



# TEAMword

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3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023

The Thirteenth Sunday After Trinity

## **Time to Say ‘Goodbye’**

This is a bitter-sweet issue of our occasional parish-wide newsletter *TEAMword*. Of course it’s always gratifying to come together as three congregations to celebrate the Eucharist together. Today, however, we do so to say “Goodbye” and “Godspeed” to our Assistant Priest (HfD) Canon Charles Masheder and his wife Felicity. Over August Charles and Felicity have spent a Sunday morning in each congregation so the farewell process is well under way. But today Charles presides for the last time in our parish and is joined by all of us, clergy and laity alike, who have enjoyed and benefitted from the Masheder’s presence over the past four eventful years.

Despite the many months of the pandemic and lingering Covid-19 crisis Charles’s ministry in worship and pastoral care has flourished, and we all are in his debts as we consider the overall *bounce* that his ebullient personality has given to our common life and witness.

Thinking about the impact of his priestly service it will surely be that aspect of his contribution, which is nothing less than the sharing of *himself*, that will endure in our individual and corporate memories. For that, we have ample reason at this morning’s Corporate Communion to give ‘thanks and praise’!

The Revd Dr Charles Miller, *Team Rector*

## **The Changing Faces of Ministry**

At a summer-time ‘wine and dessert’ which I hosted for our ministry team and spouses in early August I was struck by the number of clergy and licensed/authorized ministers who serve in our parish. At the same time I was pleased by how freely and happily they all engaged with one another—a sign of mature and generous spirits committed to the common life of the Body of Christ.

Hearing about the shrinking of clergy numbers in so many parts of the Church we ought to bear in mind how fortunate we are.

At the same time, there is flux in our ministerial company. We are aware of that today as we bid farewell to Canon Charles and Felicity Mashedor. But there is more change afoot still. Our 'local' bishop, **Henry Scriven**, with his wife **Catherine**, who have shared our ministry and life for well over a decade, will be leaving the parish to re-settle in Chipping Norton. Their presence through the years has given us a more global sense of the Church as their very international ministry and travel has enriched and coloured the insights and perspectives they have shared. Fortunately, Bp Henry will carry-on as one of the honorary assistant bishops in our diocese so we probably haven't seen the last of him in his purple pursuits! At time of writing particulars are not wholly clear, but what *is* clear is that we will miss them and that their new community and parochial home will be blessed.

Early in the summer our Parochial Church Council (PCC), with my full endorsement, voted to support the application of warden **Linda Hobbs** to begin training as a Licensed Lay Minister. Linda has shown exemplary service as a parish warden and now, in her final year of service, she transitions from that firm basis of Christian service toward licensed public ministry. Linda's strength and commitment lay in the sphere of pastoral care (as many of us well know) and it is supposed at this early stage that her future LLM ministry at St Helen's and in the parish will concentrate in that sphere. The diocese has changed the content of the LLM training so we await news of what it involves from Linda herself as she gets 'stuck in'. Doubtless in future issues of *TEAMword* we will hear more. Please pray for Linda (and her supportive husband Kelvin) as she begins this exciting new stage in discipleship and ministry.

### **Permission(s) to Officiate**

The Diocese of Oxford now requires that all clergy seeking a PTO meet with the incumbent and complete a *pro forma* detailing the proposed terms of ministry in the parish. The aim is to clarify mutual understandings and to provide a base for annual review. Over the course of the summer I have met with *almost all* of the clergy with PTO to complete the above referenced form. It has been good to have such one-on-one time with colleagues and gratifying to hear of their pleasure in sharing the ministry with those of us who constitute the formal 'Team'. We depend heavily on our free-willing ministerial colleagues to keep the show on the road'. So, 'Thank You!' to you all.

## **First Communion Preparation**

An on-line First Communion course of preparation is being led by Canon Gordon Oliver, a retired priest in the Rochester diocese who is also the father of St Helen's parishioner Jonathon Oliver. Gordon led a successful course two years ago and I appreciate his willingness to lead a larger group again – this group aiming to include children from both St Nicolas and St Helen's. The aim is to celebrate the children's First Communion in October.

## **Notices**

**StHelen's@Lunch** - come along to the Wandering Kitchen, OX10 7PQ, near Berinsfield, from 12 midday on Wednesday September 20th. If you need or can offer a lift contact Susan Scott, 01235 522960.

**Junior Church** will be held on the following Sundays in September 3rd, 17th, 24th.

**Mothers' Union** meet on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September in St. Michael's Church, 10.30 am for a Eucharist with Paul Smith who will officiate and preach. Members of the parish are very welcome to join us. Refreshments will be available after the service.

**A big "thank you"** to all who contributed cakes for the "Children Heard and Seen" residential at Hill End Camp. We arrived at Hill End with a car full of goodies, in pouring rain, but were greeted by lots of happy smiling faces. The weather improved over the weekend and the children had a fun weekend together.

**CIA Church Twinning visit to Argentan.** This year our Normandy twin town is celebrating 20 years of church twinning with us. They have invited 15 people to come to Argentan to commemorate this link from Thursday 12 October 2023 to Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Visitors will stay in host families (unless otherwise requested) and a varied programme will be prepared for us. French language is not required. Ideally, transport is by private car (sharing spaces) using the Portsmouth to Caen ferry. For more details and booking, please contact: Eileen Bontempelli at [epkbontempelli@gmail.com](mailto:epkbontempelli@gmail.com) or on 01235 526331.

**Faith Forum.** The autumn series lead by the Team Rector begins today at 9.15 am in the Parish Centre Hall. The series title is 'Faith in France: A Sabbatical Retrospective', and today's session: 'The Glory that was Bec: The Benedictines of Bec & the English Church'. The breakfast bar opens at 9 am (volunteers to lay out the breakfast bar are needed for the first Sundays of October-December). If you can help please let the Administrator know: [administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk](mailto:administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk).

**Ride & Stride.** The Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust annual Ride & Stride is on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September. Volunteers needed to cycle or walk, and welcome people to church and/or sponsor them. For further details see *The Window*, or [www.ohct.org.uk](http://www.ohct.org.uk).

**Holy Communion  
St Nicolas' at 8.00 am**

Readings: Romans 12.9-end; Matthew 16.21-end

**OUR PARISH LEADERS 2023-24**

**Our new Wardens are:**

St Helen's: Linda Hobbs, David Pope

St Michael and All Angels: Louise Heffernan, Joyce Kelly

St Nicolas: Eluned Hallas, Paul Rast-Lindsell

**Treasurers:** Susan Read (Parish, and St Helen's and St Michael's) and Jenny Metcalfe (St N)

**Deanery Synod Representatives:**

Miss A Green

Dr H Glennie

Ms S Scott (also Deanery Lay Chair)

Miss A Scott (also a Diocesan Synod Representative)

Mrs E Hallas

The Revd R Rutherford, Clergy Representative

**Elected PCC Representatives:**

Mrs K Burland (St Helen's)

Mrs S Read (St Helen's)

Mr J Clare (St Michael's)

Dr G Lewis (St Nicolas)

Mrs J Fishpool (St Nicolas)

Dr J Metcalfe (St Nicolas)