

Rector's Rambles

Final Edition

Dear Church Family,

I am writing this with just a month to go until my retirement, so it comes with gratitude to you all for our fellowship in the Gospel over the last 19 years. One of the casualties of Covid-19 restrictions has been the lack of farewells for so many. This is true in my case, the farewell service (for which I have already had people say they would have attended) and shared meal afterwards, will not happen. On Nov 15th I will say goodbye to those who are in church (assuming public worship is not restricted by then) and those who join the Zoom service that evening, but this will be very restrained and only involve a small percentage of you. The other thing that will be strange about my departure is that my family and I will not be moving straight away, having permission to stay in the house for up to a year.

Although I will be around and will enjoy bumping in to many of you and hearing your news, I will keep well away from Church Services as I do not want to hinder your journey in a new direction. When a Church of England minister retires they surrender their license to minister and are not permitted to be involved in leading any service (including baptisms, weddings and funerals). To resume ministry they need "Permission to Officiate" which is not normally requested, or granted, within 6 months of retirement. So please don't be offended if you have a special service that you would like me to return to take, when I say I cannot do so.

One of the advantages of not having a big farewell is that it allows the church to look forwards rather than backwards when you get together. This is why the Church Annual Meeting has been arranged for Nov 18th (7.00 pm). Archdeacon Sam has kindly agreed to attend the meeting and help with discussions about planning for the future. There are two reasons why it is so important that everyone who possibly can attends, either in presence or on Zoom.

- 1) The start of an interregnum is an opportunity for everyone to contribute their hopes for the purpose and direction of the church, as you start to consider what qualities and style of ministry you would hope a new minister possesses.
- 2) You will be aware that the Church of England, along with most charities, has suffered a serious drop in income through the pandemic. I don't have any inside information, but I am guessing that this is going to influence the deployment of clergy. Against this reality it is important that Archdeacon Sam meets a church that shows itself to be enthusiastic and active.

One important function of the Annual Meeting is election of Wardens and PCC. Due to the formation of the Conventional District at St. Wulstan's we have a large number of vacancies on the PCC and as Deanery Synod Reps. It is important that all aspects of the life of the church are represented on the PCC, so would you be prepared to stand? Application forms will be on the Church website or from Ann Mansfield or myself.

Alison and I will miss being part of the Holy Trinity Church Family and look forward to hearing all the great things that God will be doing in and through you.

With love and prayers
Michael Woodmansey