

## News for the Pews

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May

Sunday: 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



### News and Views

On Tuesday evening I attended the Archdeacon's Roadshow on "Growing the Heart of England", looking at the Bishop's vision for the next five years of renewing relationships, restoring health and new growth. Every parish or benefice is being encouraged to "prayerfully imagine" how we can grow from our own church life a new worshipping community. The diocese has lots of resources in place to help us achieve this.

I am pleased to let you know that the Bishop has appointed Rev. Andy Batchelor, priest in Harbury, to be our next Area Dean. Please pray for Andy as he takes up his new additional responsibilities. We owe special thanks to Rev. Martin Green who has been Area Dean for about 9 years. His pastoral and missional ministry has been hugely appreciated across the deanery.

### Events for the week – too many to list – see local information about all the Platinum Jubilee events!

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May – Group Council meeting at 7pm in Stockton Church, when we will be looking at the first draft of the Parish profile

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June – Songs of Praise for the Platinum Jubilee at 4.30pm in St. Lawrence's Church, Napton – with tea and cake served from 4.00pm

### Looking ahead

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June – Archdeacon Barry will be leading the 10.30am service at St. Leonard's in Priors Marston

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June – Archdeacons' visitations for Churchwardens at 7.30pm in St. Mark's Church, Bilton

### Services next Sunday – 5<sup>th</sup> June – Pentecost Sunday

9.00am – BCP Holy Communion (not the usual pattern of Morning Worship) at St. Mary's Church, Priors Hardwick – please note that the service on 19<sup>th</sup> June will be Morning Worship, not Holy Communion

10.30am – CW Holy Communion at St. Lawrence's Church, Napton

10.30am – Songs of Praise in St. Michael's Church, Stockton – with coffee and cake afterwards

11.00am - Open air Songs of Praise on the green in Priors Hardwick (in church if wet)

3.00pm - Songs of Praise in St. Leonard's Church, Priors Marston – with tea and cake afterwards

Bible readings for Pentecost are: Acts 2:1-21 and John 14:8-17, 25-27

### And finally

This week we celebrate Ascension Day – a much overlooked Feast Day, in my opinion! This was the end of Jesus' appearances on earth and his physical, historical ministry. Jesus' work on earth was done – he had completed the task which God had given him. It was time for him to be lifted up, exalted, glorified – to go back to that position that he had originally occupied alongside his Father in heaven. Before Jesus came to earth, he was one with God and now, having taken on our human nature, we see him being restored to his original place of honour and glory and – through that – restoring **our** relationship with God. And that is why Ascension Day is so important. The birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus would mean nothing if he hadn't returned to heaven to restore that relationship. He would have been restricted to just one time and place. And if Jesus lives in us, we too are carried into the heart of God because of his Ascension.

The collect for Ascension Day: "Risen Christ, you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven: help us to seek and serve you, that we may join you at the Father's side, where you reign with the Spirit in glory, now and for ever. Amen"

God bless,  
Gillian

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk) or the parish magazines)