon Price)

6.30 Evening Prayer Norbury

SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER TRINITY 16

8.30 Holy Communion Wentnor

10.00 SNEAD HARVEST FESTIVAL: Preacher Rev Maurice Young

11.15 Brownie Centenary Service Churchstoke NEW

11.15 Holy Communion More

4.00 “God’s Acre Celebration” Ratlinghope

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

WEDDING: 1.00pm Stephen Bryan Hudson & Diane Mary Wood Wentnor

SUNDAY 26 SEPTEMBER TRINITY 17 “Back to Church Sunday”

8.30 Holy Communion Norbury

9.45 Holy Communion Myndtown

9.45 Morning Praise Ratlinghope (Lay Led)

11.15 MORE HARVEST FESTIVAL: Preacher: Rev Dr John Daniels, Director of Local Ministry

11.15 Morning Praise Churchstoke (Julia Francis)

2.00 Christening Churchstoke

2.30 Hyssington United Service

6.30 **“Back to Church” Evening Service** _Wentnor

SUNDAY 3 OCTOBER TRINITY 18

9.15 Holy Communion Hyssington (Julia Francis)

11.15 Morning Praise Norbury (Julia Francis)

11.15 Methodist Holy Communion Churchstoke St Nicholas (Ian Waugh)

6.00 RATLINGHOPE HARVEST FESTIVAL Preacher: Jon Price

Wednesday Morning Prayer 8.30am

All are welcome to this short weekly act of worship from all the parishes. 1 Sept Hyssington; 8 Sept More; 15 Sept Wentnor; 22 Sept Myndtown; 29 Sept Snead; 6 Oct Ratlinghope.

AT THE CHURCHES

The **Local Ministry Team** runs a **Prayer Line** which is like the School Snow Line. You phone the first number and we phone several volunteers to pray for any worrying situation you feel you need help with. Prayer request number: contact 0782 7750 665. The Local Ministry Team members are Ann Remfry (Ratlinghope) ; Anita Bright (Wentnor & Myndtown), **David Hardham** (Ratlinghope), Oliver Goode (Norbury), Trish Macmullan (Snead); Janet Wilcoxon (Lydham & More), David Jelves (Churchstoke), Jon Price & Rev Norman Morris. Margaret Wallsgrove (Hyssington) attends. Rev Dr John Daniels is the new Diocesan Local Ministry officer.

The LMT has been operating for **four** years now and has done a huge amount in the parishes. We should be grateful for all the Team has done! It will continue, though there may be a few personnel changes. We always welcome new members especially at this **four** year stage. “Calling out” is being called for so please look around and if you think someone young or old would be a good potential team member, please put her or his name forward. If you wish, talk to an LMT member beforehand about what’s involved but **NEW FACES** would be welcome, please!

Norbury Village Hall AGM & Management Users Cttee Meeting Tuesday 14 September 7.30pm Norbury Village Hall

Suggested dates for the autumn PCC meetings are as follows. Please could PCC Secretaries see if these dates are suitable, please, so we can confirm them?

Monday 13 September Hyssington PCC 7.30pm Cefn Farm

Wednesday 15 September More PCC 7.30pm The Rectory

Thursday 16 September Lydham PCC 7.30pm Upper Broughton Farm

Friday 24 September Norbury PCC 7.30pm Lea Farm

Monday 27 September Ratlinghope PCC 7.30pm Coppice Farm

Monday 18 October Churchstoke PCC “Oakfields”

Monday 25 October Wentnor PCC The Rectory
Friday 5 November Snead PCC 7.30pm Lower Snead?
Date? Myndtown PCC TBA

More monthly Draw: August: 1st Prize: Mike Hemmings; 2nd Prize: Emma Bullock
3rd Prize: Miriam Lennox

The sale of harvest produce will be held on Tuesday 28th September at the Crown in Wentnor on their Fish & Chip night, proceeds divided between the churches in Bosano, Uganda and St. Peter's, More.

Ratlinghope 200 Club Draw: May £20 Trevor Sheard; £15 Joan Evans; £5 Lucy Cooke: June £20 Lavinia Hardham; £15 Jane Paterson; £5 Lucy Cooke: July £20 Ann Remfry; £15 John Fildes; £5 Rose Jones

ROUND-UP OF EVENTS: Over the past couple of months we have had a large number of parish events which have all been hugely enjoyable and which have raised funds for the churches. Our grateful thanks to all those who worked hard to make them a great success! Generally, the weather for these events has been very good. **On Friday 25 June, a** Lydham "Wine & Cheese Party" at "Parkside", in aid of Lydham Church, with Barclay's Bank march funding, raised over £500 (more below), while the Churchstoke Strawberry Fayre on **Saturday 26 June**, run by the PCC and the WI, raised over £1,000.

Lydham had a Table Top Sale (more below).

Neil Hird writes about Lydham Church's "Wine, Cheese and Pate evening" - "At 'Parkside', the home of Janet Wilcoxon, the Lydham church's organist, a very successful wine, cheese and pate evening raised £581 towards the cost of essential repairs to the church's east gable. Barclays under their national £ for £ match funding grant scheme, which helps rural community projects, has agreed to donate a matching sum to this very worthy cause. The PCC thanks the Ladies of Lydham who provided excellent fare on the evening and all those who supported this successful event".

Lydham's Table Top sale: Doris Wright organized a successful Saturday morning table top sale, cake stall and raffle in Lydham Village Hall which raised £342. The funds will be divided equally between Lydham Village Hall and More and Lydham churches. Many thanks to the stall holders and all who supported this worthwhile event."

On **Friday evening, 9 July**, a Concert "WORDS AND MUSIC FOR A SUMMER EVENING" for Ratlinghope Church took place at Leasowes Bank Farm, Ratlinghope – our grateful thanks to John and Francis Williams for holding this 8th such Concert which featured this time, Richard Duncan - recorders - and Bryan Holland – harpsichord - while Richard Beaumont and Val Littlehales presented stories and poems.

On a sunny **Saturday morning 10 July** a joint Lydham/Crowgate Garden Fete took place at Upper Broughton Farm, which included a Coffee morning stalls and a car boot stall which raised in excess of £300. Our thanks to Alex and Jonathan Leeke and their helpers who organized this occasion.

Sunday 11 July The Annual Parish Cricket took place at Norbury Football Stadium and an excellent day's cricket ensued, with teams from Ratlinghope, 2008 champions (2009 was a washout), Wentnor, Myndtown, Linley, Norbury & Snead. Eventually, after several exciting games, Ratlinghope and Wentnor went forward to the final with Ratlinghope emerging yet again as winners! Memorable this year was a fine batting performance by Nastasha De Vito Hird, only weeks after giving birth to her first child, and several youngsters who showed much batting and bowling promise for the future!

On Sunday 18 July, a highly successful Upper Onny Country Show took place at Norbury Village Hall & grounds which benefited Norbury Village Hall and Norbury School to the tune of £3,000! Magnificent effort!

Saturday 24 July, a coffee morning took place at Adstone Farmhouse for Wentnor Church which raised over £325. Our thanks to Penny and Tim Bevan for hosting the Adstone event and to the Wentnor PCC, and beyond, who put in the organization for the morning.

Saturday 25 July the Hyssington Annual "Open Church & Churchyard Afternoon" was held with over 50 adults and children attending the service and having tea afterwards. At the service David Jelves spoke about his visit to the Oberamagau Passion Play.

Snead's SPECIAL DAY was on Sunday **3 August** when the **Annual Snead Duck Races** took place from 3.00pm on the River Camlad close to Snead Church. There was a Plant Stall, Cakes, Teas and much more as well! On Sunday evening there was a Festival Evensong in Snead Church at which the Preacher was Canon Dick France. The day was an excellent one in every respect and raised c.£1,000 for church funds.

Happy retirement to Janet Peacock who has run the Wentnor Shop for five years and who is now retiring. Her cheerful and friendly manner will be much missed and we are very grateful she took on and ran the Shop which is a wonderful resource to have! Please give Tracey and her team from The Crown, who are taking over, every support!

Finally, my apologies if I have missed anything out – will be rectified next month!

The Upper Onny Country Show

Sally-Anne Jones reports that the first Upper Onny Country Show was a tremendous success, attended by people from both near and far. Many people have commented on the sheer delight in seeing so many smiling faces taking delight in the vast array of demonstrations and attractions. The committee wishes to take this opportunity in thanking all who supported the show. We are delighted to report that the event raised in excess of £3000, which is to be divided equally between the planned New Village Hall and Norbury Primary School. The committee will be holding a full debrief meeting in September where the future of the show will be discussed and its accurate financial report given.

a full debrief meeting in September where the future of the show will be discussed and its accurate financial report given.

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Benefice Book Group: Barbara Kingslover “Lacuna”: Saturday 16 October at Asterton Stables.

The **Bible Study Group** Meets at the Rectory, usually occasional Fridays - new members always welcome! Currently studying St John’s Gospel at the Wentnor Rectory. Contact: The Rector 01588 650244.

Saturday 11 September at Norbury Village Hall 9.30am to 12 Noon. The **September Art Day** (Activity morning) for younger children, older ones are welcome to help. If the weather is fine, a picnic lunch could be taken on the field. This year we hope to have the new Diocesan Young People’s Advisor, Esther Gregory, with us. Cost £1 per child £2 per family. Drinks & biscuits included. Further details will be available at the beginning of September. Contact Rev Norman Morris 01588 650244 to book places

Saturday 11 September: The Shropshire Historic Churches Cycle Ride. All our churches in our Shropshire & Welsh parishes will be taking part (and you are of course welcome to take in our Welsh parishes too!) This annual sponsored Cycle Ride has been going since it started in Suffolk in 1982 and has since spread to many dioceses and counties. It provides a wonderful opportunity to visit country churches by bike or walking (or horse, if you like!) according to a route of your own choosing anywhere in Shropshire. All our churches will be open and available to visit. Sponsored monies are shared 50/50 between the Historic Churches Trust (which makes small grants to the costs of repairing churches. We have benefited hugely, including last year at More) and a church or chapel of your own choice. For many years Joyce Yapp did her cycle ride and raised £9,000 over the years. Latterly, Joy Martin and Marion Denwood have cycled for More & Lydham – so let’s try and have a few more sponsored cyclists, please, young & old! Be in touch about details 01588 650244.

Tuesday 28 September Harvest Produce Sale at the “Inn on the Green” for More Church & Busano Parishes (Uganda)

Saturday 9 October Coffee Morning at Upper Bent for More Church 10.00 – 12.30pm

FORWARD NOTICE: Friday 22nd October and Saturday 23rd October 2010 at Kingsland Hall, Shrewsbury School, Shrewsbury

Please remember us when you sort out your wardrobe as we would love any unwanted good quality clothing to sell at this event. Please contact Jane Sayer at sayer@stedment.co.uk to arrange collection. Your help is much appreciated. Last year Dress for Less raised £16,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support in Shropshire.

2010 Harvest Festival Dates

Sunday 12 September 11.15 Lydham Harvest Festival & Harvest Lunch (Lydham Village Hall) Preacher: The Bishop of Hereford ...*early because of September weddings & the Michaelmas Fayre*

Sunday 19 September 10.00 Snead Harvest Festival Preacher: Rev Maurice Young

Sunday 26 September 11.15 More Harvest Festival Preacher: Rev Dr John Daniels

Sunday 3 October 6.00 Ratlinghope Harvest Festival Preacher: Captain Jon Price

Friday 15 October 6.30 Myndtown Harvest Festival Preacher: Rev Jo Evans

Sunday 17 October; 3.00 Hyssington Harvest Festival Preacher Canon Julia Francis

6.30 Wentnor Harvest Festival Rt Rev Michael Bourke, former Bishop of Wolverhampton
Thursday 21 October 2.00 Norbury School Harvest Festival
Sunday 24 October 11.15 Churchstoke Harvest Festival & Harvest Lunch Preacher Norris & Kathy Boyland; 6.30 Norbury Harvest Festival

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO The Stockings retired from Hyssington Post Office which marked the end of the Post Office there; a Churches Together BBQ was held in Clun; Clungunford Tower had major repairs which included a 150 ton crane hoisting lead onto the roof; Hopesay was pursuing plans for wildlife sanctuary; Rev Dick France was inducted as Incumbent at More for the “Wentnor” parishes; “Framework for Faith” was well underway in the Deanery

FROM THE REGISTERS

Christenings: Rohays Elizabeth De Vito Hird Snead Sunday 25 July

Weddings:

Ian Edward Mason & Satarupa Alice Bradley Myndtown Saturday 24 July
Jason Francis Price & Angela Clare Norton Bishop’s Castle Saturday 31 July
Peter Bevan & Sarah Perks Lydham Saturday 14 August

Funerals:

Monica Vince (68) Wentnor Monday 16 August
Edna May Hampson (65) Ratlinghope Tuesday 17 August

Myndtown Combined Parish Council

The Parish Council now has a new web address www.myndtown.org.uk In due course it is hoped that the website will provide information relevant to the Parishes. It is also hoped to set up a business directory on the site for local businesses, be they plumbers, electricians, B&Bs, gardeners or anyone running their own business locally. If you would like your contact details and maybe a link to your own site in the directory, please send your details to philip@myndtownwines.co.uk. The bigger the directory the better for everyone and it is an ideal opportunity to have a web presence, so please do contact us.

Myndtown Combined Parish Council 2010 Meetings: Norbury Village Hall 7.30pm (Mondays) 6 Sept; 8 Nov.
Contact: Parish Clerk Mrs. L Thomas 01588 650509.

Age Concern Lunches for those 60 & over at The Crown Inn, Wentnor, 12 Noon for 12.30pm

SECOND WEDNESDAY in the month –

NEXT LUNCH Wednesday 8 SEPTEMBER

to book your meal please ring Vera Brookfield 01588 650230 BY 3 June

AND third Tuesday in the month,

NEXT LUNCH Tuesday 21 SEPTEMBER

please ring Margaret Cooke 01588 650280 to make a booking

Table Tennis! Open to all! Anyone wanting a good game! Often taking place Mondays at Norbury Village Hall 2-3pm for details contact The Rector 01588 650244

Local public transport?

DIAL-A-RIDE Wentnor to Bishops Castle & back every Friday pick-up 10.00am Wentnor Church & Wentnor Shop (can stop at Norbury) return 12.45pm from Tuffins BC.

SHROPSHIRE LINK ring 01743 210368 – need to make a booking a day or two before.

Find out what is going on across the **Hereford diocese** at the website at www.hereford.anglican.org - have a look at the Noticeboard. For details of service times at the Cathedral, please telephone 01432 374212 or visit the cathedral website www.herefordcathedral.org.

Norbury & District WI: Thursday 9 September “Hypnotherapy/Relaxation”; Speaker Virginia Smith
Hostesses: Dilys Owen, Jayne Godsman & Pauline Phillips; Flowers: Julie Spille; Competition: A Hint to relax at Home.

Lydham, More & Snead WI: Thursday 16 September; The Way to the Town; Speaker: Peter Francis;
Competition: Four Shrewsbury Biscuits Teas: Margaret & Marion & All; Visitors invited – ACWW Raffle.

Onny Valley Social Club: Usually meeting at Norbury Village Hall; .Social gatherings & outings for the over-fifties: well worthwhile – do join! Contact: Pat Varcoe 01588 650204 New members welcome. 4 September AGM;
DAY TRIPS 15 September Welshpool Canal trip & Meal; 26 November Abbey Cwm Hir Xmas Decorated House

Churchstoke Mothers Union: Contact: Olive Fitzhugh 01588 620698 The **Mothers Union** has a scheme to provide holidays for families in need – any recommendations, please contact the AFIA Holiday Organizer at the Mother's Union 01432 373306 or email: mothersunion.hereford@surefish.co.uk

Churchstoke "Over-Sixties": Meet alternative Wednesdays 3.00pm Churchstoke Community Hall contact: Jay Frank 01588 620081

Age Concern: please contact **Mrs. Janet Brandon** on 01588 650232 – your Age Concern Parish Link – who will also be pleased to help.

FLOWERS/CLEANING

Wentnor

5 & 12 & 19 September: Mrs. A Turner & Mrs. J Sheard

26 September: WEDDING Mrs. P Bevan & helpers

3 & 10 October: Mrs. M Rowson & Mrs. B Jones

17 & 24 October: Mrs. R Jones & Mrs. L Middleton

31 Oct & 7 Nov: Mrs. R Preston & Mrs. P Bevan

Ratlinghope

5 Sept: Mrs. C Buxton & Mrs. K Hughes

12 Sept: Mrs. Ann Littlehales & Mrs. D Owen

19 Sept: Mrs. S Betton & Mrs. S Pinches

26 Sept: 12 Sept; Mrs. J Mcnamara & Mrs. S Cusack

3 Oct; Mrs. J Brandon & Mrs. V Harley All help welcome for Harvest decoration

Norbury:

September: Mrs. A Gibbons & Mrs. D Jones

October: Mrs. B Corfield & Miss O Pinches

Lydham: Sept: Mrs. J Preshous October: Mrs. P Brayford:

More Sept: Mrs. S Screen October: Mrs. Diana Pritchard

NOTICEBOARD

Want a Magazine?

Know someone who would like one? Please encourage sales & distribution! Please contact Margaret Cooke 01588 650280 (Shropshire & Snead parishes) or Jay Frank 01588 620711 (Churchstoke & Hyssington)

Myndtown Combined Parish Council Contact: Parish Clerk Mrs. L Thomas 01588 650509.

Wentnor Stores: The Post Office OUTREACH service is OPEN on TUESDAY 9.00AM – 11.00am - offering personal banking, Car Tax & Euros- please support our village shop WENTNOR STORES as much as possible!

Run up the Flag! Here's an offer to everyone in the Wentnor Group of parishes and beyond - every man, woman and child - those living in Wentnor, Ratlinghope, Norbury, Myndtown, More, Lydham, and Snead - mark your birthday, pet's birthday, wedding, anniversary, exam success, passing your driving licence, whatever, by having the Union Flag or St George's Flag flying from the Wentnor Flagpole - pay only £1 to the Benefice account which supports all the churches. The flag could fly for you! Any day of the year! Contact Rev Norman Morris 01588 650244.

Bus enquiries: **0870 241 2 216** National Rail Enquires: **08457 484950**

Hall Bookings: Norbury 650660 Anita (or if need be Rev Norman Morris **650244**) – **Lydham 638737** –

Hyssington Village Hall: 01588 620197 - do use our halls!

Norbury Village Hall: Tables, chairs, hostess trolley, crockery, & boiler available for hire 01588 650660

The Rector is always available to discuss Wedding and Christening dates at any time

Office Hour: Saturday morning at The Rectory 9-10am. Tel: 01588 650244.

House Communion is available to anyone who cannot easily get to Church.

Photocopying at The Rectory: 5p per sheet – reductions for longer runs.

Bishop's Castle Dial-a-Ride and Community Car scheme: Available for individuals or groups regardless of age or disability. All journeys must be pre-booked. Volunteer drivers and escorts urgently required for this worthwhile community service. Contact: Adrian Varcoe or ring 01588 638350.

WENTNOR ANNUAL FETE
OLD RECTORY, WENTNOR

“Shropshire’s Tuscany”
BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 30 AUGUST
1.00PM

Hog Roast, Stalls, Bric a Brac, Newly New, Books, Homemade cakes, garden games, Dog Show, George’s Pony Trap rides, delicious Teas. Plants, Produce, Children’s Corner, Bouncy Castle, Grand Draw, and much more! All welcome!

RATLINGHOPE’S FESTIVAL OF CEREMONIES
A Celebration of Weddings and Christenings
9th - 10th JULY 2011

Were you christened or married at St Margaret’s Church, Ratlinghope?
We are looking to display associated items: wedding dresses, family photos, christening gowns, memorabilia, interesting tales etc. relating to wedding and christening celebrations at Ratlinghope Church over the decades.

We would like to hear from you should you be able to contribute to our festival.

Please contact Margaret Cooke (tel: 01588 650280) or Janet Brandon (tel: 01588 650232).

**Proceeds to: St Margaret’s Church, Ratlinghope &
The Rainbow Unit, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.**

Why be an average person?

The average person uses over 300 plastic carrier bags per year. Why be average? Nearly every plastic bag that has ever been used since plastic was invented still exists somewhere probably in a landfill site or in one of the world's oceans!

Working with Shropshire Waste Partnership under the Wasteless Society’s ‘Zero Waste Place ’ drive natural fibre shopping bags are now available for Bishop's Castle's shoppers. The Society has distributed cotton bags to householders, arranged for Severn Hospice to have cotton bags and jute shopping bags will shortly be available at the Town Council's monthly Farmers' Market.

When you go shopping you do not leave your purse behind so please do not forget to also take a natural fibre shopping bag. Plastic bags that are not disposed of properly can be dangerous to animals. Many end up in the planet's oceans where they are mistaken for food and can kill when eaten by fish, animals and birds. After the unfortunate animal dies and decomposes the plastic bag will be released back into the environment where it can continue to be harmful. Please do not be average! Use a natural fibre shopping bag.

Neil Hird of the Wasteless Society

Recently a rep from **West Midlands Ambulance Service** pointed out that they now use Ordnance Survey map references to locate rural properties. The advice is for everyone who lives somewhere rural to put the OS map reference by the 'phone so if you have to ring for an ambulance in an emergency you can give this information.

A little introduction. By Canon Julia Francis

I look forward to working in the ministry group in the Onny Camlad parishes. I have just completed 14 years as Chaplain amongst Deaf People - and yes this did involve my learning and speaking Sign Language in order to lead worship and make pastoral visits. It has been a rewarding aspect of my life and I have cherished all that has been a part of that ministry.

I had the overall responsibility for the chaplaincy: devising special services; arranging visits; running events; attending training conferences etc; pastoral care; hospital visits; along with the more ordinary forms of worship and sadly funerals. It also involved all the admin work for the running of the chaplaincy. I have particular enjoyed being part of the Deaf Community in the Hereford area and the establishment of a revived Deaf Children’s Society.

Here in South Shropshire I was admitted as a Reader in the Pontesbury Deanery and since I began training in 1983 I have been very busily employed as a Reader in the Minsterley group- then 3 (now known as the Stiperstones Group of 5) churches.

My deployment will bring me into the churches where our ancestors worshipped in former times. Graves and headstones record numerous Francis family names. Particularly in Lydham and More. My late father-in law having attended More church as a boy himself.

I hope this gives those of you who will meet me in the next weeks a little glimpse into who has now come

amongst you, in terms of my ministry background. I look forward to getting to know all of you and making many new friends.

“In the sweetness of friendship; let there be laughter and the sharing of pleasures. For in the little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed” K Gilbran.