

RECTOR'S LETTER

News from the Quantocks Villages Benefice!

As I am sure many people will know, Reverends Craig, Steve and John have all moved on in their ministry and the Benefice is currently in what the church calls interregnum – being without a Rector who has overall responsibility for the running of the 6 parishes concerned, one of which is St Margaret's Spaxton. So I have volunteered to keep the seat of the 'Church News slot of the newsletter' warm until a new Rector is appointed, whoever he or she may be.

For this edition, I thought I would like to let you know a little bit about me and my husband, Rev Martin Jones and our respective backgrounds, as we have been in The Rectory in Church Road for almost 18 months. Martin has the title of Associate Vicar, his role includes taking Sunday services in all six churches, preaching, at this time of year leading Lent groups, giving pastoral care as appropriate, hatch, match and dispatching and leading school assemblies each Friday afternoon. Martin also works 10 hours per week for the NHS as a Mental Health chaplain in Taunton and Bridgwater.

I was licensed as a Reader in the Church of England last October in Wells Cathedral and I take monthly services in our benefice, including Morning Worship and Evensong and shared the leading of the Carol Service on Christmas Eve. I work full time as a Team Secretary for the National Deaf Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (NDCAMHS) in Taunton and enjoy learning British Sign Language from my Deaf colleagues.

Originally from Bromsgrove in the West Midlands, Martin had a long career in the Royal Navy followed by several years in engineering before sensing God's call to ordained ministry. Following a parish curacy Martin then worked as a full time hospital chaplain in a busy, acute hospital on Merseyside. For my part, I had worked for 36 years for the Midland, then HSBC Bank. I was brought up and lived in Crosby, Liverpool (yes, I'm a Scouser!)

As most of our family live in Cornwall, my brother lives in Gloucester and I have family near Exeter, we had in the back of our minds that we would probably like to move to be nearer to everyone when we retire – but after my Mum died in 2012, God started to move in mysterious ways! Martin began to feel a shift in his ministry back towards parish life, but not feeling he should give up chaplaincy completely, hence our 200 mile move to this beautiful part of God's creation. Sometimes it feels we have been here longer than 18 months although conversely, it has gone so quickly it feels like only yesterday that I arrived here (two days before Martin and our furniture) with a camp bed, kettle, microwave and the cat!

Thanks to so many people warmly welcoming us to the Quantocks, Martin and I are both excited and about sharing our respective ministries with everyone.



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