

## **This month's letter is from Revd Pauline Ashby**

Our Palm Sunday service this year was extra-special as people from across the Benefice gathered to celebrate and give thanks to Peter Maynard, as after 26 years he retired from his ministry role. A special thanks to the team at St Peter's, Copt Oak, for hosting us and providing refreshments - in abundance!

Peter became part of the Benefice family in 1981 when he married Gill, who at that time attended St Peter's Thornton. It was after they moved to Stanton in 1991 that Revd. Geoffrey Willett asked Peter to consider training for ministry. This he did, first completing a foundation course, then two years of Reader training. Peter was licensed by Bishop Tim Stevens at the Cathedral in November 1999.

Over the years Peter's ministry has touched many lives: journeying with bereaved families as he prepared and then led funerals, and leading countless services in our churches. Peter has a heart for local people, and this is typified by his dedication to the annual Remembrance Day service in Bagworth. For many years Peter has been involved with our church magazine, and has made delivering the magazine an opportunity to engage with people on a pastoral level.

Over the years Peter has worked alongside Revd Willett, Revd. John Downs, Revd. Peter Evans, Revd. Simon Nicholls and most recently Andrew and me. We have all appreciated Peter's support and what he has added to the team.

Fortunately Peter won't be leaving the Benefice, and we look forward to many more years of fellowship, but retirement will enable Peter and Gill to spend well-deserved time together, and for Peter to further his interests in writing and gardening.

On Palm Sunday Peter was asked to choose the final hymn, which was 'Brother, sister, let me serve you' which was no surprise as it absolutely describes Peter's approach to ministry.

We can all learn from Peter's example of dedication to others, and this is summed up in a prayer which he personifies, and which acts as a model and

reminder for us all:

Teach us, good Lord,  
To serve thee as thou deservest;  
To give and not to count the cost;  
To fight and not to heed the wounds;  
To toil and not for seek for rest;  
To labour and not to ask for any reward  
Save that of knowing that we do thy will.

*(St Ignatius Loyola)*

Thank you Peter, God bless you and Gill, and may he remain close to you as you begin the next stage in your journey.

**Pauline Ashby**