



Ponderings from Partington Parish

Greetings from St. Mary's Church here in Partington where it's hard to believe I've been in post as Priest-

in-Charge for over 10 months now and high time, I thought, to let folk know how I'm getting along.

Time has simply flown by, perhaps because as soon as one Sunday service is done I'm already working on the next two. As James said when I first started out at Mottram "the trouble with Sundays is there's nearly one a week"! Being the sole minister here and leading and preaching every week I am certainly missing the team at Mottram, however I am hugely supported by the congregation in all sorts of ways.

Here, all of our church members come from the parish and are committed to our tight knit community which they know well; caring with a passion for social justice, a heart for the gospel and deeply rooted in prayer.

Partington and Carrington is a somewhat isolated community both demographically and geographically, and has in the past suffered, often unjustly, from a poor reputation. Many families and individuals are really struggling for a whole variety of reasons, yet the community and the church are slowly re-writing the story and I have witnessed open hearts, surprising honesty, sacrificial generosity and a hospitality that goes the extra mile.

I'm somewhat rattling around the 130 year old rambling vicarage that was built

when Partington was a small village of a couple of hundred people, nestled along a few streets round a village green. The parish grew as a Manchester overspill estate between the 60s and 80s to 8,500 people today, and there are plans for building around 1000 new homes.

I have settled well into the parish and vicarage, helped by purchasing some furniture including a comfy sofa from the money gifted to me from Mottram Parish Church when I left in March. In my spare time I continue to hike in the surrounding countryside, travel in Eastern Europe and indoor skydive in nearby Trafford!

My focus thus far has included growing the ministry to families and children; including revitalising baptism ministry, all-age worship and leading a team of 10 volunteers who run "Open the Book" assemblies at a local primary school. It has also been a challenging year for our church's pastoral work and we have seen the use of the Foodbank increase significantly.

Overall my ministry has been one of reconciliation and bridge building, between the church and community and within families and damaged relationships. In so many ways God is showing me "I am the right person, in the right place, at the right time" and the parish and all its opportunities and challenges fit well with my passions and prayers, and I am of course building upon all I learned through my invaluable time as curate with you.

I continue to keep St. Michael's in my prayers and very much appreciate your prayers too.

*God bless,
Andrew*