**APCM Curate’s Report 2025**

This year’s APCM represents almost a year since my ordination to the Diaconate and my licensing to the Benefice. Over the last year it has been a great blessing to get to know all the people that make up the church and wider communities in the four parishes this Benefice serves, and to grow and learn much about ministry as I prepare to be ordained Priest.

Taking the Harvest Festival service at Peatling Magna was a particular highlight, and if I am ever called upon to be an auctioneer in future ministry then I have been well trained! It has been heartening to hear the bells ringing in the church again, thanks to the hard work of all involved at the church. It is exciting to consider the future possibilities for festival services at the church, and the leadership of the PCC should be commended as they have become the first church in Leicester Diocese to receive festival church status. There is much in which God can be seen at work, through strong attendance at the last few afternoon praise services, the wonderful gift of hospitality the church possesses, and through the renewal of the bells and guidance towards festival church status. The church continues to provide an important community meeting place and I look forward to continuing to partner in ministry with the PCC.

Christmas was a busy time for all four churches and it was great to be able to throw open the doors of St Andrew’s to over four hundred visitors through the Christingle service, the Scouts carol service, Midnight Mass, and in addition welcoming select years from Greenfield Primary School who put on a fantastic nativity performance for those of us who were lucky enough to be involved in hosting them. The community links with the village have always been a great strength for the church, and it has been a pleasure to learn how to connect with all those community groups from Richard and the wider team at St Andrew’s.

Otherwise, we have seen God bring the church into a season of growth in attendance at both services, and in new ministries, with the launch of St Andrew’s Kids, meaning that there is once again children’s work at the heart of Sunday services.

The recent Lent course, *Practicing the Way,* hosted by the Bridge for the Benefice, has been a great chance to take stock of our own discipleship and think about how we can continue to grow into Christlike people, witnessing to our community of the life in all its fullness that we have found. We greatly look forward to hosting the mission apprentices from Holy Trinity Leicester who are resourcing our mission week from the 16-22nd June. Please do pray that we would see many people take an interest in following Jesus in our community as a result of this step in faith.

December also brought my first experience of ministering at a wedding alongside Richard. This took place at Willoughby Waterleys and it was amazing to see the church so beautifully decorated for Christmas, in part because of the wedding. Willoughby continues to have fortnightly services due to the hard work of Mike, Peter, Di, and all the other members of the community who contribute. It has been good to see the church open each day since the beginning of Lent, which is planned to continue *ad infinitum.* Providing a place for walkers, cyclists, villagers, and pilgrims to pause, rest, enjoy the peace and beauty of the church and meet with God is such a blessing in this busy and noisy world. I recently was introduced to a service of liturgical morning prayer at Willoughby and Peter continues to teach me many new hymns each time I visit! I look forward to getting to know the community in Willoughby better and continuing to enjoy ministering in such a beautiful place.

I write in anticipation of an event which will be very significant for me at Foston. My first opportunity to preside at Holy Communion, the morning after my Priesting, will take place at a Benefice service on the last Sunday in June at the church. It will be an immense joy to stand in the place of many priests in this most ancient church to celebrate the joining of the Church of our Lord over all geography, denomination, and history in the shared Eucharistic meal. It has been a hard year for the church having lost six faithful and much loved members of the community, but it has been good to continue to meet together and share these experiences of pain and loss together, held in the worship of God, who knows our pain intimately, and by God’s own experience in Jesus Christ. We have continued to see God at work in the community despite mourning these losses, as attendance and mutual support with St Andrew’s has continued to be strong.

All four churches face the challenges that come with looking after ancient buildings, and we must give thanks for the PCCs, Churchwardens, and buildings teams at each church that ensure that they are cared for, work is done in good time, and fundraising is undertaken. Together we will work through the Minster Community process, which continues to take up much time and energy throughout the Benefice, to ensure that our churches retain ministry that is committed and looks towards building for a future led by Jesus.

On that note, we must continue to celebrate our wonderful team of lay ministers, who provide so much good to our churches, and thank Richard for his leadership in these changing times. Please cover us, your ministers, in your prayers each day, as we devote ourselves to the flourishing of every church member’s ministry in God.

With love and in Christ,

Rev’d Cam,

Curate.