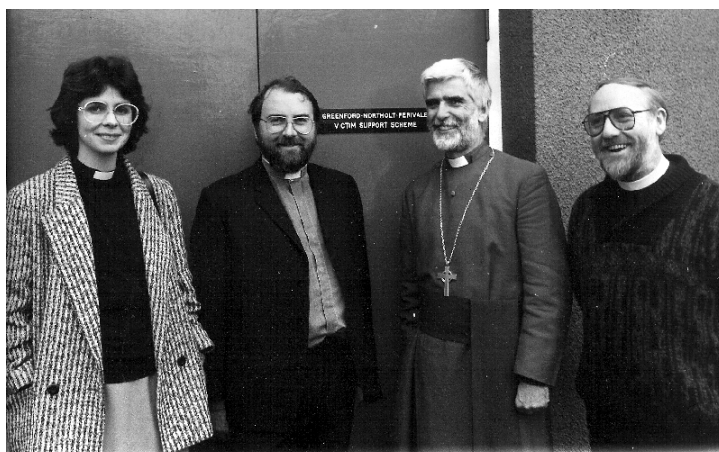


The Reverend Philip Ball in the Parish of Greenford Magna 1984-1988



Deacon Jo Stoker, The Reverend Philip Ball, The Right Reverend Tom Butler, The Reverend Neil Richardson
circa 1986

On 3rd July, The Reverend Philip Ball celebrated 25 years in Holy Orders. Neil Richardson writes-

In 1983, I was seeking a curate to be in charge of a daughter Church in The Parish of Greenford Magna – St. Edward, King and Confessor - and I heard about Philip from a member of the congregation who knew him and knew of his work. He was warmly and roundly recommended for appointment, so I wrote to him and asked him to come down to London from Durham Diocese to see the parish and meet the people.

Jo Stoker, our young Parish Deacon as she was then, and I went to King's Cross Station to meet him. Imagine our shock when he arrived with **five** women in his entourage! To be fair, four of them were his daughters, all aged under 5! The other was Sue, of course.

It was a bit of a shock, watching him struggle along the platform with a twin under each arm, a suitcase in each hand and a huge bag of baby paraphernalia slung over his shoulder, whilst at the same time trying with his teeth to steer a push-chair safely along the platform towards the ticket barrier, and trying to greet us politely!

To this day I am full of admiration for the manner in which Philip has kept his sanity and his masculine identity intact! whilst living in the company of so many women! (Only joking!)

Philip did a really good job at St. Edward's Church, quietly building on the strengths he could find (which were not that many) and encouraging people to take responsibility and get more involved. The church he inherited had lain fallow for quite some time and in his four years, Philip put the whole show back on track and introduced some solid patterns of worship and congregational togetherness. Mind you, the family of six only just squeezed in to the small curate's house next to the church. Philip did a great job at St. Edward's and was a very good thing!



Sue became a very valued member of staff at Edward Betham Church of England Primary School in Greenford, and continued in this even after Philip moved parishes to Hayes in 1988. We were very sorry to lose Sue from the school when the family moved to Bicester in 1997.

Everyone in Greenford sends their best wishes and love to Philip, Sue and the entire family on this great day. Not forgetting, of course, the people of the parish of Abington.