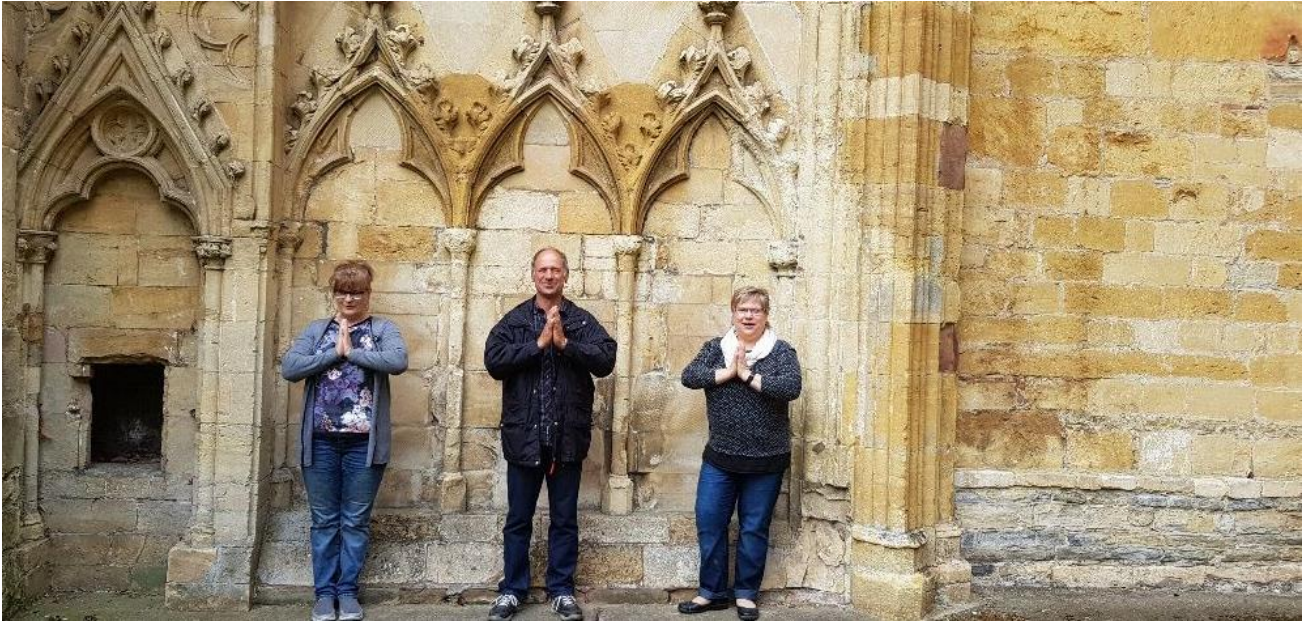


## SALZWEDEL VISITS PERSHORE – 29<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June

This was the second visit made by friends in Salzwedel. The first of our visitors arrived by air on the Wednesday afternoon, spending the evening with their hosts. Early the next morning, as they were new visitors to Pershore, they embarked upon a tour of Pershore Abbey,



climbing to the top of the tower to view the surrounding countryside and then a short walking tour of the town itself. Lunch was at The Swan Inn, Birlingham after which they visited our benefice church,



then onto St Nicholas, Pinvin



and lastly to St Mary's, Wick, where tea was laid on.



The second group of visitors had undertaken to drive and take the ferry across to Dover, but Google map under-estimated the time it would take to drive from there to Pershore and they only arrived just in time for the meal booked for all the visitors and hosts at The Star Inn.

Friday morning dawned bright and breezy and the whole group set off with companions from Pershore to Worcester Cathedral, where they were met by the Precentor Michael Brierley and a tour of the Cathedral followed.



The tour included a visit the library, which was a rare treat enjoyed by all. After lunch in the Cloister Café everyone decided a stroll along the river to Diglis Basin and then the canal was in order.



There were two teenage girls in the party and it had been arranged with the Youth Leader at Pershore's Riverside Youth Centre to meet with some similarly aged girls from Pershore late in the afternoon. Meanwhile the youngest member of the party, the Pastor's young son, enjoyed a competitive hour of junior skittles in the Sports Centre, where he came third. When the girls were collected it was obvious a good time was had by all, spending most of it cooking crumpets, scones and brownies, but they still had room to enjoy all the food at a bring & share Barbecue held in the riverside garden of one of our hosts. The highlight of the evening had to be the river trips organised with a neighbouring boat owner – what better way to spend a summer evening?



On Saturday guests, hosts and a number of the congregation met at Croome Park, where a tour of the house and landscaped gardens



was enjoyed by all and everyone worked up a good appetite for sandwiches from the restaurant. There was time in Pershore for some shopping (a novelty for our guests as shops in Germany close Saturday lunchtime) before the party drove out to Holland House, where a delicious cream tea had been prepared.

In the evening thirty people attended a meal in our Parish Centre, St Andrew's, after which there was an exchange of gifts. Everyone from Pershore was stunned to receive a huge candle, embossed with models of Pershore Abbey and St Catherine's Church, Salzwedel and inscribed 'Partners in Christ'.



It really cemented this still quite new relationship and expressed exactly what these church partnerships are all about and how important they are in the light of our current political situation.

Because of the time it had taken to drive from Dover there was considerable anxiety about the return trip and consequently the decision was made for the driving group not to attend the service in Pershore Abbey on Sunday morning. However, visitors and hosts had time to enjoy a farewell breakfast at The White Horse Hotel,



opposite Pershore Abbey, and after many hugs and handshakes they set off just before 10.00am.

The three remaining guests, who were flying home early on Monday morning did come to the service. One, Harald, was able to join the bell-ringers as they summoned the people of the town to the service.



During the service the small group described for the congregation what Salzwedel and St Catherine's were like, encouraging everyone to visit them next year and we are hopeful that even more people will make up the party to go and our links will gradually extend through both our congregations, establishing firm friendships into the future.

