

An Inheritance of Faith

“Life as a two-clergy couple isn’t as crazy as I thought it would be. We get to have lunch and dinner together most days.”

The Revd Ruth Wyld is just completing the first year of her



training curacy in the Queen Thorne Benefice, five rural parishes outside Sherborne.

Her husband Richard is a curate in Sherborne itself. They’ll be priested at the same service. But that isn’t Ruth’s only family link with priesthood.

20 years ago, Ruth’s mother, Sarah Chapman, now Canterbury Diocese’s Healing Adviser, was one of the first women to be priested in Chichester.

After her undergraduate degree, God started calling Ruth in the same direction as her Mum.

“When I was 24, I worked with Lee Abbey for a year on a Bristol estate, where I started exploring vocation.

Things moved quickly. I started training at Cranmer Hall in Durham within about 18 months. That’s where I met and married Richard.

“Curacy is exciting. I’ve learned more and been challenged more this year than the previous three decades!

“One high point was running a home group. I’ll be starting another one on faith and film in the autumn.

“Two sisters at primary school, with no church background, started coming to our after-school club, and then to all-age worship regularly. They’re to be baptised with their older brother in a few weeks. Growing new disciples is so rewarding.”

Bishop’s Letter

The Right Revd Nicholas Holtam
Bishop of Salisbury

English, British, European or what?

There have been some lovely summer fetes this year. By and large the weather has been kind, including for the Salisbury-Sudan Medical Link fete in our garden. For the first time in three years we did not have to move it to the cathedral because of rain.

There was such a mix. I loved seeing two camels in front of the Amesbury Silver Band and a clown entertained children of all ages. There were masses of people buying books, plants, bric-a-brac, cakes, teas,

strawberries and cream. There was a raffle with prizes given by generous local sponsors, lots of competitions such as “guess the age of a ram”, and a vintage Bentley on the front lawn.

A huge number of people worked hard to make it happen and it all depended on the hundreds who turned up on the day who spent and donated generously.

It couldn’t have been more ‘English’, not least because the money raised was to train midwives in a country where 1 in 7 children die before the age of 5 yrs.

What it is to be English, British, European and Global have been repeated questions this summer.

Christianity teaches us to love God and love our neighbour as ourselves. In response to a smart alec question



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about who is our neighbour, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan. For Jews at the time of Jesus, Samaritans were despised outsiders.

No-one would have thought there was such a thing as a good Samaritan, let alone one who showed religious people what it meant to be neighbour

Hope In The Countryside

Clergy and lay-leaders from across Wiltshire gathered in Figheldean recently to discuss rural mission and the future of the rural Church.

While 18% of the English population lives in the countryside, fully 40% of Church of England worshippers do.

With most country congregations part of large benefices of up to fifteen parishes, rural ministry has changed dramatically. The vital leadership role played by lay churchpeople in the countryside is likely to increase as the number of priests continues to fall.



Jill Hopkinson, the C of E's National Rural Officer, said rural church growth develops from the faithful prayer and service to neighbour that already exists; especially when people are helped to explain the Faith that motivates it.

Roots Give Hope

For 12 years, Routes To Roots, a Christian charity, has helped rough sleepers and vulnerably housed people in Poole. The Revd Pat Southgate, Associate Priest at St Peter's, Parkstone, has been involved since the start.

"When I was churchwarden in St Peter's, two decades ago" said Pat, "churches came together to do a soup run for rough sleepers. We realised we needed a base for them to come to us.

"We now operate two afternoons and two evenings a week at Skinner Street United Reformed Church.



We give people a hot meal, advice on improving their situation and, if needed, clothes.

"Over 30 churches, 14 of them Anglican, support us across the Borough.

"It isn't all about practicalities, but also showing people their value, often simply. We serve evening meals sitting down. We go on trips to Holton Lee, as changes of scene can break cycles of depression and addiction."

One person helped by Routes To Roots is Steve, who came to Poole after a relationship broke up. He slept in his car for 5 years and was 'in a bad way'.

Other homeless people told Steve about the project, and he was able to get a hot meal a few times a week, clothes, and advice. Rehousing was

Fresh-Air Fundraising

This year's Ride+Stride event takes place on Saturday 13 September - a great chance to visit beautiful churches.

Participants are sponsored to cycle, walk or horse-ride around churches on routes they choose. Money raised is shared between their own church and their county's Historic Churches Trust.

One enthusiast for the event is Julian Cherrysom, organist at St Christopher's in Winfrith Newburgh.

Julian's autism makes cycling difficult, but he has still ridden an average of 58 miles to 33 churches for the past seven years. He even wrote a Ride+Stride hymn, set to the tune *Sing Hosannah*.

Visit www.rideandstrideuk.org or ring **020 7600 6090** to learn more.



difficult, as he wouldn't abandon his dog, Jet. "She'd been through it all with me", he said.

Eventually, a period of extreme cold saw Steve given an emergency bed, even with Jet. From there, helped by Routes To Roots, he managed to get a council bungalow in Winfrith.

"I found it hard to manage bills and run a home at first, but the project helped. I've been there for four years now, and love it. I was also helped with writing a CV and how to look for work.

"Even after years, I still come to see my pals at Routes To Roots. And if it wasn't for the staff's commitment and skills, I'd still be living in my car - or dead!"