

WHY CHANGE?

I have the pleasure to be part of the team that supports Curates in training with facilitated sessions as part of their IME (study phase of curacy). My subject area is Change Processes and managing change. It is largely based on real life examples, amended to protect the innocent. It is thankfully much appreciated by the students who are in their third and final year and looking forward to applying for their first post "in charge" so to speak!

In the introduction, the session notes say this:

Why change?

*Change is required when our **current activities, methods and structures are not** directed towards our **vision, objectives and Mission Action Plan**.*

Which presumes that we have a vision, objectives and action plan.....!

Albert Einstein is alleged to have said *"The definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result!"*

If we want to change the outcome, then it is worth looking at what we are doing and how we are doing it.

That is what we have been doing in a series of team meetings over the last three weeks. Exploring what we do, how we do it, what works, what could be tweaked or amended.

The only reason to change is to get a different and better outcome. What is gained must be more than what is lost. And if it's working, it isn't broke....so don't fix it!

The only thing that has changed so far is the look and content of the **Parish News**.

The purpose is threefold:

1. To make it more attractive to those outside the church and inform them of what is going on
2. To establish a consistent look to our publications that is recognisable and striking
3. To keep the congregation informed of what is going on; hence e-mailing it out in advance of Sunday as well as producing paper copies.

In the process, we have a **red banner** that is consistent with our noticeboards, we have **highlighted our mission statement** on the footer, again in red, and we have (thanks to your talented warden) a **new logo** making use of the people/church photo – which is by the way genius! Love it!!

All of these changes are intentional and designed towards a purpose.

And that purpose has been ever so slightly tweaked too.

According to the profile that I applied to, and in some of the parish literature (but often hidden) was the parish mission statement. Be honest. Do you know what it is?.....

Many churches have them, few can tell you what it is!

But to be effective, **it needs to be known, it needs to be meaningful, and it needs to be owned** so it influences all our decisions.

Here it is: ***Growing in Christ, working together with the community and sharing God's love***

While I will be asking PCC next month if this still represents our understanding of our calling here, I think that it encapsulates some key aspects of the heart of Sanderstead Parish. But in formulating it for the consistent look mentioned above, I tweaked it to be three sets of three words:

Growing in Christ

Together with Community

Sharing God's love

I commend it for two reasons. Firstly, it has a symmetry with the 3 x 3 format. Secondly, the amended "Together with Community" works on two levels –

working with the community; AND

Growing in Christ with the community

– in other words, we want those who do not yet know Him to grow in Christ with us!

It's a small and subtle change but can both communicate a message as well as potentially open up conversations with others.

Please also notice that *Growing in Christ* (worship and discipleship) and *Sharing God's love* (caring and sharing) apply as much internally to the church family as it does to reaching out to those outside. It's both/and. Not either/or.

Why change?

Because we want a different outcome.

Do we change everything?

NO. Only those areas where we want the outcome to be different!!

A final thought.

In an attempt to root the material in scripture, I also posed the following questions to the curates...

BIBLICAL CHANGE - A BIT OF FUN!

QUICK QUIZ: Consider the following scriptures:

Exodus 32 – what change management processes might have prevented the making of the Golden Calf?

A: CLEARER COMMUNICATION DURING A PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY?

Haggai 1 – how does God encourage change through the prophet Haggai?

A: REMINDERS OF THE MAIN PURPOSE (– *keeping the main thing the main thing.....*)

Acts 6 – how did the apostles effect change in the way in which food was distributed?

DELEGATION

Acts 10 – how were the attitudes towards gentile Christians changed through Peter?

THE POWER OF A RESISTER, INSPIRED BY GOD, BECOMING A PROPONENT, INSPIRING OTHERS

Revelation 21 – how does God effect change?

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE INTERVENTION OF GOD IN UNEXPECTED WAYS – BE AMBITIOUS AND READY FOR THE MIRACULOUS!!

All for his glory...

Come Holy Spirit, guide our conversations. Show us your desired outcomes. Help us keep what is good and change what will change the outcome!

In Jesus Almighty name we pray,
Amen

Your brother in Christ,
Doug

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