

Licensing of the Rev Tom Ringland as Vicar of Penhill Benefice

The teachings of Jesus, especially in the Beatitudes, show that Christians don't have to conform to the world. Instead they should have a prophetic witness, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds, told those who attended the service of institution at St Andrew's, Aysgarth, of the Revd Tom Ringland as the Vicar of Penhill Benefice on November 4, 2019.

Bishop Nick told the large congregation: "There's only one measure of the faithfulness or the integrity of the Christian church and that is when people look at us, when they touch us, when they hear us, ... they see some representation of Jesus. The church does not exist to save the church. The church exists to save the world out there."

He added that this might mean sacrificing the culture and ways of worship of the church so as to meet people where they were. And part of the job of a vicar was to enable that to happen.

The Revd Tom Ringland's institution by the Bishop was witnessed by the Diocesan Registrar Peter Foskett, the Dean of Ripon Cathedral the Very Revd Canon John Dobson, the Area Dean the Revd Canon Penny Yeadon, several local clergy, and the Readers and Churchwardens of the Penhill Benefice.

The Revd Canon Penny Yeadon also deputised for the Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven, the Ven Jonathan Gough, as he was too ill to attend.

It was she, therefore, who placed the Revd Tom Ringland's hand upon the handle of the entrance door and officially inducted him into "the real and actual possession of this church and benefice with all its rights, responsibilities and opportunities for ministry."

He was then presented with the keys by the Churchwardens who, with the captain of the bell ringers Stewart Huntington, went with him to the tower where he rang one of the bells nine times to signify that he was taking up his pastoral charge.

The Revd Tom Ringland had been welcomed not only by church members but also by representatives of the local communities served by the Penhill Benefice. These included North Yorkshire County councillor Karin Sedgwick and parish council chairmen.

When the Churchwarden of St Martin's at Desford in Leicestershire, Nev Hammonds, commended the new vicar to the benefice he pointed out that the Revd Tom Ringland did face one particular challenge: "He is a keen cyclist and the hills here are a little larger..."

Quite a few from the Revd Tom Ringland's previous parishes at St Bartholomew's, Kirby Muxloe and that at Desford attended the service although one group was left stranded in Leicestershire when the minibus they had hired did not appear.

After the service most of the congregation stayed to enjoy the homemade canapes and to chat with friends. *Pip Pointon*

November 2019 - Vicar Tom introduces himself:

I was born and raised in East Kent, near Canterbury, and still have family in the area. I worked for a short while for Pfizer inc. in their agricultural research division before leaving home to read Chemistry in Durham. I switched courses and graduated in Geology before I

felt the compulsion to pursue a vocation to full time Christian ministry. I volunteered in a church in the East End of London while testing my call, and then spent a year in Sudan and Kenya in Christian relief work before beginning ordination training at Trinity College Bristol, under George Carey.

It was in Bristol that I met my wife Bev, and we were married 12 months into my first Curacy in Crawley, West Sussex. After a second Curacy near Eastbourne, we came north to the Midlands and I've had spells of ten years in the former mining town of Coalville and 13 years in my current parishes, which are a couple of larger villages, also in Leicestershire. Along the way we have been blessed with two daughters and two sons – three now in their 20s and the youngest being 19. Tim, our third, will be living with us, along with our two Labradors, Islay and Skye.

Bev grew up in Wharfedale, and it is thanks to her that I've come to enjoy wide open spaces and long walks! We've also done a bit of cycling together, but the terrain in Wensleydale looks a little tougher than we're used to! Birds, cricket and the environment are some of my other interests –