

Our reader in training writes. . . .

Dear Friends,

I'm hoping as you read this, the sun is warm and the rain has abated. I'm thinking back to a wonderful day at the beginning of July last year at Wimbledon watching the tennis and enjoying strawberries and a glass of Pimms with a friend.

You may have seen coverage of an international movement known as 'Thy Kingdom Come' over the last few months. This was an international initiative praying for spiritual renewal between Ascension Day and Pentecost. Many churches were involved locally including Elstow Abbey which conducted a silent Eucharist every day during a ten day period.

This made me think about my own prayer life and those of our congregation. It's easy isn't it to always pray in the same way and not to put ourselves outside of our comfort zone. Rev'd Ben Lewis during his time as curate has offered us a range of opportunities to taste new things: a Modern Benediction, Iona worship led by Jennie Cappleman, the Poets' Eucharist, the Lay Leaders led a Taizé service and who could forget the Pets' service? As we wish goodbye to Ben, I hope that we can be thankful that he has stretched us and undoubtedly as we all pull together without either a vicar or curate we can reflect on what he has taught us.

Many of you will know that I'm just finishing my 2nd year of Reader Training and in the spring term this year we undertook a module on 'Spirituality and Discipleship'. We were exposed to 5 different types of Spirituality: Benedictine, Franciscan, Ignatian, Carmelite and Social Action. As well as studying the theology over that term I was blessed by lots of opportunities: praying with icons, praying with colouring, praying with clay, praying with nature and nature walks, praying in silence, following the 7 Benedictine services each day and prayer through social action. With the season changing, perhaps you might like to consider changing your prayer habits?

The Church of England website <https://churchofengland.org/> has Morning, Evening and Night Prayer (Compline) on its website for each day with the readings inserted*. I look forward to saying Compline each night, thanking God for what has been, praying for what will be and asking for a safe night's sleep. Maybe you could join the millions of Anglicans worldwide who carry out this spiritual discipline?

By the time this is published Ben Lewis will have left us but I would like to personally thank him for everything that he has given to St Mary's and particularly to me during my training. We wish him and his dogs well.

Yours in Christ,

Cathy Sanderson

*There is also a daily link to Morning Prayer on our own website (www.stmarygoldington.org.uk) and, if you prefer traditional language there is a link to daily Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer.[Ed]