

## Vicar's Report

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to the worship / rota team and the PCC's and everyone in the congregations for your prayers and support when I was signed off sick in July – December and allowing me a slow phased return. 2023 wasn't an easy year for anyone but the worship team and PCC's pulled together and with the help of Rev Alma and Bishop Robert were able to offer service cover so there was as little disruption as possible. Thank you to everyone.

I will say, I am now well, I am not ever going to be who I was before I was signed off and have, with the help and support of the churches adjusted accordingly. I know we hope to hold more events this year as the year progresses to enable fundraising but also social events to happen.

We do need to look outwards to help the community encounter Jesus. We have planned a few more Churches Together Services on The Green which are well attended. 6<sup>th</sup> June we look to commemorate and remember D Day 80 years and at the end of summer a pet service on The Green. We also hope to hold across the benefice – Skittles Evening, Bat Watch and Wine, Quiz Evening, Harvest Supper, Concerts, Cuppa and Cake, Knit and Natter, to name a few things. Also the Friends of St Eadburgha's wish to hold some events this years and we're grateful for all they do to aid us in looking after St Eadburgha's Church.

Fundraising happens in most churches - St John's is fundraising for their roof and St Michael's a lift and we hope by the APCM the lift will be in place. St Michael's and St Eadburgha's now have Card readers – although St Michael's seems to be temperamental at the moment.

We've asked for a meeting with the Diocesan Secretary and we're also being joined with the new Archdeacon of Worcester at the meeting to hear about going forward and finances – I'm sure there are a lot of questions people have and it'll be a bit like grill the vicar! Being serious we are struggling to pay our parish share and have for a while, but hopefully the meeting will help and inspire us moving forward.

We've also had the Glebe land come back up as a proposal by the Diocese due to a developer making an offer. As a PCC and Village we objected to this and pray the right conclusion to this for Broadway village.

We're fortunate to have a bible study group which is a drop in and at the moment they are looking at Bishop Robert's book – Making Christ Visible.

We go out to the village with a Coffee Club at Number 32 and also the Foodbank. These are valued in the community.

Outreach to the community is important and so how we are disciples of God. How God transforms our lives. If we are rooted in prayer, have a missional mindset, generous heart, welcoming and led by the spirit we can't go far wrong.

We've held an All Soul's service, Remembrance Service, had memory baubles on the tree at Christmas, Carol services in church and on the green, school nativity in St Michael's. Walk of Witness, Service on the Green on Good Friday, Easter Morning at Broadway Tower, Service celebrating the parish, Mothering Sunday Service with Bishop Martin and Brownies and Guides, to name some of the services held that appeal to the wider village as well as regular Sunday Services and Occasional Offices – I'm sure most of us remember the Wedding last year where we came and took away some of the beautiful flowers.

We've sadly had members of the congregation been seriously ill and some members died – we pray that they rest in peace and light perpetual shines on them. But we do grieve our loss.

We hope and pray that this year with the lift at St Michael's some members who have struggled to attend church feel able to come back and join us.

I would like us to continue to reflect on what might need to stop or change in order that new things can grow, and to continue to reflect on how we invite and welcome people to join us – in worship, in discipleship, and in fellowship. It is good that we work together as a benefice, including some shared worship on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, and as we engage with the deanery planning process we need to think about how as parishes we all together can best engage with and serve the communities of Broadway and Wickhamford.