

Three Churches Newsletter

June 2018

St John Baptist, Hugglescote
St Christopher's, Ellistown
St Mary's, Snibston



Signs of the Kingdom:

It's been almost a year since my ordination as Deacon and starting ordained ministry with you here in Hugglescote, with Donnington le Heath, Ellistown and Snibston. The year has flown by and I have had many experiences which have been formational both for my ongoing ministry and for me in my own personal walk with God, my own discipleship and spirituality. It's been a very affirming, restorative and enjoyable time and I look forward to a further 2 to 3 years serving you as Priest (although one is always a Deacon and I fully intend to retain these aspects of vocation in my Priestly role).

My ordination as 'Priest' is now rapidly approaching (Saturday 30th June 2018 in Leicester Cathedral at 4.30 PM – all welcome) which is a good incentive to take stock of where I am in my development and discern where God is taking me forward. Of course, I'm not doing this alone. Georgie and I constantly seek to identify what God is doing in our lives and marriage. As a church and community, we also seek to recognise the Kingdom breaking into the life of the parish we are all called to minister. It's these 'God instances' that the Diocese wishes to see and hear about, especially accounts of the growth of God's Kingdom in our particular contexts as we are 'Shaped by God' in our lives and communities. As I approach my ordination as Priest I've been specifically asked to reflect on the Diocese's focus and give account of the signs of the Kingdom of God that we have witnessed breaking in over the last year and especially recount those that have given me the most joy. I'd like to share some of those reflections with you.

Incarnational Ministry is very important to me. It's a key aspect of my calling and indeed an intrinsic part of my personality to be with and be a part of a community. It's why my white stole (which I will wear when I am ordained) depicts Egon Schiele's painting of a Church amongst a mass of rooftops. It speaks to me of the churches place in the community and it's very much what we are about as a Parish.

The church depicted is actually a hospital chapel, and this speaks to me powerfully of my previous employment in the NHS as a Podiatrist or Chiroprapist, and all that my previous career has given me to take into ministry. It also speaks of how the church can be a place of healing and wholeness in a community and in the lives of individuals. I have written before of how this is the case for Georgie and I (Newsletter – September 2017) as we find our place amongst you and settle down as members of this fellowship and community.

One of the earliest experiences of the Kingdom of God breaking in, which I love to share, was at the end of our first week in our House in Ellistown. I said to Georgie I was going over to the Working Man's Club for a drink. 'Why are you going over there?' she said, 'Because I'm a working man!', I replied. I received warm welcome, chatting with the locals and regulars and enjoying a pint together. The next time we went in together I had my collar on. We received an even warmer welcome and had drinks bought for us. When we took Olwen in (not her natural habitat to be fair) we discovered she knew just about everyone there and had baptised some of them! It spoke to me very much of the Churches place in this community and how the kingdom of God is touching people's lives here. Being accepted as part of a community and welcomed in is a key experience of the Kingdom of God and very much an example of God manifest in this place. The Ellistown Christmas lights switch on switch on was a similar experience and I was beginning to find people I knew in the gathering after only 6 months in parish and welcoming them into what we were doing.

Of course, a large part of our outreach is focused on serving the community. Establishing new relationships and enabling social cohesion are important aspects of our mission. Such ministry brings me great joy, especially when we hear accounts such as the 2 mothers who were overheard saying 'we only got to know each other because we met at Community Cinema', or when a mother tells me 'we can only come to Community Cinema because my disabled son shouts out. In regular cinema they ask us to leave'. I reassured her that in our Church run Community Cinema we welcome all and celebrate such enthusiasm and joy, it's encouraged. It sounds to me a lot like the Kingdom of God breaking in. It's no wonder such people continue to engage with what Church is all about. Messy Church and Family Services are other examples of places where we gather and share life together, which we hope in time becomes life in all its abundance. The sense of community in our churches, the pastoral care, friendship and inclusiveness have been particular examples of the kingdom of God alive amongst us. In this sense we are the kingdom of God, Christ manifest in our midst, in our loving care and concern one for another... in our joyful and fun interactions as well. The fun and laughter we share and the tears and sorrows we together bare are a profound witness to God's love and grace. In many ways its surprised me how quickly we have been taken to people's hearts and how

quickly we have reciprocated that love and friendship. I've discovered its different as a Vicar, but I hope the collar is not an obstacle to deep friendship and care. We value it immensely.

It has been a privilege to be a part of the ministry to those in particular need, especially sharing in the support the church has given to Rowena Campbell through her illness. It was a privilege to minister to her, to give the address at her funeral and share with you in the celebration of a life well lived. I knew on sitting back in my pew after giving the eulogy that I was then free to grieve and commemorate her passing myself. As I looked over her coffin to the those deeply grieving themselves and sharing in the joy of her hope the tears of sadness and joy flowed mingled down as we belted out the 'Lord of the Dance' together. John Price's funeral was even harder for me, and his passing still grieves me profoundly. Like Rowena, my sense was that he was a giant amongst us (in more than stature) and I was so looking forward to knowing him better over my years here. His short illness and sudden death was a shattering blow and a sadness I still share with you all. The kingdom of God is a place where we share and carry each other's burdens, as a priest and deacon I hope I can continue to play a part sharing these burdens, in the knowledge that I am often only a heartbeat away from where the ones I'm ministering to are themselves. It is the Lord's sustaining presence that helps us through.

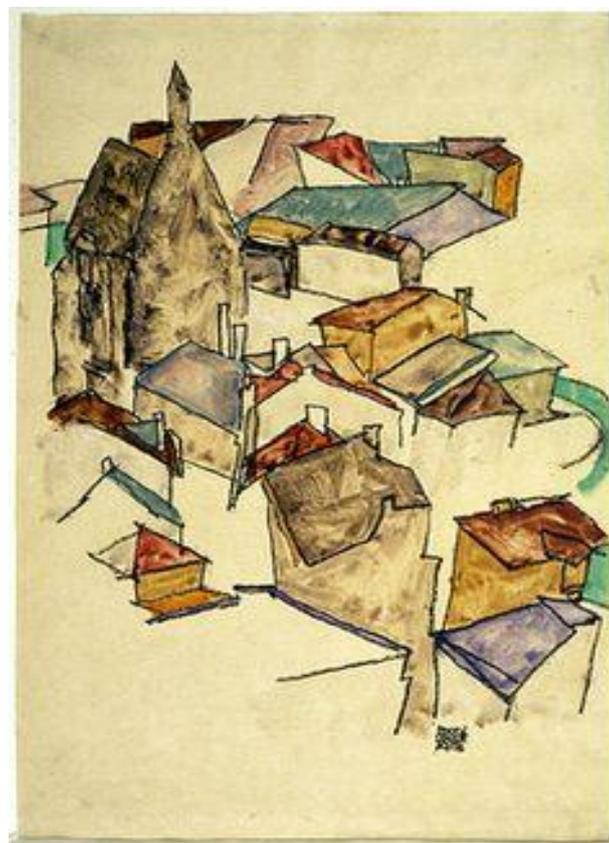
Not many of my fellow deacons have found themselves in a context with such a variety of ministries to get involved with and experience. The school's ministries, messy church and of course Jacobs Ladder are especially good examples of such variety. Being able to get onboard with such an exciting fresh expression and see the Kingdom breaking in through such ventures is particularly exciting. It is of course great fun, but serious fun. Missional fun. It speaks to me of how the kingdom of God is a place of risk taking and pushing the boundaries.

The extraordinary dedicated and committed service is also a profound expression of God working amongst us. Humble Christian service always is. Its challenging to my faith and ministry to witness so many of you worshipping through your devotion to all the jobs that need to be done to keep the show on the road. The work that does on is often unheralded. It's my particular job as Deacon to notice. Let me assure you it has not gone unnoticed. I give thanks to God for this expression of the kingdom of God being worked out amongst us.

When you work closely with people you begin to appreciate their gifts and talents. As Olwen and I have worked out our Training Incumbent / Curate relationship I've really appreciated the considerable gifts that Olwen brings to the party. Her preaching speaks of the kingdom, especially motivating us to act, her experience, discernment and insight identifies where God is moving and in turn informs our getting on board. Her prophetic prayer especially is I think, an underappreciated gift, which I have been privileged to benefit from. Recently she prayed for me and for a deeper sense of healing and wholeness in my life, the deeper sense that we all need however sorted we may appear, and I was proudly grateful that she poured out her love and concern for me in such a way. It's a healing and wholeness that we all need and which God has for us in deeper and deeper measure, if we will only allow his grace to permeate the dark and damaged recesses of our heart. It's a healing and wholeness which is

already being worked out amongst us and it is my hope and prayer that this is increasingly the case as we journey on together. The kingdom is profoundly a place of healing and wholeness. Its where God most wants to work... in intimate relationship with each and every one of us as individuals and together. I look forward to seeing how it plays out over the next few years.

Rev. Chris



Diary for June 2018

- Fri. 1st June
7:30 pm Darts Evening at Hugglescote Social Club
- Sat. 2nd June
2:00 – 4:00 pm Nearly New Baby Items Sale at St. Christopher's
- Sunday 3rd June – 1st after Trinity**
8:00 am Holy Communion, St. John's
9:30 am Family Service at St. John's
3:00 pm Messy Church at St. Christopher's
- Mon. 4th June
7:30 pm Messy Church Meeting at the Rectory
- Tues. 5th June
10:30 am Interment of Betty Hornbuckle's Ashes St. Mary's Churchyard
6:00 pm Evening Prayer at St. John's
7:30 pm Deanery Synod Meeting at Hugglescote
- Thurs. 7th June
9:30 am Holy Communion, St. Christopher's
3:00 pm After School Club at St. Christopher's
- Fri. 8th June
1:30 pm Interment of Derek Bird's Ashes St. John's Churchyard
- Sat. 9th June
11:00 am-4:00 pm Diocesan Day Out at Brooksby Hall
2:00 pm Open Garden at 2 St. Faith's Drive, Coalville
- Sunday 10th June – 2nd after Trinity**
8:30 am Holy Communion at St. Mary's
9:30 am Parish Communion at St. John's
11:15 am Parish Communion at St. Christopher's
- Mon. 11th June
7:30 pm Explore Group at St. Christopher's
- Tues. 12th June
2:00 pm Mothers' Union in the Broughton Lounge
6:00 pm Evening Prayer at St. John's
7:00 pm Hugglescote Remembers meeting
- Weds. 13th June
10:30 am Holy Communion, St. John's
- Thurs. 14th June
3:00 pm After School Club at St. Christopher's
- Sat. 16th June
3:00 pm Ellistown Community Cinema at St. Christopher's
- Sunday 17th June – 3rd after Trinity**
8:00 am Holy Communion at St. John's
9:30 am Family Communion at St. John's
11:15 am Parish Communion at St. Christopher's
3:00 pm Holy Baptism at St. John's
6:30 pm Jacob's Ladder at Hugglescote Social Club

- Mon. 18th June
7:30 pm Explore Group at St. Christopher's
- Tues. 19th June
6:00 pm Evening Prayer at St. John's
- Thurs. 21st June
9:30 am Holy Communion & Coffee Morning at St. Christopher's
3:00 pm After School Club at St. Christopher's
- Sunday 24th June – St. John the Baptist**
8:00 am Holy Communion at St. John's
9:30 am Parish Communion at St. John's
11:15 am Parish Communion at St. Christopher's
3:00 pm Messy Church, St. Christopher's
- Mon. 25th June
7:30 pm Explore Group at St. Christopher's
- Weds. 27th June
10:30 am Holy Communion, St. John's
2:00 pm Ellistown Afternoon Social Group at St. Christopher's
- Sat. 30th June**
4:30 pm Chris' Ordination at Leicester Cathedral

FUTURE EVENTS

- Sunday 1st July – 5th after Trinity**
Time T.B.C. United Service for Chris' celebration of his first Eucharist at St. John's followed by Lunch at Hugglescote Community Centre

FROM THE REGISTERS

- BAPTISMS at St. John's**
20th May Alice Lily Burchell age 4 months

- WEDDINGS AT ST. JOHN'S**
5th May Duncan James Prime and Megan Laura Weston
26th May Karl Darren Halewood-Muse and Gemma Muse

- MARRIAGE BLESSING AT ST. JOHN'S**
12th May Paul Leslie Chaplin and Tammy Wilcock

- FUNERALS**
At St. John's and Hugglescote Cemetery
24th May Sheila Chandler age 84 years