

It's been busy! Rev'd Julie James, Ruth Coates and I attended the Deanery Synod at the Church of the Ascension on Monday. We sat very politely through another presentation – this time on Diocese Transformation led by Damian Herbert, the Diocese Transformation Director. As ever I just like getting to know more people and was especially pleased to meet the new Deanery Secretary. It's good to know that Maria Toman has been re-elected as Deanery Chair. One representative gently reminded us prayer should be central to all we do.

And as ever I was reminded of that great saying of Martin Luther – I have so much to do today I shall spend 3 hours in prayer. Gulp!

In all the talk of New Worshipping Communities we are constantly reminded that churches are about people not buildings – I can testify to this from the gales of laughter from the splendid All Age Worship team as they rehearsed for last Sunday's service. And then on the day, there were different gales as the Chancel turned into the Sea of Galilee and across the water came Jesus to the frightened disciples. The theme was – Be not afraid. And it touched me deeply for there are times when one does fear: for our faith, for our churches. Surely that fear – just like the storm – abates if we are part of a team that works together, laughs together, praises together – and keeping together we keep steady.

A warm affirmation of an interest in churches is that we have two visits this week from different U3A 'Looking at Churches' groups – one from Ledbury who thoroughly enjoyed their visit to All Saints, Hollybush on Tuesday and many thanks to Rev'd Julie, Manda Simons and Shirley Williams for giving up their time to welcome and show them round. I'm actually finishing this letter after an afternoon with a really large group – over 35 – from Bromsgrove who had had a super meal at the Duke of York beforehand. I was very thankful to have Rev'd Julie and Ann Ward with me, and I think I can safely say they had a thoroughly interesting time. Andrew had mown a viewing path around the church and lots of great conversations went on about churches and history and heritage in the warm sunshine.

Sadly we didn't have any take up from a Rider and Strider – but we did welcome to St Faith's, a visitor who introduced himself as a pilgrim and who explained he once walked from Tewkesbury to Rome, so the journey that weekend to St Faith's was a bit of a doddle. It reminded me again always to have those lamps trimmed for you never know who might come by. Last weekend it was a sheepdog and its owner who appeared just as I was closing up, and I was pleased to show them round.

My sincere thanks to those who gave so very generously to the Gift Day for the Parish of Berrow with Pendock. The outcome is well clear of £2000 and most donations will attract GiftAid. Always the topic of finance is sensitive – my pension doesn't make it possible to claim GiftAid which is why I do all my giving through the collection as GiftAid can be claimed on collections. And the extra 25% that can be reclaimed makes a real difference to totals.

There used to be a very effective advertisement on TV saying that 1 in 3 would have cancer, those statistics now are closer to 1 in 2 people. All the charities associated with Cancer research and support are very worthy, but perhaps none more than Macmillan Cancer Support and it is great to know that this year again we shall take part in the wonderful Coffee morning event at the Church of the Redeemer on Friday 29 September between 10am and 12 noon. As the parish magazine says on page 12 – join

us for a chat, cuppa and a cake. May I put out a special plea to the splendid Benefice cakemakers – of splendid cakes – that donations of these would be very warmly welcomed.

I hope that you will take the opportunity to look again at the splendid kneelers in the Church of the Redeemer. I must confess somewhere in the Seventeenth Century my attention and interest in the History of the Church of England wavered. I was distracted briefly by a quick romp (maybe that should be a yomp) through a History of the SAS and then settled to Elizabeth Bingham's beautifully illustrated book – 'Kneelers, The Unsung Folk Art of England'. I discovered there is a super website –

<https://parishkneelers.co.uk/>

And I have realised that kneelers are an endangered species. Kneelers locally from Hereford Cathedral and St Michael and All Angels Ledbury are recorded; but none at all from Worcestershire. I feel that must be corrected and I am grateful to Bob James who has responded to my request for help to record them. It was lovely to see Roy Pritchard at the service there on Sunday so that he could identify the ones sewn and designed by his beloved wife Ruth.

The Fish and Chip Supper and Fun Quiz in aid of the Restoration Fund for the Wall is at Eldersfield Lawn School from 6.30pm for a 7pm start, with an ending time of about 9.15pm, on Friday 6 October. Food is included in your ticket, do bring along liquid refreshments. I pointed out to Andy Holt that 6 October is St Faith's Day – which would have been a good quiz question! The work has been done on the wall, but I am quite sure their finances and indeed planning has taken a real pounding, so do support them.

I do hope you always look at the scrumptious recipes that feature faithfully in the Parish Magazine – and I notice this month's – on page 17 – Poached Pears with Blackberry Compote is especially recommend for the second half of September

This Sunday 24 September, there is a service of Holy Communion at Birtsmorton at 10.30am, followed by Evensong at Eldersfield at 6.30pm. Next week - my goodness and we will be in October on its 1st day - Eldersfield will have a communion service at 8.30am and then there will be Café Church at 10.30am at Berrow Village Hall.

Each Friday, we meet at 7pm for a catch-up chat, and settle to the short said service of Compline at 7.15pm. Do join us! Details of the Zoom meeting room are below and the service sheet is attached to this email;

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8106840135?pwd=RDhGellxYjczTFArK3NoMnpwczhhQT09>

Meeting ID: 810 684 0135

Passcode: Berrow

Dial by your location

+44 208 080 6592 United Kingdom

+44 330 088 5830 United Kingdom

Hey, little robin, move over – the little frog is full of derring-do. I have been very proud of the grey water system we have used for the garden all summer but with the recent rain we have deep buckets around to catch the deluge. I noticed a leaf in one and then looking closer saw it was the little frog valiantly doing breast stroke. My life, quickly he was rescued and left to recover – very picturesquely I must say – on a large brunnera leaf, and stayed long enough for a photograph so he could also appear on my Instagram! Hey ho!

Fondly, Elisabeth Rambridge (Churchwarden of Berrow with Pendock)