

ALL SAINTS' PILGRIMAGE 2017

08 July 2017

In anticipation of the ordination of our Reader, Stéphane Javelle, our Priest-in-Charge, Fr David Greenwood, challenged us at our Annual General Meeting in March to consider a chaplaincy pilgrimage to Salisbury England. While there, we would be able to attend the ordination at Salisbury Cathedral as well as do some other spiritual exploration.

Most of us considered the possibility of going. Most wanted to go. Many discussed going. All were invited and eventually some did go... and it was exciting. At the end of June, in typical All Saints' fashion, five people went by four different routes and means. The phrase, "herding cats" comes to mind.

On Thursday, 28 June, Aidan Hamilton took the Eurostar train to London. The next day, on Friday 29 June, Fr David and one of our Wardens, Olivier flew to Heathrow on British Airways and took a bus to Salisbury. On Saturday, our other Warden, Amanda flew to Bristol and rented a car to drive to Salisbury. And throughout that time, our Archdeaconry Synod Rep and former Warden, Helen, drove from Marseille to Salisbury. So this was no common shared Canterbury Tales type of journey but rather a meeting of minds and hearts at a common location – Salisbury.

As part of the formal pilgrimage events, Fr David and Olivier, visited the site of Stonehenge. While there, they participated in a renewal of baptismal vows service where those participating remade their vows and promises to live a Christian life. Fr David blessed holy water and little cups of the blessed water were distributed for the participants to take with them as they wandered the site and to sprinkle on the ground as they prayed. Later that day Fr David and Olivier met with Amanda for some time of fellowship, prayer, and dinner.

On Sunday morning all five met at the Salisbury Cathedral. Helen, Aidan, Amanda and Olivier sat together and Fr David was invited to vest and process with the Diocese of Salisbury clergy. The service was amazing.

Afterwards the five of us were invited with Stéphane's family to join with the members of the congregation at his new parish church – Salisbury Plain Benefice. It was a full and lively parish lunch and our pilgrimage folk mixed and mingled with Stéphane's new parish family. Following lunch, there was just time for a quick group photo before Amanda, Aidan, and Helen were off for their various week day appointments. Fr David and Olivier continued to All Saints' and St Mary's Chitterne for the service of welcome and licensing of Stéphane and evensong. The presence of the French pilgrims was recognized even before the service began with the Chitterne organist playing variations of *Sur le pont d'Avignon* and *Frère Jacques* and other traditional French melodies as a prelude.



Fr David and Olivier at Stonehenge.



On Monday morning, 3 July, Fr David and Olivier concluded the pilgrimage at the Heathrow airport chapel where they conducted Morning Prayer using the propers and lectionary readings for the Holy Day of St Thomas. It was part vacation... part adventure... part spiritual journey... and part supporting our congregational colleague during his special day. It was all prayer... it was all pilgrimage... and it was all done in God's holy name. Alleluia. Amen.

Stéphane with the five All Saints' pilgrims as well as the Rev'd Sally Wells a former volunteer priest at All Saints' Marseille and her husband Andrew Wells.