

Revd. Robin Mann



I was born in Worcester, and educated at Worcester Cathedral King's School. I qualified and practised as a Chartered Town Planner, specialising in strategic planning, ultimately heading the Structure Plan Team in Leicester. On completion of that Plan I took a career-break to read philosophy and theology in Cambridge University. God's strategic planning led me to meet Rosemary, a history teacher, and we were married in 1976. I was ordained in Ripon Cathedral in 1977. After my Curacy in Wetherby, I went to minister to the civilian community surrounding Catterick Garrison, working closely with Army Chaplains. Subsequently I've ministered in the Wyre Forest, Worcestershire, encouraging them in the development of an extensive and effective Lay Ministry Team, pastoring and leading a group serving seven villages. I was then asked to build up the Lay Team in the Avon Valley, Wiltshire, six parishes closely linked with the Army on Salisbury Plain. From there I went to Exmoor as half-time Tourist Minister for the Diocese of Bath and Wells and half-time Minister to six rural parishes, including the much visited village of Selworthy. Lots of sheep and deer - and four Hunts!

I suppose I'm an enabler at heart, and I passionately hold that "the Church's Ministry is shared by all Christian people". I've encouraged and enabled Christians in the creative use of their God-given gifts in home, work, school, leisure, church and community. I'm always wanting to work myself out of the job. In 1993 I was granted sabbatical leave from my Worcestershire parishes and on my return members of the local lay-ministry team asked, "What did you need to come back for?"

I retired to Edge End in 2007 and have happily assisted in thirteen local churches, covering for holidays, illness or emergencies. I was asked to be "Interim Minister" for the Forest Edge Parishes, when their Priest moved on and worked there for a year helping them prepare for their next Incumbent.

I'm really only here just to open doors for God to get through to people and for them to get through to God, whatever the occasion, formal church services or simply in the changes and chances of everyday life.

And now, after 41 years in ordained ministry, I feel I want to go a bit gentler, be a little more "retired", perhaps just helping a little in my home parish of Christchurch. I enjoy walking, oil-painting, playing the cello and playing with my grandchildren, and I'll be giving a little more time to that. And to Rosemary!

I'm writing this on Sunday evening having just returned from our grandchildren near Bristol. On the way, we stopped at Tidenham, where I've often helped out, and enjoyed just sitting in a pew together, thoroughly immersed in the worship, letting someone else lead! Perhaps it was a God-incidence that the preacher, (to be ordained priest next weekend) preached on the importance of Rest, Work and Play - in that order: **Rest first**, to be prepared for the work God is calling us to, then the work, and then appropriate periods of play.

So I'm looking for some good rest first, to prepare and see how God is calling me to work in the future.