

CHRISTMAS LETTER 2009

From the Joint Acting Team Rectors:

The Churchwardens, Anna Branston and Ewart Carson, report in this issue (see pages 14 -17) on our objectives in 2009 and on the stewarding which sustains our vital and growing ministry to visitors at St.Laurence's. I thank Ewart and Anna for their great commitment to the life of the church in the past year, and for their support for me personally as I have taken formal responsibility for the Parish of Ludlow, St.Laurence and St.John, with the departure of Brian Curnew, the Team Rector. Because we are a Team Ministry we have not entered an 'interregnum' and the development of our ministry can proceed uninterrupted, both within Ludlow itself and in the wider Team where my colleague Richard Green has the lead responsibility. So we will be setting objectives for 2010 and reporting these to you in the February magazine.

We will want to build on our achievements in 2009 - our expanding ministry to visitors, our growing engagement with the community, our involvement with schools and young people, the completion of the first Phase of our very exciting and challenging Vision Project, and the continued development of music and the choir alongside our commitment to give of our very best in liturgy, in word and sacrament, to the praise and glory of God, and for the hope and comfort of all his people. Highlights of the year have included the Mystery Plays performed by local schoolchildren, the very successful Summer Fete and Christmas Bazaar, the rehangng of the enhanced ring of bells, the memorable Diocesan welcome service for the new Bishop of Ludlow which we were honoured to host, and equally the splendid carol service for Radio Shropshire which came to St.Laurence's for the first time.

In all this we are indebted not only to our churchwardens and deputy churchwardens and other officers both at St.Laurence's and St.John's, but also to our staff, Lesley Draper, Parishes Secretary, Peter Turner, Administrator, Shaun Ward, Director of Music and Vision Project Co-ordinator, and Matthew Lenthall, Verger, and to the great army of volunteers who sustain our ministry in many and varied ways.

I thank you all for your friendship, support, and encouragement in the past year, and for the many Christmas cards and good wishes you have sent to Mary and myself. I wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a good and hopeful New Year.



Revd James Stewart

NEWS FROM THE TEAM MINISTRY

Recently the clergy of the Team met to discuss developing a strategy for the Ludlow Team Ministry for the next six to twelve months.

Some of the key elements of this strategy are as follows:

- to enable further development in the music and liturgy of St Laurence's, which has undergone significant improvement
- to improve the administration and running of St Laurence's and the Team
- to encourage greater co-operation and working together between the churches of the Team
- to resource the parishes of the Team in the fields of music, liturgy, mission, finance and buildings
- to help the parishes of the Team to draw up a mission action plan to determine their priorities for the future
- to enable the above by regular and more effective meetings of the clergy and other key personnel

The details of this strategy will be the subject of future articles in the magazine. One thing we were clear about was that if this strategy is to achieve anything, then it must be under girded by prayer and worship. To this end, we have decided to strengthen the provision of weekday worship in St Laurence's and St Giles'. So, from Monday 4 January, the pattern will be as follows:

Mondays, Wednesdays*, Thursdays, Fridays:

8 am Morning Prayer, 8.30 am Eucharist (CW), 5.30pm Evening Prayer (BCP)

★★ *St Laurence*

Tuesdays:

8 am Morning Prayer, 8.30 am Eucharist (CW) *St Giles*,

5.30pm Evening Prayer (BCP) *St Laurence*

* The existing 11 am Eucharist on Wednesdays (BCP) will continue in addition to these new services.

★★ There is no evening prayer on Mondays; Friday Compline replaces evensong

Should it be necessary to alter this pattern on odd occasions, this will be announced on the weekly news sheet. We would like to stress that all parishioners are welcome to attend these services; indeed we would positively encourage this, so that we may all pray together for God's mission in these parishes. It is disappointing that relatively few parishioners come to weekday worship at present, and it is hoped that this greater provision will give people more opportunities to come.

Fr Richard Green