

PARISH OF BISHOPSTROW AND BOREHAM

Rector: The Reverend Denis Brett

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1. **What is the 'Personality and Character' of your local church?**

We place very high priority on being first and foremost all-inclusive with a welcoming, friendly approach in the context of a liberal minded Anglo-Catholic tradition.

We are very proud of our established and continuing enhancement of 'hands-on teaching' with three schools within the benefice. Our distinctiveness is that we are a caring church with a heart to love all God's people.

2. **What are the priorities of your local church?**

a) To teach the faith: with enthusiasm through symbols, art, word and music using extensively the tool of 'open the book'.

We have a dedicated church team headed by the LPAs to draw the schools into the church, during the week, with creative teaching cells around the church that the children can touch, mould and smell followed by discussions with them sharing their stories with us.

b) To confront and act where there is social need.

The church has developed, alongside the community, the Warminster Foodbank (an offshoot of the Trussell Trust). The Rector is one of the trustees to keep a faith base, but firmly believe in drawing in the community to participate as volunteers for this project. This is a major part of our work. We have invited Bishop Edward to our AGM in May to be an observer of how well this project is working. Sixty volunteers of church and community are part of this mission and outreach work.

c) Christian Aid.

One of our LPAs is the key co-ordinator for whole of the BA12 area for Christian Aid. Our Benefice is committed to this work and demonstrates it by traditionally raising the highest sum of money in the whole community. We interact with national contributors.

d) Homelessness:

We are concerned about the level of homelessness in Warminster. We are very pro-active in the east of Warminster to re-house them, working in conjunction with Trowbridge housing Department and to empower them to be signposted to other agencies to meet their particular needs. We are successful in this field of work and we are known for this work.

e) The sick and elderly.

We care for the sick and elderly. This important work is underpinned by a faithful, solid prayer group led by a retired priest in the parish.

3. Is there one thing you would like to take on in the coming year (recognising that may mean you may need to stop doing something else)?

Yes: To share resources and build up mission and outreach together with the other Anglican churches in the town so that its peoples can see us working in partnership together.

4. Are there ways in which we can work together to achieve more?

Yes: When there is an interregnum, let us learn not to say 'business as usual' in seeking new appointments. Surely this should be a rich opportunity to 'think outside the box'. We should 'talk together'; those who hold the responsibilities for new appointments must listen to clergy in the local context and achieve that which allows us all to 'inhabit a space' where growth may take place in a spirit of mutual trust and openness.

5. How can we best measure the quality and impact of church life?

We can only truly begin to address this question when we stop mistreating one another ie the appalling and disgraceful behaviour in the debate of women bishops. When we can all sit down at a national church level and have a respectful, dignified conversation with integrity then we will all be able to move forward by the measure of who we are and what we are within our own parishes.