

Mike's message

Farewell

This is my last letter for the St Andrew's 'Roundabout' because, at the beginning of March, I will be taking my last services at St Andrew's before moving on.

I hope that you'll be able to join us for my final services on Sunday 5th March. There's a 9.30am Communion service and then a special Farewell Service at 4.00pm followed by refreshments.



It's fourteen years since I arrived in West Bromwich to be Vicar of St Andrew's. It's been a time of both challenge and great joy. I've enjoyed being Vicar of St Andrew's and, during that time, playing an increasing role in the Methodist Circuit. The later has changed a great deal itself during this time and has been 'West Bromwich Circuit', 'Tipton and West Bromwich Circuit' and is now 'The Black Country Circuit'. For the last two years, in addition to St Andrew's, I've also been Minister of Wesley Church, West Bromwich and Ryders Green Road Methodist Church. Thank you to everyone who has been part of my ministry during that time. It has been a pleasure to serve in West Bromwich and on the wider Methodist Circuit.

I've always thought that I wouldn't move on elsewhere unless I found somewhere as ecumenically involved as St Andrew's. In September I saw an advert for the post of Minister of The Cotteridge Church and decided to apply.

The Cotteridge Church is as interesting place. Back in 1982 three different churches decided that their future was together. The churches were then; Kings Norton Methodist Church, Kings Norton United Reformed Church and the Church of England Parish Church of St Agnes, Cotteridge. The latter two buildings were later demolished and The Cotteridge Church is housed in the Methodist owned building right in the heart of Cotteridge. If you aren't sure where Cotteridge is it's in south-west Birmingham, between Bournville and Kings Norton or, in other terms, about a mile from Cadbury World.

The Cotteridge Church is a busy place. It's worship of three, sometimes four, services a week, is led by clergy or local preachers. Alongside the 10.30am service there is an active 'Young Church' with activities for 0 - 14 year olds. In addition to a range of Sunday worship styles and traditions it's also a very busy church during the week. It has a café open six days a week, operated the B30 Foodbank twice a week and has a Day Centre for the Elderly on weekdays. There's a Boys Brigade (7th Birmingham) and a Stay and Play Toddler Group. There's a whole range of other church groups and a variety of community activities - from Guides to Clog Dancers - that also use the building.

My Welcome Service at Cotteridge is on Thursday 23rd March at 7.30pm. Margaret Morgan (St Andrew's) and Beryl Price (Wesley) are arranging transport for those who would like to attend. Get in quick as when the places are gone they are gone.