

March News - Latest Update

On 22/09/95 I penned the very first 'March family newsletter'. It celebrated our arrival at Moorlands Bible College in Dorset, and a new chapter in our lives as we stepped out to follow God.

Over the following 27 years we have sent out regular prayer letters to the people who have faithfully prayed for us and supported us financially as we have tried to go on this 'very big adventure with God'.

You can still access most of the newsletters at our old website www.marchsite.com in the 'March Archive' section.

We now enter a new phase in our ministry. Most of you will know that on 2nd July I was ordained as a Pioneer Priest in the Church of England. Sharon and I are now both employed by the Diocese of Leicester.



Sharon is employed part-time as an Associate Minister across the 11 churches and 4 schools in the 'Avon Swift benefice' - the group of churches based around where we live. Her role is mainly about connecting with people outside of the existing congregations, working to promote faith and engaging with local families. She now also helps design, implement, and deliver our Diocesan training programme for all Lay Ministers.

My role as Curate (trainee priest) over the next year will be to support 6 village churches in an adjoining benefice - running services, doing baptisms, weddings, and funerals - as well as working with Sharon in schools. I am also working with two schools in my own patch, and some of my time will be spent supporting other trainee Pioneer Priests in the diocese.

Our vision is to take church to where people are, rather than expect them to come to church where we are. Many people find entering the building and engaging with the ritual and expectations of traditional church difficult.

After three years of hard work supporting schools through the horror of COVID, Sharon has earned enough trust with them for us to get agreement and support to start a new ministry. So we are aiming to deliver 'church in school' - a weekly after-school church (not a Christian club) for the whole family in local Primary Schools from September. We are hoping this will help us develop some new worshipping communities locally.

Please pray for us as we reach out to families with little or no Christian knowledge or faith, that God would enable us to introduce them to Jesus and that Jesus would transform their lives. It is an exciting and awesome opportunity God has opened up for us.

Coming to the point of priesting in July felt like an appropriate time to stop sending out regular newsletters. After 22 years we are well aware that for some, we are 'old news' and that's entirely understandable! But we're not suggesting we lose contact - feel free to follow our story and contact us at any time - see details below.

Our children continue to flourish amidst the ups and downs of life. Covid restrictions made getting together really complicated, and we increasingly feel that they all seem to be very far away...

Benjamin has a partner Alexia, a wonderful Greek lady. She just got her PhD (in something very scientific about brains that we don't understand!) Ben still works in IT. They are very happy and live in Strasbourg. Joshua and Lindsay and their wonderful nearly-two-year-old, Elinor Joy, are still in Stirling. Joshua is doing research at Abertay University and Lindsay works at Stirling University. Caleb and Carole have moved from Lyon back to a town near where we used to live in Burgundy. Caleb has left the French police and will retrain as a masseur working for a local spa. They are also expecting their first child in October, so big changes all round!

Both of our mums live in Kilsyth now and we are really grateful to our sisters who are taking care of them so well.

A few of you still send us financial support each month through The Scriptural Knowledge Institution. We wanted to express our heartfelt and genuine appreciation of your support, prayers, and concern for us and our family over these many years, without which life would have been much more difficult.

Your giving has been a major blessing as we have seldom been financially secure over the past 27 years. We could not have survived without your generosity. Going forward, some of you may want to continue to support us, knowing that being a Church of England priest is not the best paid employment in the world! Others may feel that this is the right moment to stop. Please feel free to decide; all we would ask is that you let SKI know of your decision by phone or email, it will make it easier for them.

Email SKI@Mullers.org or Phone 0117 924 5001

Many of you have faced major challenges in your own lives and circumstances, and we continue to pray for those we know who are ageing, suffering, and who have experienced loss. We were quite shocked recently to realise some of our friends were thinking about retirement! So far, that is not something we have plans for - where would we go and how would we live? We have no home of our own, but we know God can look after old folks as well as young ones, and all we can say is we have proved God to be faithful! We feel there are a few adventures in us yet and look forward to making best use of the time we have.

"I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16)

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