

## WELLINGTON & DISTRICT TEAM MINISTRY

### 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

Welcome to our newsletter this Sunday. The clergy team hope Lent has started well for you all.

- ❖ News of some up-and-coming changes given Maria's forthcoming retirement:  
Firstly, Alan Ellacott will add oversight of Sampford Arundel and Thorne St Margaret to his oversight of the East Group of Parishes; this will take effect from 4<sup>th</sup> March.
- ❖ Secondly, Martin Beaumont will add oversight of Rockwell Green to his oversight of the Ashbrittle Group of parishes; this will take immediate effect.  
These changes are among those outlined in a paper which all PCC members have received entitled 'A proposal for ministry in 2021'. Should you want more details, or a copy of the paper, contact any member of your PCC or your relevant parish priest.
- ❖ Thirdly, from the beginning of March the newsletter will move to a fortnightly version, with a (probably) termly 'colour supplement' about mission and other activities.

#### Worship this Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February

- Worship podcast from Tim Treanor and John Young, the podcast team available on internet or by phone: 01174 288175 (local rate)
- 10 a.m. 'The Home Service' bringing church worship to your front room from around the Tone Deanery. 10Radio 105.3 FM
- 7 p.m. John Young's Sunday evening hymns, with reflections 7.00 p.m. Click on Team Facebook page and from there on John Young's page. This can be picked up later as well.

#### Worship next Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February

- Worship podcast from Tim Treanor and John Young, the podcast team available on internet or by phone: 01174 288175 (local rate)
- 10 Radio service and John Young's hymns as this week.

**Weekday worship:** Morning Office 8.30 a.m. via Zoom. If you wish to join this small group (currently 4-9 people) who pray regularly together please contact Tim Treanor for details.

Daily Podcast restarts. Worship podcast from Tim Treanor and John Young, the podcast team available on internet or by phone: 01174 288175 (local rate)

Compline 8 p.m. led by Selina and Richard on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81555085560>

**Lectionary Readings for this Sunday:** Genesis 9: 8-17 God establishes a covenant with Noah and his descendants that 'never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood'. The sign of the covenant is the rainbow – which appears when sun and rain occur together. *I wonder, do you have a particular sign which indicates God's promises to you?* 1 Peter 3: 18-end Peter expounds the idea that the waters of the flood, through which Noah and his family were saved physically, symbolise the waters of baptism through which we are saved spiritually. Mark 1: 9-15 One of Mark's fast-moving passages where in just 7 verses he covers Jesus' baptism, his time in the wilderness, the imprisonment of John the Baptist and the start of Jesus' preaching in Galilee. *I hope we can take Lent more slowly!*

#### Collect

Heavenly Father,  
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom  
and prayer  
that we may witness to your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Post Communion

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living  
bread from heaven;  
by it you nourish our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and strengthen our love:  
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true  
and living bread,  
and enable us to live by every word  
that proceeds from out of your mouth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### World Day of Prayer 2021 – Vanuatu – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The service for The (Women's) World Day of Prayer, scheduled for Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March, will not take place locally but a video of the service by the women of Vanuatu will be posted on the WDPIC (World Day of Prayer International Committee) YouTube channel and social media. The theme is "Build on a Strong Foundation". Maralyn Norman (01823 975899 – [beaconview@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beaconview@yahoo.co.uk)) has a few copies of the service booklet if you wish to read it at 10.30 on 5<sup>th</sup> March, along with others around the world. Donations to WDP may be made through the WDP website.

For a Lenten experience with a difference, an online programme, based in the Holy Land check out <https://sites.google.com/view/geneva-isc/retreats/2021-lenten-program>.

**Your prayers are asked** for people who have died recently and for their grieving families and friends:  
Jean Sparks from Nynhead.

**Some challenging thoughts** – from Simon, the CEO of Rural Ministries (our partners in Mission) – slightly paraphrased. [<https://www.ruralministries.org.uk/>]

In a conversation with a couple of folks recently two different concepts were mentioned that caught my attention. The first was the topic of 'imagination in mission'. The second was 'design fixation' which, in short, could be described as the limitations of regurgitating old ideas. Both thoughts collided in my brain with a recent Ignatian reflection on Luke 1: 26 ff, particularly the statement by the angel Gabriel that '... nothing is impossible with God'.

With my neurons exploding like fireworks, I spent the afternoon researching both notions. I came across a fascinating article from the Harvard Business Reviews written in April 2020. The authors suggest that we may not be able to return to our familiar pre-crisis normality. 'While imagination may seem like a frivolous luxury in a pandemic, it is necessary to create new opportunities and find new growth paths.' The editorial is primarily business-focussed, but I believe there are implications and applications to those involved in church.

The church, at this moment, needs to facilitate collective imagination. The key to this is allowing new ideas to be shared while they are still in development: creating forums for people to communicate casually, without hierarchy, reports, permissions, or guarantees of growth. At Rural Ministries we call this 'giving permission to fail' so that there is an open environment to come up with ideas and innovate, accepting that many of these will probably not work.

I suspect that 'the church' overall does not create room for this and instead is experiencing 'design fixation'. We are used to using yesterday's solutions and not allowing new ideas, however offbeat and random, to surface, thereby missing out on the potential of some different ways of thinking, leading to mission success. An illustration from the Panama Canal construction might help. Its construction began in 1903 but was dogged by problems until 1905 when the railroad engineer, John Frank Stevens took over. Steven refused to see the work as an excavation challenge, common in canal projects of the past, but instead defined it as the movement of excavated rock and earth. He focussed on building a rail system to remove the excavated spoil, rather than concentrating on digging. He was much criticised but his methods worked. His detractors suffered from 'design fixation thinking' – they couldn't see past the old solutions and imagine new ways of working."

Simon goes on to say 'Friends, what has got us thus far will probably take us no further. When we are limited to the solutions of before we may miss out on the potential of new ideas that could be circling. I see this in the patten of training and preparing for leadership found in many of the UK theological colleges. I see this in the outreach methods advocated by many denominations, with a heavy reliance on course-based material.' [Not in our neck of the woods – Ed] **I fear it in any attempted return to the pre-pandemic patterns of ministry and Mission. The world has changed, and leaders need to facilitate collective imagination in God's church.** [My bold – Ed]

*Simon goes on to offer some advice:*

- We need to define the issue entirely. Many of us are impatient: 'Let's get it done'. Rushing through the process of defining the problem can lead to solving the wrong problem, missing benefits that could arise from a different solution. Instead we need to slow down.
- We should use our whole brain – left & right sides, so our left side's analytical, verbal & abstract capabilities cooperate seamlessly with the emotional, intuitive & synthesising capabilities of our right side.
- We should be open to lots of ideas: scientist Linus Pauling said, 'The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas.' We should ask how we are giving people grounds for hope, imagination & innovation, creating space for trialling prototypes.
- We need to maintain positivity; pessimism can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- Luke 1: 37 'For nothing will be impossible with God' – pin it on our walls, make it our screen savers, have it as the verse to read before any planning meeting begins.

*I would also suggest that we ask for God's perspective on the whole matter and take time to listen, to be open to pictures that God gives us. God's perspective often comes up in new words, fresh images, often from unexpected quarters. We just don't have to be afraid to share these as we explore together how God calls us to be a 'new creation' [2 Corinthians 5:17]. [Ed]*

### **Church contacts**

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