

Sunday 26th July 2026
Announcement from the Rev'd Dr Jacky Barr
Rector to the United Parish of
Chinnor, Sydenham, Aston Rowant and Crowell

Dear United Parish

There is some news that I need to share with you this morning.

After much prayer, reflection and discernment, I have accepted the post of Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of Atworth with Shaw and Whitley in the Diocese of Salisbury.

My final Sunday here will be **18th October**, and I will be licensed in my new parish on **10th November**. I hope that many of you will want to come, to that and you would be very welcome.

For me, this has not been an easy decision. The reasons for moving are complex and layered, and over the coming weeks, if you would like to ask me about them, I will be very happy to talk.

But today, there is one thing that I most want you to hear. I am not leaving because of a lack of love. Not because I have stopped loving this parish, and not because I have felt anything other than love from so many of you. It has been one of the greatest privileges of my life to share in your journeys: to worship with you, laugh with you, cry with you, celebrate with you, and sometimes simply to sit quietly beside you. Those memories will stay with me always.

I won't pretend that this isn't emotional. There have already been plenty of tears, and I suspect there may be a few more before October arrives. But once I've the crying under control, my hope is that these remaining three months will not simply be about saying goodbye.

Rather, I hope they will be a time of joy, thanksgiving and celebration as we give thanks for all that we have shared together, and for all that God has done among us.

The Church has always been a people on the move. God calls us into new places and new seasons, not because the old ones were failures, but because God's story is always continuing. I leave with deep gratitude for all that you have given me, and with every confidence that God will continue to bless this parish in the years ahead.

Let us pray.

Loving God, We thank you for every step of this journey we have shared together. We thank you for friendships formed, faith deepened, laughter enjoyed and burdens carried together.

As we enter this new season, hold us all in your love.

Give us grace to cherish the past, courage to embrace the future, and joy in all that still lies before us.

May we continue to know your presence with us, wherever you lead.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**