

Wetheral, coffee would be at 10.30am, which is the usual time for a mid-morning beverage rather than the present 'just before lunch' time. This will enable us to be leaving the building at the same time as we leave now.

We have agreed to run this new pattern for an experimental period of one year with a review next autumn.

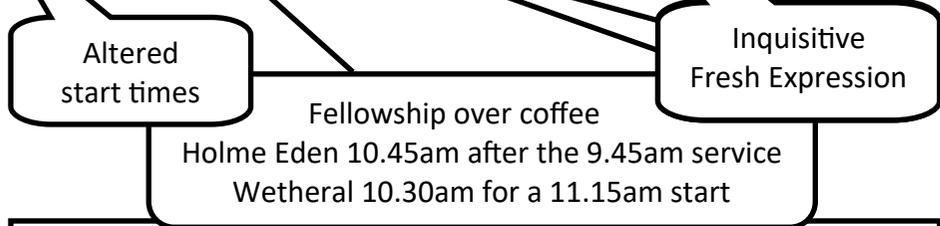
I am aware of the difference the fifteen minutes might make to a good number of people but I hope you can understand and agree with the collective decision for the

bigger picture of developing life in our churches and communities. You are welcome to email or phone me to talk may about how we came to this decision, if that would be helpful. My hope and prayer is that we will all welcome this new pattern of service times and the Fresh Expression as a real opportunity for personal and corporate spiritual growth.

Yours
Graeme Skinner

The new pattern

| Sunday | First | Second | Third | Fourth | Fifth |
|----------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------------------------|
| 8am Wetheral | HC | | | | |
| 9.45am Holme Eden | JAAW | HC | Inq 2 | HC | HC <i>Alternating</i> |
| 11.15am Wetheral | Inq 1 | HC | JAAW | HC | HC |



The new services times will start next Lent...
Starting from 10th March... and will be reviewed in the Autumn.



The parish churches of Holme Eden, and Wetheral with Warwick along the River Eden.

Church on Sundays

Worship, discipleship, fellowship and mission.

Graeme Skinner writes, Firstly, I want to express my affirmation and thanks to all those who have consistently served these churches with servant hearts, over many years, and especially in the vacancy before my arrival. I found you to be in good heart. Since being here I have been listening to comments concerning our Sunday service pattern, which was, I was told, 'due for review on the arrival of the new vicar'. Since last July people have often asked me 'when will the service pattern change'.

I have now spent five months listening to conversations about Sundays and weighing up what everybody has been saying.

During this time there has been a total of six Parochial Church Council meetings, prayerfully and carefully considering how we could review our service times. We did not start from the negative position, 'You can't please everybody all the time', but sought to explore an opportunity to develop the Sunday services from a positive viewpoint around worship, discipleship, fellowship and mission. I asked the PCCs to approach the anticipated review with four questions.

- How can we make the best use of our vicar?
- How can we best support the church down the road/river in their ministry?

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How can we think from a mission point of view about **those who presently don't come** to church on a Sunday?
 How can we best serve our **own congregation**?

Firstly, as the vicar of both churches I explained how important it was for me to be regularly at both congregations, for pastoral support, welcoming guests and to be integral in our learning together.

Secondly, we need to be mindful of the fact that we are a united benefice (two congregations together) and are called to support each other, especially as we explore the development of unity and collaboration in our proposed Mission Community.

Thirdly, I have suggested that from a mission point of view, having the both churches open at the same time each week is very important. It is hard enough for the membership to remember which Sunday it is...

**Present Sunday pattern.
 (JAAW Joint All Age Worship)**

| Sunday | First | Second | Third | Fourth | Fifth |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------------------------|
| 8.15am Wetheral | HC | | | | |
| 10am Holme Eden | JAAW | HC | | HC | HC <i>Alternating</i> |
| 11am Wetheral | | HC | JAAW | HC | HC |

but for those who *might* come to church we need to be consistently open for when they do come.

Lastly, we addressed the 'empty' Sunday in each church during the month from the point of view of the congregations. A good number of people are away at weekends and the on/off programme can limit occasions for worship. We also recognised, through attendance figures, that the joint services at different times and locations may not work for some people.

These thoughts, and many others, formed the basis of our three months of discussions. The PCC proposals and conclusions were as follows...

Conclusion 1

We explored the opportunity for some creative thinking, commonly known as '**Fresh Expressions**' of church. In the two 'empty' slots we decided to use these **to offer different styles of gatherings** for those who are not used to our regular services. We could also

utilise this time for some applied teaching for church members on what it means to be a followers of Jesus. The time would be structured around discussion, talks or interviews and not have a set pattern of liturgy.

We decided to call these gatherings '**Inquisitive**'. There would be two Inquisitive events per month and those coming would benefit most by being at them both, the first in the month at Wetheral and the third the month at Holme Eden. The subject matter would be set up as a consecutive series following a particular topic. Church members in existing services could also be part of this pattern and benefit from the opportunity to be part of the gathering and support this Fresh Expression of church. The Bible is full of inquisitive people of all kinds of backgrounds, asking him who he is and what it means to follow him. It is no different today.

**A creative use of the present 'gaps'.
 A Fresh Expression of church called Inquisitive.**

| Sunday | First | 2nd | Third | 4th | 5th |
|------------|----------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|-----|
| Holme Eden | | | Inquisitive 2 | | |
| Wetheral | Inquisitive 1 | | | | |

Conclusion 2

There was an opportunity to explore how we provide **Holy Communion** in the united churches. At present **we will maintain and affirm our Eucharistic pattern of five Communions** in a four Sunday month. The fifth Sunday remains as an alternating Communion service. The **Joint All Age Worship** will need to be developed with input from our new Children and Families Outreach Worker, as well as considering children's provision during other services.

Conclusion 3

In the present pattern it is not possible for me to be fully present every week in both congregations. In response, the two PCCs have unanimously affirmed the need to change the start times by a few minutes in both churches starting Holme Eden at 9.45am and Wetheral at 11.15am.

We are also exploring how this might work best with regard to our **fellowship and chatting** (also known as coffee time). In