



Connection

Sunday 4th and 11th April 2021
Easter Time



View from a Vicarage

Hello and firstly may I wish you all a very Happy Easter! Today is the day we can finally say “*Christ is Risen! Alleluia!*” as we celebrate this most special of days in the Churches Calendar. Our 40 days of Lenten fasting and penitence are over, we have journeyed with Jesus through his last days on earth from Palm Sunday through to his last meal on Maundy Thursday and his crucifixion on Good Friday, and now we have finally arrived at the day when Christ has overcome death and sin, as we celebrate his glorious resurrection.

All over the country people will be taking part in services both online and, as we will be doing, physically back in church, listening to the story of how the disciples and Mary rushed to Jesus’ tomb, only to find it empty, as the angels announce to those first visitors “*He is Not Here!*”. Thankfully, this year, although still officially in Lockdown, many of us will get not just to hear the Easter story, but will be able to physically celebrate with other Christians, experiencing once again the joy and hope of new life which the Resurrection offers.

The services taking place in four of our churches round the Hill, at Beckford, Elmley Castle, Bredon and Eckington, are the start of us returning to a more regular, albeit streamlined, pattern of physical worship; Because from 18th April it has been agreed that we will have two clergy led services of Holy Communion each week around the Hill, and each benefice will therefore receive two Eucharistic services per month. However, because some benefices are larger than others, and have more churches within them, the Forum have agreed that benefice PCC’s should make the decision as to where services will take place in the coming months. This arrangement will remain in place until at least 21st June when hopefully all government restrictions will be lifted.



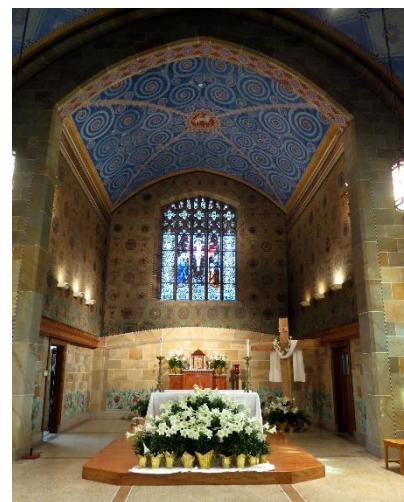
Easter therefore is a chance to look forward; And as we look around us and see trees and flowers beginning to bloom in readiness for the summer, new lambs gambol across fields and hillside, and people prepare to get that first haircut after so many months of being unable to access hairdressers, we can start to plan how we will re-engage as church communities physically together once again. It may be awhile yet before we can have tea and coffee in church, but we are now working with wedding couples who had booked weddings with us last year and then decided to postpone because of the restrictions to

replan weddings for this summer, we will be able to have our council meetings in church once again rather than through Zoom and we will gradually be able to engage in more physical pastoral care support, which I know as been a concern for many whilst we have been unable to meet with others in peoples homes and gardens.

We are not there yet, but we are getting close; And I hope that by the summer we may be able to welcome a new priest into ministry across the Bredon Hill Group of churches, as we continue with the current selection process over the next few weeks.

The joy of Easter is that after a time of darkness and experience of Good Friday when all seemed hopeless, the light of the Resurrection brought new opportunity, new encounters, new beginnings and new disciples: And so for us, despite the difficulties, uncertainties, and in some cases the personal losses we have experienced, we are now facing a time of resurrection in the hope of new life as we emerge from the worst of the pandemic.

Therefore, now is the time to follow the lead of those first disciples by sharing the excitement of sharing the Good News of Christ and by considering new opportunities of how we may help the growth of our churches in the future. Perhaps we have the skills to lead a bible study group; Perhaps we have an interest in working with children and can support in working with our local church schools; Perhaps we are good at meeting and praying with others and so would be happy to support pastoral care, or perhaps you are good at governance and can use these skills on the church council helping to discuss and determine the priorities of the work in the church. There are so many ways in which the church will soon be able to offer once again more physical spiritual and caring support to others, and to assist this we now need to start thinking about what roles each of us can play as our churches go forwards as we prepare for the plans mission which God has for our communities.



Easter is about new life, growth and enrichment, and central to this is the placing of the loving resurrected Christ in our hearts, homes, communities and churches. Therefore, as we reflect on the joy of Easter this year, let us all seek to be an Easter people, bourn up in the hope of what God is planning for our future – for it is good!

Sadly, this double issue of the Connection is likely to be the last in its current format, as we return to physical worship again. However, we do hope to continue to produce a streamlined version for the next couple of months, whilst we make the transition back to formal worship. In this I would especially like to thank two people who have worked so hard during the Lockdown to help make this publication possible – Rachel Tebbatt, Parish Administrator for Eckington and Alison Khan, Administrative Coordinator to the Bredon Hill Group. Their help and support have been so much appreciated by myself, and so on behalf of all the readers of the Connection I would like to offer them our heartfelt thanks and gratitude for all they have done.

Also, my thanks to the numerous people who have contributed to the Connection, either through the writing of Reflections or the producing of Intercessions. To you also, my grateful thanks for your contributions, and which has helped the worship and spiritual support of many of us during a very challenging time.

And so, as we go forward and enjoy this wonderful Easter season, may we do so in the love and joy of the One who overcomes all things, and blesses us with spiritual riches beyond our wildest imagination; The One who is Risen, and who now lives in eternal glory with His Father, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. God Bless you this Easter!

Allison

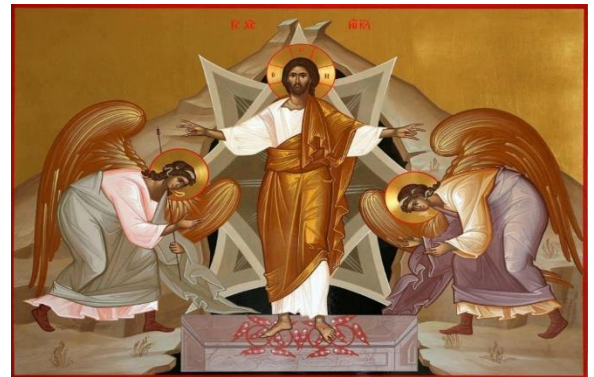
Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group

Service of Holy Communion for Easter Day

Collect

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen



Acts 10. 34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ^{but} in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ^{not} to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

John 20. 1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ^{and} the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned

to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Post Communion Prayer

God of Life,
who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Hymns

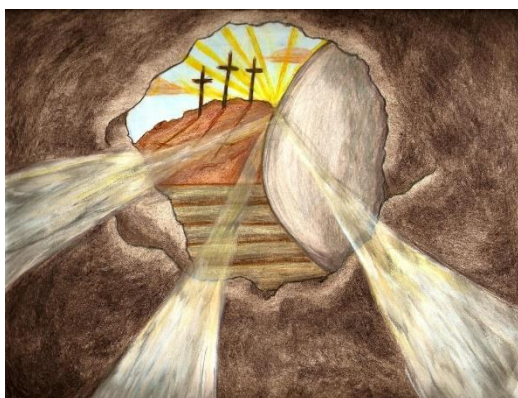
1 Jesus lives; thy terrors now
Can, O death, no more appall us;
Jesus lives: by this we know
Thou, O grave, cannot enthrall us.
Alleluia!

3 Jesus lives: our hearts know well
Nought from us his love shall sever;
Life nor death nor pow'rs of hell
Tear us from his keeping ever.
Alleluia!

2 Jesus lives: henceforth is death
But the gate to life immortal;
This shall calm our trembling breath
When we pass its gloomy portal.
Alleluia!

4 Jesus lives: to him the throne
Over all the world is given:
May we go where he is gone,
Rest and reign with him in heaven.
Alleluia!

Source: [One in Faith #474](#)



1 Christ the Lord is risen again;
Christ has broken every chain!
Hark, the angels shout for joy,
Singing evermore on high: Alleluia.

2 Christ who gave for us his life,
Who for us endured the strife,
Is our Paschal Lamb today.
We, too, sing for joy and say: Alleluia.

3 Christ who bore all pain and loss
Comfortless upon the cross,
Lives in glory now on high,
Pleads for us and hears our cry: Alleluia.

4 He who slumbered in the grave
Is exalted now to save,
Now through Christendom it rings
That the Lamb is King of kings. Alleluia.

5 Now he bids us tell abroad
How the lost may be restored,
How the penitent forgiv'n,
How we, too, may enter heav'n. Alleluia.

6 You, our Paschal Lamb indeed,
Christ, today your people feed,
Take our sins and guilt away,
That we all may sing for joy: Alleluia.

Source: [One in Faith #461](#)



Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

1 The strife is o'er, the battle done;
the victory of life is won;
the song of triumph has begun.
Alleluia!

2 The powers of death have done their worst,
but Christ their legions has dispersed.

Let shouts of holy joy outburst.
Alleluia!

3 The three sad days are quickly sped;
he rises glorious from the dead.
All glory to our risen Head.
Alleluia!

4 He closed the yawning gates of hell;
the bars from heaven's high portals fell.
Let hymns of praise his triumph tell.
Alleluia!

5 Lord, by the stripes which wounded thee,
from death's dread sting thy servants free,
that we may live and sing to thee.
Alleluia!

Final Ending:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Psalter Hymnal, (Gray)

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost...

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.

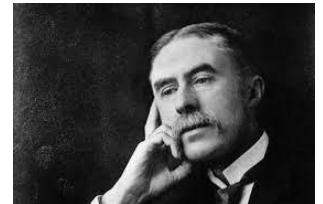
No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Reflection for Easter Day

For this week's Reflection, two very different poems about Easter.

The first is by A.E. Housman (1859-1936) and is entitled Easter Hymn and is written from the perspective of the unbeliever who wants to believe.



Easter Hymn

If in that Syrian garden, ages slain,
You sleep, and know not you are dead in vain,
Nor even in dreams behold how dark and bright
Ascends in smoke and fire by day and night
The hate you died to quench and could but fan,
Sleep well and see no morning, son of man.

But if, the grave rent and the stone rolled by,
At the right hand of majesty on high
You sit, and sitting so remember yet
Your tears, your agony and bloody sweat,
Your cross and passion and the life you gave,
Bow hither out of heaven and see and save.



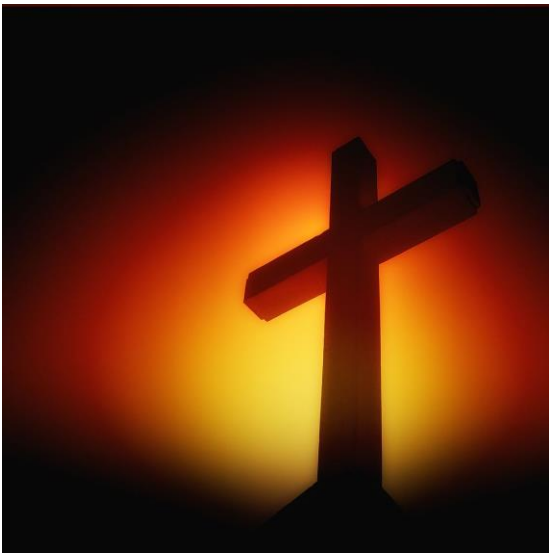
The second is Easter Wing by George Herbert (1593-1633), one of the great devotional poets, and reflects on the fall of man and the speaker's desire to rise.

Easter Wing

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Prayers for Easter Day



On this day that the Lord has made,
let us pray for the people he has redeemed.
That we may live as those who believe in the triumph of the
cross:
That all people may receive the good news of his victory:
That those born to new life in the waters of baptism
may know the power of his resurrection:
That those who suffer pain and anguish
may find healing and peace in the wounds of Christ:
That in the undying love of Christ
we may be united with all who have died in the faith of
Christ:
Let us commend the world, in which Christ rose from the
dead,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Christ is Risen, and the power of His resurrection fills the world today with new life, hope and expectation and so we bring him all our needs.

Faithful God, we think of your church today celebrating the Resurrection all over the world. Language race and nationalities may be different but our worship and our joy on the Day Of Resurrection make us one in the Gospel. We pray that The Holy Spirit may guide and strengthen us in mission and service praying that day by day we may grow in love for you and for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

We pray for your Church here in Bredon Hill Blanca and especially for the new future as we and the rest of the world, hopefully recover from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God, we pray for the leaders of the nations of the world that they may give priority to those with greatest need in the distribution of the world's basic resources. We especially pray on this special day, for a fair and equitable distribution of the Coronavirus vaccine

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

Father God at this joyful Eastertide we pray for our families and friends especially as they are unable this year to join us here during the Easter Holidays. We thank you for the joy of sending and receiving Easter cards and messages of love and for modern communication systems which bring our loved ones so close even when we are separated by great distances and by the Pandemic.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God we pray for those who are in need and ask you to look with pity on those who suffer. We especially pray for all those within our Group who have asked for our prayers

We pray for the broken-hearted , for the sick, for the lonely that your very presence would comfort them in their time of need and give thanks for all who work in the health services.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

Merciful God, we pray that those who have recently died may one day share in the promise of new life won for us all by the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ and his triumph over death and the grave.

Lord in your mercy: Hear our Prayer

Faithful God as we go out into the world we pray that we may reflect your love in our families, our church and our community; so that the world can witness that we are followers of Christ and draw others into his loving care.

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Requests for Prayers

If there is someone or something that you would like to pray for please email us at eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com



Please continue to pray for the ill and isolated, frontline, hospital and medical staff and for all those who are in any kind of need. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray for our Baptism Families: Loving Father, bless all families with the ability to love unconditionally and in the hardest moments. Help them to realise what Jesus gave up so that they could know love and life. Amen.

We pray for all those who are sick everywhere and for those who have asked for our prayers and for their carers, Roy and Margaret Putnam, Edward Bunn, Brian Bolam, Wendy Dufty, Yvonne Seward and Andy Caddell.

We continue to pray for Percy and Sharon Blizzard, Jackie Pickford, Clive Hunt.

We pray for those who are in residential care Sheila Bigland-Gibbons, Barbara Milton and Rita Sheppy.

We pray for those who have died everywhere. For those who we know and for those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. Eileen Fincher, Michael Connelly, Ronnie Compton, Captain Anthony Greenwood, Betty Kirkpatrick, Margaret Sutton, Pat Hidden, Don Dufty and David Finch

Easter Garden Competition – closing date Wednesday 7th April

There is still time to decorate a tree, make a garden on a plate or create an Easter scene – please send your photos to the.tebbatts@btinternet.com, including your name and age. There will be a chocolate prize for the winner of the best display by a child and the best display by an adult – we look forward to seeing your creations!



Thank you to all the fabulous folk of Eckington who donated Easter Eggs and items to the Pershore Foodbank - we have had a fantastic haul - THANK YOU!



April 2021

Please can you help our Foodbank with these non-perishable items. (We are not able to use chilled or frozen items.) Last week we fed 72 adults and 64 children.

We currently need: ♦ Vegetable soup ♦ Pasta in sauce ♦ Custard ♦ UHT milk ♦ Tinned carrots ♦ Tomato soup ♦ Rice pudding ♦ Fruit juice ♦ Coffee ♦ Tea ♦ Tinned Cold meats ♦ Sponge puddings ♦ Tinned fish ♦ Rice ♦ Chocolate ♦ Cereal ♦ Toilet rolls ♦ Toothpaste

We are also continuing to collect at Eckington Church on Wednesdays and Fridays 10am-3pm. There is also a box permanently in the porch of Church Cottages (Kit and Sas Carson's house) for foodbank donations.

Good Friday - 2nd April 2021

Reverend Allison will be leading a service of hymns, readings and silent meditation for Good Friday, via Zoom at 10.30am

The customary pilgrimage up Bredon Hill will not be permitted under current COVID regulations, but each parish will also be arranging local events, including the opening of churches for private prayer so look out for local notices.





Easter Egg Hunt at Holy Trinity Eckington – Saturday 3rd April

Attention all children - please join us in the churchyard at Holy Trinity for a FREE Easter Egg trail between 2-4pm on the Saturday before Easter. No need to book but social distancing rules must be observed. For further information please contact Karen Sagar on 01386 750401. There will be a small chocolate prize for each completed trail.

Easter Sunday – 4th April 2021

Subject to no changes to the current government guidelines; Easter Services of Holy Communion will take place in the following churches at 10.30am:

St Giles, Bredon led by Reverend Allison
St John the Baptist, Beckford led by Bishop Martin
St Mary's Elmley Castle led by Canon Roger
Holy Trinity, Eckington led by Bishop Michael

If you wish to attend a service, please contact Alison Khan to book your place.



The Second Sunday of Easter - Sunday 11th April

A Morning Prayer service via Zoom led by Reverend Allison where we will be welcoming Archdeacon Robert Jones who will be joining us to provide the Reflection for the Second Sunday of Easter



Service of Holy Communion for Sunday 11th April Second Sunday of Easter

Collect

Risen Christ,
for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred:
open the doors of our hearts,
that we may seek the good of others
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,
to the praise of God the Father.

Amen



Acts 4: 32-35

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

John 20: 19-end

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ
you have assured your children of eternal life
and in baptism have made us one with him:
deliver us from the death of sin
and raise us to new life in your love,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen



Church Services on Sunday 18th April

10.30am St Peter's Chapelry, Besford
10.30am St Peter's, Little Comberton

Church Services on Sunday 25th April

9.00am Chapel of Ease, Bredon's Norton
10.30am St Barbara's, Ashton-Under-Hill

For all services being held via Zoom please contact Alison Khan if you wish to attend so that she can send you the Zoom invite. Tel: 07984 748059 or email: acbhteam@gmail.com





A free phonenumber of hymns,
reflections and prayers



Additional Resources during Lockdown

Even though we are inviting everyone to join our weekly Zoom service at 10.30 on Sunday morning, please be aware that the Freephone Daily Hope programmes of worship services and prayers are still available by ringing 0800 804 8044. This includes a Church of England weekly service (select option 6) and traditional Morning/Evening Prayer (select option 7). This service will not cost the caller anything and provides worship material for those looking for additional services and prayer.

News from the Diocese

Prayers and diocesan news can be found at www.cofe-worcester.org.uk



Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group

