

**Letter from the Vicar - June 2010**  
**View from the Vicarage**  
**Being in Mission, being in Community**

Many of you will have heard me say before that I took the position as Vicar of these Villages based on two things. The first thing was the fact I was coming to a Mission Community, the second was what I saw when I was given a tour of the Churches and Villages and heard about all that was going on here. These things excited me, and they still do! So much happens in these communities, run by the Church and various village organisations, that builds up community and brings people together — I wish I had time to go to everything, though I do manage to get to quite a few things I can't be at them all!

But this idea of a Mission Community is something we need to be excited and enthused by and which we need to build on if we are to continue to grow as the Church of Christ in this place. Theologian Emil Brunner wrote "The Church exists by Mission as a fire exists by burning". Mission is the reason and purpose for being Church — not evangelism as such but Mission. Mission is the work of God in reaching out to the world, Evangelism is the proclamation of Christian faith and the sharing of the good news of Jesus. The two are bound up together, but they aren't the same. Mission is what God does — creating and sustaining the world, giving himself to humanity, reaching out and drawing us to himself. God has chosen us to have a part in that through worship, prayer, service to others, supporting each other, ministering to the needy, loving, living in faith and the more specific sharing of the Gospel in Evangelism. It is God's work, and we are a part of it. If we really grasp that this is what Mission is then we would see that every part of our lives is part of God's work and that every act of service, every kind word, every loving act is part of God being active in our lives and in the world around us.

And this is the foundation of Community — we work together as God's people across these villages, and in partnership with our brothers and sisters from other churches not just because there are less Vicars than there used to be, but because in working together we can do so much more than being in splendid isolation. Because we are called to be so close in our Christian fellowship that we act, as the Bible says, as one body. As we grow together, and work together further, we can discover the gifts that exist across our Mission Community, and share the resources which God has blessed us with. Over these coming months we are going to consider more of what being a Mission Community might mean, to restate our aims in being a Mission Community — and this will be tied up with receiving a new Curate, and with rediscovering God's purpose for our working together in this place. Please pray for our Mission Community, for your Clergy, Readers and all ministers, for our congregations and for yourselves that all of us might know God's will and grow together in faith.

**Alastair**