



St Mary and St Michael's, Trumpington: Reflection for the week commencing 27th September 2020

As Mandy announced at the APCM, my curacy in Trumpington has come to an end, successfully, and the Bishop has 'signed me off' as competent to do whatever ministry seems right now. Well, that was a pleasant surprise! Seeking a new pattern of ministry is what I shall do in the months ahead and of course it might take me away from Trumpington. I felt it was a good time to take advantage of the opportunity afforded me by these weekly reflections that Mandy has been sending out – to share my own reflection on my time with you.

It has been a joy to be here. That is the overriding feeling I have: and maybe it would help if I said why. For I think you could, in turn, reflect on the reasons in a very positive way.

You welcomed me in to your congregation and community from the very first. Given my background, that was not necessarily going to be a given, such are the ways of the Church we know and love. But you did. Warmly and, from my viewpoint, whole-heartedly. It speaks of an approach to your faith, to Christians, and to inclusion, that reflects Christ's approach to the people of His time. You shared your hopes and fears, your joys and sometimes your sorrows with me, for which I give thanks, too.

So why do I say it is an opportunity for reflection?

I believe you should build on your positive attitude. Take time to pray and think through what it means to you, individually and as a community, to include people who are not the same as you. Put yourself in others' shoes and ponder anew how people feel when they are made welcome. Think about what it might mean to someone in the congregation who is wrestling with difficult aspects of their humanity, and how it might help to feel safe to explore in an accepting congregation.

Consider whether there is any extra knowledge you need, and how to gain it. Make a plan to do so. And wonder whether, at the end of all your reflecting, there are concrete actions- or ways of relating to others - that we should all agree to put in place. Maybe you could encourage another person whose vocation is to serve in the church, yet whose acceptance is uncertain? Or maybe there are ways of drawing in seekers, doubters, visitors or new arrivals who are looking for a safer space than most. Or maybe there is something you or I simply cannot foresee just now, but which God shows you is needed.

And I ask for your prayers and encouragement in the months ahead as I seek God's plan for me. Indeed, you might even pray for such a plan, as my vision is obscure just now!

Rev'd Diana Johnson

Trumpington

September 2020