

Dear Nativity family and friends,

Welcome again as we remember today, those who fought for our freedom, as well as those faithful saints who made our worship space available to us. But we remember not only them.

REMEMBER

Supremely we remember what God, in Jesus, won for us on the cross and by his resurrection.

Remembering indicates something has changed. Things are no longer as they once were. Life itself is constantly changing. Often change is uncomfortable but we don't need to be afraid of it.

Last Sunday Libby and I made this announcement at the end of each service:

"In consultation with the Bishop and Parish Wardens, Libby and I believe we have led Nativity as far as we are able. Therefore with very sad hearts we tell you, I have tendered my resignation as Vicar of Nativity, to the Bishop. It seems that it needs someone with a different skill set and giftings to lead Nativity into the next stage of Parish Life. As you know Parish finances do not allow us an option to stay on as Pastoral staff. There are 2 factors I believe are important to say at this point:

1—This has been months in the making and has nothing to do with the operational review the Reverend Robin Kingston is preparing.

2—I have annual and sabbatical leave that needs to be taken before I officially finish here. Therefore in 2019, after annual leave in January and sabbatical leave from February to late April, my last Sunday here will be 5 May. So we'll be around for another 6 months off and on."

Libby added:

"As Bob said, our hearts are very sad. It's been a hard few months recently. We had anticipated journeying with you all for some time yet, but it's not to be. We love you all and we have experienced so much love from you, and that's why we need to be real and say it hurts so much to share this news. God has never let us down. He has an exciting future for Nativity that he's already hinted at through Bob and the leadership, and God has an exciting future for us too that we are seeking him about constantly. We don't know what the future holds for us, but we know the one who holds the future, and that's a very good start."

It's not that we want to leave. We don't. It's that we have loved being part of this Parish, and like raising kids, part of the care is knowing when it's time to get out of the way. So we'll still be around for a while, and will look forward to seeing you and worshipping with you for the next 6 months.

Now, please remember to pray for our staff and Vestry as they also face changes. Redundancies and cut backs are very possible. These changes result from the operational review that's in process. Staff have been consulted and will be informed of the outcomes once Vestry has assessed the report. It's hoped to be able to let you, the Parish, know by the end of November.

Whatever happens Nativity will look very different in 12 months. "As it was in the beginning, is now and shall be forever" only applies to the glory of God, not us, not the church, nor the things we do even in church. Do you remember when guitars were disapproved of? Or when only the clergy and specially licenced lay people led the worship? How things have changed indeed!

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah" (Psalm 46 v7 & 11)

We are indeed on a journey. The scenery is changing around us. Our God alone is constant. Remember these things – but don't look back. God's grace and peace be with you, through all the changing scenes of life.

Bob and Libby