

## The Road to Retirement

My time as a minister has been a major part of my lifelong journey of faith. It has been a time of contrasts and of being an accidental pioneer. I had a very interesting career as an Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Inspector) in inner-city Sheffield, but felt God calling me to full-time service overseas and applied to CMS (Church Missionary Society). As I was the first EHO they had on their books they were not quite sure what to do with me – but eventually I was sent to Rwanda to set up a health project. From the urban slums of Sheffield to the rural hills of Rwanda was a big change.

The project had a limited lifespan of 3 years, so my thoughts and prayers turned to what next? When I returned to the UK I was accepted to train as a deaconess and began theological training at St. John's College (which I loved). I became an accidental pioneer again, as in 1987, I was among the first women to be ordained deacon without being a deaconess first. That began a pattern that continued throughout my ministry – I was the first woman member of the clergy to serve in each parish I have worked in – up to and including the Alcester Minster. In the early years I was often the first woman in a dog-collar that most parishioners had seen.

My first parish as a deacon was in a large (15,000 pop.) South Yorkshire pit village, with a small congregation (20-30). A lot of the work there was pastoral which was a great contrast to where God sent me next. That was a small (5,000 pop.) affluent, suburb of London with a very large congregation (500). While there I trained as a Spiritual Director and as a Christian Listeners Tutor and spent a lot of my time training others and leading teams. I also gained a husband (Martin), was ordained priest (in 1994 – alongside many other women), and had a son (Tom).

We then moved up north and I began a career break from full-time ministry while the children (Kate was born 2 years after Tom) were small. At least that was the theory – Kate's needs meant I never went back to working full-time. However, I had permission to officiate in the dioceses wherever we lived and helped out in the local churches, eventually becoming licenced to the Heart of England benefice (Bidford etc.) as an Associate Minister (NSM). I was then asked to help out the new Rector of the Alcester Minster (Adrian) for 6 months – which became two and a half years. Then in 2016 I was licenced as an Associate Minister (House for Duty) in the Alcester Minster. Before we moved into the Rectory in Great Alne our daughter Kate died suddenly while we were on holiday. We were very grateful for all the support and quiet sympathy of the Alcester Minster folk.

Thank you all for helping to make my last few years of ministry a happy and fulfilling experience. I look forward to retirement and discovering what God has in store for us next! May God bless you all with the riches of His grace.

*Sue Henwood*



## Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches Sunday 11 July 2021

Trinity 6 Green

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”*

Ephesians 1 v 3

### Collect

Merciful God,  
you have prepared for those who  
love you  
such good things as pass our  
understanding:  
pour into our hearts such love toward  
you  
that we, loving you in all things and  
above all things,  
may obtain your promises,  
which exceed all that we can desire;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our  
Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

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### Ministry Team:

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### Children & Family Worker:

Beth Clarke email: [Beth.Clarke@Coventry.Anglican.org](mailto:Beth.Clarke@Coventry.Anglican.org) Tel: 0749 432 9638

### Administrator:

Tricia Berry (Monday – Friday 10.00am – 1.30 pm) Tel: 01789 509 278  
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17 Butter Street, Alcester, B49 5AL (Office Opening Hours 10.30 – 12.30pm)

**Alcester Minster website:** [www.alcesterminster.org](http://www.alcesterminster.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster](https://www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster)

### Alternative Collect

Creator God,  
you made us all in your  
image:  
may we discern you in all  
that we see,  
and serve you in all that  
we do;  
through Jesus Christ our  
Lord.

## Next week's services and events

### Sunday 11 July

Alcester 10.00 am  
Kinwarton 4.00 pm

### Trinity 6 *Green*

Holy Communion  
Evening Prayer

### Tuesday 13 July

Via Zoom 12 noon Prayer Gathering

### Wednesday 14 July

Alcester 10.00 am Midweek Communion

### Sunday 18 July

Alcester 10.00 am  
Coughton 10.00 am  
Weethley 3.00 pm

### Trinity 7 *Green*

Holy Communion  
Holy Communion  
Morning Prayer

**Please remember to reserve a place at any of the church services, wear a face covering, unless exempt, and keep 2 metres distance. Thank you.**

Best wishes for Sue Henwood as she embarks on her retirement next week.

### Remembrance and Thanksgiving

On **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August**, all Alcester Churches will be open throughout the day from **9.30am to 4.30pm** for **Personal Reflection** on the events of the past eighteen months, culminating with a service at **St Nicholas at 5.00pm**.

On **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August**, an open-air service of **Thanksgiving at 3.00pm** will be held on **Jubilee Fields**, (weather permitting, or inside the Eric Payne Centre) followed by a '**Bring Your Own Picnic**'.

**Please save the dates.** We hope to see you there. **Bring all your friends and family.** (All will depend on the coronavirus regulations at the time of the event.)

### **Please note:**

The Administrator will be on annual leave next week.  
If you wish to reserve a place at Alcester on Wednesday 14 July or one of the three services on 18 July, please contact Revd Katie Cross.  
*For services beyond that please wait until after Monday 19 July and contact the Administrator. Thank you.*

## Readings for the week

### Today

Ephesians 1 v 3 - 14  
Mark 6 v 14 - 29

### Monday

2 Corinthians 6 v 1 - 7 v 1

### Tuesday

2 Corinthians 7 v 2 - 16

### Wednesday

2 Corinthians 8 v 1 - 15

### Thursday

2 Corinthians 8 v 16 - 9 v 5

### Friday

2 Corinthians 9 v 6 - 15

### Saturday

2 Corinthians 10



### Prayer

Please pray for the following topics:

1. Give thanks for all who worked during the pandemic, volunteers, delivery and transport drivers and many others, but especially for the medical teams in the NHS who risked their lives to treat those suffering from Covid 19.
2. Pray for all those suffering from flood, fire and other natural disasters worldwide.

*Please ensure all mobile phones are switched OFF during service. Visitors are invited to Gift Aid their offerings in the envelopes provided.*

### Please note:

When the government announces relaxation of the restrictions we will have to wait until the Church of England notifies us of any changes, before we can lift the current restrictions. So please continue to reserve places at all services etc.

*Check out the website calendar for further details on events/services coming up*



Did you know that you can now 'LIKE' Alcester Minster on Facebook? Find details and pictures of events at [www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster](https://www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster). If you would like to submit event notices or photos to be published on the page then please email [administrator@alcesterminster.org](mailto:administrator@alcesterminster.org)