

Reflections and
Imaginings...

Quarterly East Bristol
Partnership Newsletter
August 2008

Coordinator's Report

Over recent months I have begun to meet various people from across Bristol, who, like me, are lay people working for the church. These meetings have been invaluable in helping me to think about what it means to be your Coordinator, and what exactly this Partnership is. At various times I have wondered if the Partnership is something that people really want; indeed if it means anything to anybody. I wonder if there is any joint sense of purpose, how much is it reasonable to expect from people in terms of time and commitment, and what people are actually getting out of belonging to this Partnership.

More and more I feel that all those of us who are employed by or work for the Partnership are here, because we have a passion for faith, and have made a commitment to facilitating faith. Whatever our gifts or the tasks we have been given to do, it is the same faith that we all care about, it is the same faith that we all serve, and it is this faith which, through the life-renewing holy spirit, becomes more than the sum of the parts which went into building it.

I do feel that the Partnership has tremendous potential, but that in some ways its path has yet to become clear. Here we are situated in an area of Bristol with so much going on; people of many races, creeds and economic strata. People with all sorts of need: emotional, physical, spiritual, and people with mental health problems of all kinds, learning difficulties and those grappling with addiction.

I would hope that the Partnership would allow me, as Coordinator, to begin focusing in on some of these issues, which seem ever so present once you start looking. The partnership office is beginning to be used as a drop-in, for local people, but I feel this use could be expanded. Originally there was an idea of renting a shop front for the Partnership office, which would mean we were that much more visible to folk passing by. This might not be financially viable at the moment, but I hope it might still be something we can think about for the future.

Another initiative is the setting up of a care-network across the Partnership, which I could coordinate. I'm very excited about the possibility of being the first point of contact for those in need of pastoral care, so I can then get people in touch with a priest, lay-minister or someone from the Prepared to Care team, who could counsel them further.

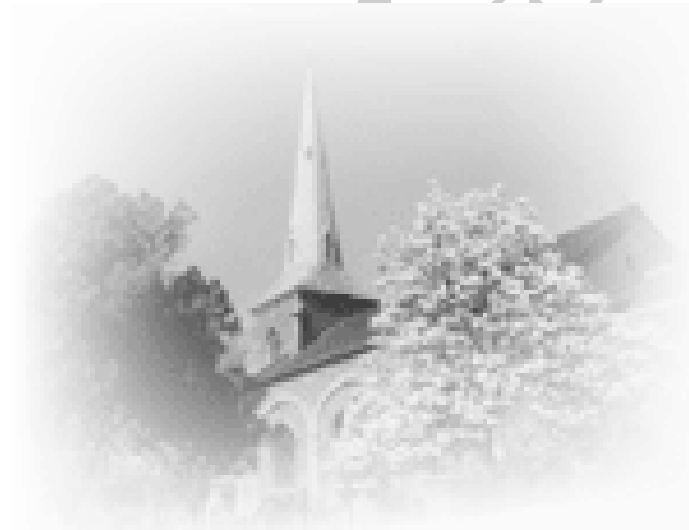
I feel that the role I have been asked to perform is to coordinate a structure which is still in its earliest stages of emergence. It's still very fragile and vulnerable, and no-one really knows how it's going to turn out. It's a very different role to coordinating something which is robust and long established. It's new, and no-one knows what it is yet. At the end of the day, I feel there's no reason why we should expect anyone to care about the Partnership, but if you do, now is the time to make your presence felt and get involved in shaping its future.

In this spirit, I hope that people might feel able to come and use the resources of the office, including the computer and photocopier. If

you're not free in the mornings, we can arrange another time for me to let you in. It's our Partnership office, and everyone is entitled to use it. Hopefully this will mean that it can grow as a centre for resources.

I look forward to seeing you all soon,

Love and blessings from Mark



St Mary's

Creating Uncommon Worship

Revd. Keith Thomasson

Richard Giles is a radical thinker rooted within the catholic-'ish' side of the Anglican church. When a priest in Yorkshire he reordered the church building with amazing effects for the worshipping community

and the community they served. A former colleague of his once told me how the worship was so rich and varied that a song of the highest romantic Catholicism, for example, *Sweet Sacrament Divine*, would be followed by a gentle modern worship song, for instance *Be still for the presence of the Lord*, when kneeling to adore the sacrament. Whilst a vicar and canon theologian of Wakefield diocese, Giles produced a landmark book "Re-Pitching the Tent" which is *the* book on how to best use your church building (please ask to borrow it). More recently he has become a cathedral dean in the USA and produced another superbly informative and provocative book called "Creating Uncommon Worship - transforming the liturgy of the Eucharist".

Giles' books are beautifully designed and gently provocative and, (I find), are books that pay reading and re-reading. His style is refreshingly simple yet bordering on the profound and would be great to discuss in a small book group. Giles reflects on the different sections of the Eucharist service and how we together celebrate the Eucharist as the whole people of God so that it really is a time when we give thanks (*eucharisto*). For us here in East Bristol it is particularly suitable as Giles has some great ideas for us to develop the tradition of worship, which we as a group of churches inhabit, in different ways, together. We could develop some good ideas to maintain our individuality and look at points of similarity too. He encourages us to, and shows us how to develop our worship so it truly is the worship of the whole people of God, led by a president (the officiating priest) but without the hierarchy which we experience as inbuilt within our worship and liturgical spaces (much a legacy of

nineteenth century developments). It is a book with which few will agree with entirety, but it will nourish all who engage with it, from those interested in attending worship and who have devotional interests to those who contribute to the leading of worship as musicians, lay ministers, ordained priests and servers of the sanctuary.

At the diocesan conference Peter Moger, a national officer for worship within the Church of England (transforming worship), led a workshop on what one can do within the law in terms of leading worship, which was very useful indeed. During the workshop he led us all to consider how worship patterns and styles have changed and evolved during the last thirty to fifty years. People spoke of the movement from Matins (BCP) with everything led by a man (or men) to services of the Eucharist with women and men (and children) doing everything equally and using music from all over the world rather than just a hymn from NEH or A and M (possibly revised!).

Please do come along to the sessions I am hosting this Autumn based on Giles' book, "Creating Uncommon Worship". Come and see and experience how we might continue the spirit of our tradition(s) of celebrating the Eucharist and yet revitalise it/them with a deeper appreciation and awareness of how we might very gently breathe new life into them.

If you want to ask me more about this then do. This is not just another course but a great opportunity for resourcing, meeting new friends and being together as we develop our faith.

7.30-9.00pm. 11 Vicars Close, Fishponds.
September 9, 16, 23, 30.
October 14, 21st.

And for those who wish to read the book beforehand:

Creating Uncommon Worship-transforming the liturgy of the Eucharist
Richard Giles, Canterbury Press, ISBN1-85311-590-8



All Saints

Diocesan Conference 23rd – 26th June 2008.
Mark Gartside

One of the most interesting aspects for me about attending the diocesan conference in June was seeing how the churches of the EBP

fit into the wider diocese. It felt encouraging to know that we are part of a larger network of churches, and to find out about the situations of other parishes and partnerships and see how they are getting on.

It was also important for me, in my role as Partnership Coordinator, to make contacts with clergy and lay from across the diocese, and try to raise the general awareness of the EBP amongst other Anglicans in Bristol. Because the idea of working in Partnership in this way is still a relatively new concept, and every Partnership that has been set up in Bristol is unique in its own way, I found myself explaining our particular situation to many people, both clergy and lay. Everyone I spoke to seemed really interested in what we are doing, and I received various suggestions for how we might work together in the future. The whole experience helped me to reflect on what the Partnership actually *is*, and to focus on where we are going within the wider context of the diocese.

I believe this was the first diocesan conference (formerly known as 'clergy school') where lay-people were invited. This included many lay-ministers and church wardens, but also some people like me, lay people employed by the diocese to work as coordinators, facilitators, administrators, project-managers and the like. I felt this was an encouraging sign that the ministry of all, in its diversity, is being recognised and celebrated. I felt this also reflected our Partnership vision, which repeatedly refers to the enabling of lay people. I felt this was especially reflected in the fact that our name-badges simply bore our name, without reference to title, such as Reverend or Canon etc. In this context we were able to meet each other simply as fellow humans, and to commune together with God.

The main event of the conference was series of lectures by Sylvia Keesmat and Brian Walsh about their book 'Colossians Remixed' (see review), two very learned and accessible biblical scholars and religio-environmental activists, with a message from the bible utterly relevant for our lives today.

Interspersed with these lectures was the opportunity to take part in small group seminars. There was a wide variety to choose from, however the first one I attended was a discussion about women's spirituality and physicality. We talked about body-image and the media, and touched on such topics as anorexia, female genital mutilation and the concept and image of Christa – the image of Christ crucified portrayed as woman. We drew many links between how women experience their physicality and how this relates to their spirituality. We also looked at the concept of the 'other', women portrayed in society as objects, and how this conflicts with Jesus' approach to women, especially his deep and complex relationship with Mary Magdalene.

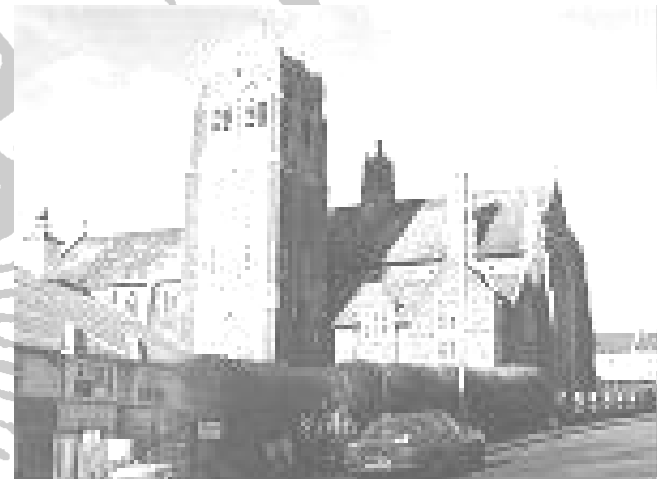
The second workshop I attended was a Samoan Circle style debate on homosexuality. With this being a hot topic in the Anglican Communion at the moment, this style of debate was a useful way of approaching the subject. Only the person sitting in the chair at the centre of the circle could speak, and before the next person could take the chair, the moderator would sum up what the last person had said. There was a wide range of views expressed. As a gay person myself, finding myself working for the Church of England, I was particularly happy about the way in which this discussion was conducted. However, it made me realise how much more difficult it

must be for a priest who is gay to be open about his or her sexuality to the community in which they serve. To my mind, there is still a 'don't ask – don't tell' culture, which I believe is detrimental to an individual's feeling of self-worth. More than just being tolerated, I believe that gay people working for the church should be celebrated, and their relationships sanctified as an expression of God's love, equal to any other.

There was also an additional lecture which everyone attended about 'why men don't go to church', given by a well-known Bristol psychologist. The gist of his talk was that there was too much sitting still and flowers to interest boys in church. He produced many statistics to back up his assertions, which indicated various differences between men and women in their approach to church. Interestingly there were no differences between male and female clergy in their approach to church, which was disproportional to the differences between men and women in society at large.

Alongside these sessions were regular meetings for worship, including traditional-style services, more evangelical-style worship, and multi-sensory installation worship, put together by Janet Lunt, who organised the Partnership children's workshop in June. I found these installations particularly moving. Amongst other things there was the opportunity to thread your prayer into a tapestry, symbolised by coloured pieces of material. There was also a video of various images of Christ, with beautiful music accompanying it, which was lovely to just sit and watch. On the final evening of the conference there was a Eucharist for all attending (over 200!), presided over by Bishops Mike and Lee.

I was very glad I was encouraged to attend the conference, and I would highly recommend it to others in the Partnership, should the opportunity for lay people to attend occur again. I feel that I came away with a fresh perspective and understanding of the work of our Partnership, and I hope this will feed into my work as your coordinator in the months to come.



St Ambrose

Question Time

Interviewee: Revd. André Urbanczyk

Interviewer: Mark Gartside

I've put together a list of questions around the subject of faith and church, which interest, me, and have begun posing them to various well-known people around the Partnership. My first willing victim was the Reverend André, and this is what he had to say:

How would you describe your relationship with God?

I think it is a growing and ever changing one. Sometimes I am struggling with him but most of the time I trust him to lead me in a good way. At times I find it hard to integrate him into my life. I believe, this is the real challenge for most people: to make this relationship essential for every aspect of their life.

How would you describe your relationship with Jesus?

I think he is a great role model for how to live with God and your fellow human beings. I don't like the evangelical view of Jesus as your *personal* friend and saviour. I think that puts Jesus too low. He is part of the Holy Trinity and therefore on the same level with God, the Father. I think we experience the presence of God in this world rather through the Holy Spirit (why is there no question about the spirit?) than through Jesus. I am old-fashioned and believe that he will return to this place at the end of time only.

In your opinion, what is the nature of sin?

I don't think there are evil forces in the world that make us doing bad things. I would give three answers: 1. Sin is structural, particularly in a globalised world. Whatever we buy, whatever we do – we harm and exploit people through it, sometimes at the other side of the world. It is nearly impossible to escape the sinful structures. 2. Also, sin is founded in the freedom of human beings: We are free to act against God. This implies, that we need to know God's will, which is sometimes difficult or impossible. 3. Sin is relative. What might be a sin in one situation could be a blessing in another. After studying

ethics for years, I believe strongly, that we should judge a person always in a particular situation, never in general.

How easy or hard do you find it to practice forgiveness?

Again, this depends. Generally I am not good at forgiving immediately, but quite good at it after some time. When people hurt me repeatedly I tend to turn away from them to not be vulnerable any longer.

How do you experience love?

Whenever people truly care for one another and like each other without preconditions.

How did you decide to start going to church?

Just accidentally. I grew up in Eastern Germany without any religious background. After moving to Bavaria (in the West), some friends took me to their youth club and I felt at home there soon, taking on many tasks in youth work. I then got baptised at the age of nineteen, feeling that I wanted to go ahead on the way with God. Still I did not enjoy Sunday services very much. It took me a few more years to get into them. Today I try to celebrate them better than I experienced it 15 years ago.

What drew you to the Church of England?

The link between my Lutheran Church in Bavaria and the Diocese of Bristol. I got offered this job and as Bettina and I liked England a lot, we gladly accepted. So, here we are. It is great for me to get to know a

different denomination from the inside. I learn a lot and will hopefully take many good things back to Germany with me.

Why did you decide to become a Minister?

I cannot say I decided that at any point. It was a rather long process. First I was fascinated by theological studies, so I went for that without feeling a necessity to become a minister afterwards. Nevertheless this became more and more a fascinating perspective during my studies. I also had the chance to go a bit further in an academic carrier but I went for the curacy after the studies because I really wanted to work with people. I have not regretted this decision up to this day.

What, in your opinion, are the strengths and weaknesses of the Church of England?

I might have a special outsider's perspective here, and I do also feel that this is actually a BIG question. Just some personal thoughts: One big strength of the CofE is her piety. I never met as many people in German churches who were praying as engaged as people here. Also the liturgy of the services is great. It is a pity that by leading Lutheran Services so often, I hardly get a chance to attend an Anglican service myself. I think they are very holistic, particularly when it comes to more catholic style worship. Also I think the Church of England's ability to embrace and accommodate a large range of worship styles, theological positions and opinions is a big strength. I'm trying hard to think of weaknesses but none are coming to my mind at the moment.

How do you imagine Jesus might reflect on the development of the Christian Church worldwide since his time on earth?

I think he never wanted an institution like that. He was actually questioning the religious institutions of his time. So, I guess he would say: "The important thing is that you believe!" But also he was calling people into community and solidarity. Therefore he would probably not be in favour of those who claim they could live their faith on their own.

What do you think are the possible strengths and weaknesses of the East Bristol Partnership?

Let's start with a weakness here: From my point of view, one fundamental problem is the relationship between clergy and people in the parishes. It is much harder to get to know each other and to get in touch as in the "one church – one vicar" model. Nevertheless I am convinced that we will find good ways of relating to each other. They might be different but will work. A strength is definitely the enlargement of our sources of people and their experiences. I heard many people saying that they enjoyed hearing many different priests preaching in their church. Also we can learn a lot from each other and support each other in our work. This does already happen and is an enrichment for our parishes.

What does the concept and practice of mission mean to you?

1. Being open, warm and welcoming towards those who have difficulties with faith for whatever reason.

2. Living the faith and witnessing to it.

What gets you through in times of struggle, doubt and despair?

My faith, of course. but also my wife Bettina is very supportive when I am not so well at times.

What is the cornerstone of your faith?

The trust in God.



St John's

Colossians Remixed - Book Review

Mark Gartside

Colossians Remixed looks at Postmodernism, Empire and Earth Stewardship through the prism of Paul's letter to the Colossians. A brief letter, divided into 4 short chapters, Colossians nevertheless

provided Sylvia Keesmat and Brian Walsh, the wife-and-husband team who authored the book, with a fertile ground for inspiring imaginative parallels between the Roman Empire of the 1st Century, and the global Empire we live in today, propagated by advertising, communication, the global economy and trade. However, one important difference between the time in which Paul was writing and today is the concept of Postmodernism, a concept which is intrinsically linked to the rise of the global Empire.

Postmodernism rejects the Enlightenment notion that there is such a thing as Absolute Truth; objective fact, which can ultimately be proved by science. Instead it embraces relativism – truth depends upon your perspective; there is no such thing as objective truth, it all depends on who, where and when you are. This idea might seem to fly in the face of the Christian conviction that the Bible represents the true word of God. However, Sylvia and Brian square this in an intriguing and provocative way.

Worship Jesus not Caesar... Worship Jesus not TV...?

This seems to me to be the essential parallel the authors draw between Paul's message to the people of Colossae living under the rule of the Roman Empire, and his message to us today. At the time of writing his letter, Paul was saying to the Colossians 'worship Jesus, not Caesar' – whose image at the time would have been omnipresent. To us today he is saying 'worship Jesus, not TV'. The only difference between Caesar and TV is Postmodernism.

Postmodernism represents choice – it allows for the possibility of taking a variety of different positions on a subject – culturally

conditioned at first, but less so as consciousness of choice creeps in. Likewise TV, and its counterpart the Internet, represent choice: thousands of different perspectives all available to us at the touch of a button; reams of information available on every subject under the sun at the click of a mouse. This is a very different adversary to Caesar. TV doesn't need to raise an army and march on our towns like Caesar would have had to do. It's already in our homes. It has already quietly conquered us, induced hypnosis through information overload, and surreptitiously squeezed out Jesus, in a more disturbing way than if we had suffered a violent onslaught, because it happened without us knowing. This, to me, seems to be the message of the book: the enemy is ubiquitous! Wake up and claim your lives back!

The book focuses for the most part on trying to explain this reading of Paul's letter to the Colossians, because it's not a reading that would be immediately apparent. The authors' essential struggle seems to be trying to square the 1st century context with the contexts in which we read Paul's letter today. To this end we are offered several 'targums': imaginative re-workings of parts of the original text to reflect the religious, cultural and socio-economic context in which we live. These targums are a lot longer than the original extracts from Paul's letter, precisely because the enemy today is so much harder to pin down than just Caesar – The Emperor. They refer to corporations such as Disney, AT&T, Nike, Microsoft etc., however, the list could be endless. The implication is that the choice to reject TV and worship Jesus is going to be a lot harder than the choice to reject Caesar, because we are so immersed in this conquering global culture. Certainly being a Christian doesn't lead to the death penalty

so much nowadays as it did in the 1st century, but the fact that we are bombarded by so much choice and information is a form of attack more subtle than straightforward violence, but ultimately just as deadly.

The book introduces to us three archetypes of the affected postmodern generation, of which I identified most deeply with a girl named Alana. A real-life student who the authors had known, she represents the child of post-modernism who feels they have to defer to everybody else's opinion (of which in our TV-Internet society there are always manifold forthcoming), and so feels lost as to her own position or opinion on everything. The postmodern child asks the question 'how can everyone be right? Answer: They can't: therefore truth must be relative. However this stance does tend to leave one in a position of sometimes desperate insecurity.

What I believe the authors are saying is that the way of Jesus, the way of the Cross, transcends even the postmodern concept of the multifariousness of truth. What Jesus is offering us is a choice beyond 'worship Caesar or die!' or 'which channel to choose'. They argue that Paul is saying that the choice to follow Jesus is not in the same league as the choice to bow to the Empire for the sake of your own survival, whether it is survival in terms of physically staying alive or being able to compete in stakes of knowledge. They are asserting that the choice to follow Jesus is a choice you make with your heart and not with your head.

The Partnership has a copy of the book to borrow if you're interested. Please contact Mark to reserve it.



St Leonard's

On the covenant agreement

Revd. Keith Thomasson

It is good to have been with you all in East Bristol for over two years now. I feel optimistic about the possibilities and opportunities we have and the obstacles we might face. We are certainly in a time of real transition which will continue for the foreseeable future. We are following the God of pilgrimage so clearly seen within Holy Scripture. This is exciting and risky, fun and painful.

As a federation of churches we have committed ourselves to a way of working together that we have somewhat boldly called a 'Covenant Agreement'. In using such strong biblical words we enter into a long theological history of partnership working which makes the most of the resources we can all, as individuals and churches, share together to work for God's kingdom here. However we perhaps should be

mindful of how easy it is to turn our backs on Covenant Agreements - again search the scriptures for the numerous examples. I regularly re-read and think about the Covenant Agreement we have entered into together as communities, as it is the basis of our shared vision which should be the basis of all we do as Steering Group and PCCs and worshipping communities. This is the vision we share in and it has great potential in shaping how we follow the pilgrimage God.

Here it is as a reminder:

The Partnership Vision

We the churches of the East Bristol Partnership, comprising St. Ambrose, St. Leonard, St Aidan, St Michael, St Mary, St John and All Saints Commit ourselves to a process in which we will...

Deliberately work to encourage and recognise the Christian ministry of lay people so that members of churches grow to an understanding of their personal responsibility for the life and witness of the church.

Build on existing good practice in collaborative ministry and so challenge simple dependency on 'having a vicar' by allowing people to experience a rich variety of ministry from gifted teams of clergy and lay people drawn from across the partnership.

Develop teams of people to undertake both traditional parish work and radical new initiatives, cutting across parish boundaries and reaching out to untouched sectors of society.

Ensure recognition of lay ministry both by the congregation and the wider community. Schemes will be developed with a view to establishing new authorised ministries for lay people. In consultation with the clergy, progress towards an understanding that clergy work within the whole partnership, rather than in individual parishes, and that their ministry is expressed as enabling the ministry of others, rather than being hierarchical leaders. Specialist ministries will be encouraged where appropriate.

So how does it affect me?

I am licensed as a partnership priest and not a priest in charge. I am here in place of the Bishop and have his license (I work VICARiously). I share in the work of enlivening this shared vision/covenant agreement and am finding that my work can be understood in three ways, all of which are done through the lens of a pastoral ministry in a broad, and not limited sense. It is also undertaken in a realistic and sustainable way. (The community theologian and thinker, Ann Morisy, has been helpful in my thinking on this matter, and I use her terms below but slightly vary their meaning).

The explicit domain.

First of all, I am involved in the 'explicit' work of the church communities, for example leading Sunday and midweek worship, officiating at Occasional Offices sometimes, and participating in to an extent a whole host of traditional patterns of ministry (e.g. visiting, feeding the homeless, giving talks, assemblies, shopping and

being present locally). Many of you if honest will recognise that this is the case, even if I am not able to do this as much as you might want me to.

The vocational domain

Secondly, I am involved in assisting people develop their own spiritual lives, their path of discipleship, and their commitment to an encounter with the living God. Connected to this I see many people one to one and in groups where the gathered people are exploring their common calling and gifting and beginning to exercise it across the communities. I am trying to support those actively engaged in various ministries and leadership positions and resource them. At the moment this is for example taking shape with the Summer Singing School for which people from St Mary's and All Saints are working closely in partnership.

The foundational domain

Thirdly, I am engaged with and plan to be increasingly, in work with those on the periphery of church life or outside it but with access points. Quite a lot of time is spent with those who are new to church or revisiting the possibility of faith. Quite a lot of time is spent with those who attend toddler groups, school coffee mornings, community choirs, and fun and faith days based on artistic work.

You may read this through and have different reactions. For some of you there may be encouragement at what is happening - and this is just with me, not to mention all my lay and ordained colleagues in

leadership, and those of you keen to develop gifting and skills but not quite yet confident enough to take the plunge. Some of you will be surprised that I spend more time resourcing the ministry of others rather than doing the ministry for 'which I am paid a stipend'. Some of you may think that I am on the wrong track altogether!

OK. So what? Well it is good that you know what I am up to, and by my writing about it briefly there will be correction to gossip, which will be mostly inaccurate. I can also communicate, however imperfectly, with more people than I can face to face, but still prefer to do it face to face (please ask me if you want to know anything specifically). However, I am writing about it here as I think it is linked to stewardship responsibilities and church finances.

Currently very few of the church communities can (easily) afford to pay their diocesan quota and maintain clergy/coordinator expenses and pay for the upkeep of buildings (and yes the list is longer than this, I know). Some churches will feel a real commitment to paying diocesan quota and this will be for various reasons-ranging from helping to pay generally for stipendiary ministry of many different kinds to maintaining good relationships with the diocese so that in nine years time we can ask for a vicar again.

However we look at it, we probably collectively can only support a proportion of the real cost of the buildings we have and the stipendiary ministers we have - our allocation incidentally is for 2.6 stipends and we have very generously been given the 2.6 (David, Susan and Mark), and in addition two mission-initiative priests (Keith and Michael Selman) and then the gift that Andre is, and then

again several self-supporting ordained and LLMs. We have limited financial resources, yet monies are given sacrificially by many, and let's thank you and God for this.

And so there is a need for all the churches to revisit the theology behind giving (e.g. in response to God's generosity rather than paying someone to do ministry for us) and then to reconsider how the money is being used, (as there are more worthy uses of the money than we can meet). We also need to ask the following questions - when did we last have a stewardship campaign? How would it work effectively now and can we ask for diocesan support? (Yes we can ask for diocesan support). What was the response?

I tentatively suggest that the huge majority of our monies are spent on what I have called above, 'explicit ministry'. I also tentatively suggest that whilst this is understandable, if we are to resource and call the people of God's creation to faith and discipleship then we need to consider taking a risk. And this risk is to make funding our increasing vocational and foundational level work an equal priority with that of funding our explicit work.

If we do this we may lose our buildings (in quantity) and the access to stipendiary ministry (in quantity). If you read the statistical analysis of Peter Brierly (done on behalf of the churches) then you might conclude we will lose these anyway in twenty years time.

If we do not do this we lose any real possibility of a growing, healthy Body of Christ, which may (or may not) wish to use such buildings as part of their ministry in conjunction with the God of Pilgrimage.

Difficult decisions need to be taken, but please... the theological, missional and spiritual perspectives are crucial. But let's do it in partnership. Let's live the vision of the Covenant Agreement, and let's take the risks. And if anyone wants to join us in partnership, for example any secular or other agencies let's consider the proposals carefully and openly. For God is not locked within the church building and one way of doing mission and ministry (hopefully).



Trees in St Mary's Church Yard

OUTsideIN... *there is more to us than meets the eye...*

In October, from 4th to 11th, St. Aidan with St. George is undertaking an outreach event, the name of which is above.

The intention is to address the call from the Bishop to PINC. The programme for the event forms the basis of the St. Aidan with St. George growth plan.

The week will encompass many events, including a variety of services, discussions, social events and general companionship. Work with a Local School in their Key Stage activities is in place and a production of 'Joseph' by local youngsters will take place. Look out for the full programme and come along, your support will be invaluable

The first major 'Building Block' in the process is to deliver to every house in the parish an information pack outlining what we are, what we already do, what we intend to do and invite all to come and experience us 'in community'.

With this pack will go a Questionnaire seeking input from all with regards to their experience of us (if any) and importantly their expectations and requirements of us.

Central to this will be our membership of the Partnership, and to this end we will make those in our parish aware of what the Partnership has to offer, e.g. Word and Worship, Start!, Confirmation etc. AND what the other partnership members are able to offer. We feel this is important as one group will find it impossible to cater for everybody's needs and there may be something elsewhere that meets the need. Also folks may find it more convenient to visit another parish church.

The PCC and the organising working group, who have been supported by André, were all united in the belief that whatever we do at St. Aidan with St. George in terms of outreach we should make reference to our Partners in the EBP, and to this end a short article from each of the Partnership Parishes is to be included.

Blessings, Trevor Denley.

News Items

Partnership seeks two representatives from any of the Partnership churches to serve 'ex-officio' on the board of governors for St Matthias Dr. Bells School, the only CofE school in the Partnership. Speak to Mark if you're interested.

Upcoming Events

Revd. Susan Allman to be re-licensed as Partnership Priest, Evensong Service, Tuesday 26th August, 7.30pm, St Michael's.

Licensing Service for Revd. Michael Selman, new Partnership Priest, Tuesday 30th September, 7.30pm, St John's.

- Outside In – Mission week at St Aidan's
- Discussion on the future of the Beehive
- Slides and fundraising for India with André
- Grand Partnership Fish and Chip Supper and Quiz Night
- Summer Singing School for primary school children

- Choir for adults and young people
- Creativity workshop for children
- Welcome, Word and Worship
- Creating Liturgy Days
- Anything to Declare?
- Start! Course
- Uncommon Worship

See EBP calendar, website or ask Mark for more details...!

Contact Details

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