**Session 2: “Leading Change”**

Welcome back, its good to see you’re still here ☺

So here we go for session 2 – leading change…

How do we encourage those that we lead to move toward the vision together?

You know this whole idea of “moving towards something”

implies change.

Movement is impossible without change.

*My 7 year old Son used to grab me by the legs and declare triumphantly “get out of that Dad without moving!”…..*

*I had the choice to either admit defeat or to wait for him to get bored.*

*Given that my fallen self hates admitting defeat – it was a tough call ☺*

Movement is impossible without change.

God’s Word tells us that GOD doesn’t change but –

what is clear is that God DOES “do” change in others

God changes people and he changes things.

He takes communities that are broken and he restores them,

he takes people that are incomplete and fulfils them,

he takes situations “that have fallen apart” and makes them whole

he takes people who are sold to sin and redeems them

He takes communities that are immature and makes them grow, flourish, bear fruit and change.

GOD doesn’t change,

but God certainly does “DO” change in individuals and communities and situations.

In Romans 12, God says this

*12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy,*

*to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.*

*2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

There are a number of important things in this that we need to see from this passage –

**first of all this passage is about change –**

Its about “not conforming” to a particular way of “thinking and doing” but being transformed,

its about renewal of our mind

Its about growth in our understanding of God’s will,

Its about trying something new (pursuing God’s purposes) and discovering, on the way, that they are good.

So this is about change and that

**Secondly, this change is urgent**

*(I urge you brothers),*

Here is a leader talking to his Church and he is calling them alongside him in this urgent task…

The Greek word is: para-kaleo – literally: to call alongside

Paul is travelling in a particular direction and he is urging his church to join him… “come along with me in this”

He is stressing the importance of transformation, of developing maturity and moving on.

It seems to me that a leaders function is to call people alongside,

to endeavour together on something bigger than themselves;

to grow people in their faith,

to put them in the centre of God’s will

This is surely part of our Job Description and it is an urgent task.

**Thirdly this Change (this Call) is VISION led….**

*Paul says “Therefore, in view of God’s mercy”*

Therefore because of what I have just said

With what I have just said “in View”…

With that “in your Vision”…

Paul has just talked about God’s salvation plan,

God’s purposes in history, and

the glory of it all – and he says

“With this in view”…

Come with me in this thing…

Change in people is vision led…

Given “this GREAT future – come with me in this thing that God wants us to DO together”.

**Fourthly, the change is practical and spiritual**

*offer your* ***bodies*** – offer something physical, do something practical because this ALSO ***spiritual*** – an act of worship.

In the next verse – Paul talks about our ***minds*** too

So in these two verses God shows us the combination of body, mind and spirit all responding to the vision that God has given us.

**And finally Change is about sacrifice: to live the life that God has called us to.**

*as living sacrifices… testing and approving God's will*

Living Christianity is sacrificial love with God’s purpose in mind

And this idea of Sacrificial love is *crucially important* when leading people into CHANGE.

It gives us a paradigm (a model) for how we are asking people to approach change.

“Sacrificial love” gives the congregation the values it needs to work out whether a particular course of action is right or not.

In other words:

The test “*do I like this change that the Vicar is suggesting”*

is NOT a criteria for judging whether something is good or not.

The test *“how do I benefit from this proposal”*

is NOT a criteria for evaluating a specific course of action

The test *“does this proposed change fit with my needs”* –

is NOT a criteria for evaluating a specific course of action in the Kingdom of God

Almost all “gospel change” is going to be driven by vision (but evaluated) through the prism of **sacrificial love**.

*When our church was evaluating the biggest organisational change in its 750 year history*

*I was looking for a mandate to proceed.*

*I was talking with some Political Researches in our congregation and I asked what a mandate looked like?*

*They said 60%, 70% agreement is unheard of in their experience.*

*70% agreement seems pretty low to me… So I thought 90% was probably our target…*

*When we took a free vote across 6 congregations*

*where some congregations would be big losers –*

*and the biggest congregation was going to make the biggest sacrifice –*

*When we voted we had a 98.5% approval to go forward.*

*Why? Because the prism they used to analyse the proposal was not*

*Do I like it?*

*Does it benefit me?*

*Does it serve my needs?*

*BUT – is this sacrificial love for the Kingdom of God…?*

So I want to suggest whether we are a leaders of 30 or 300

a crucial part of leadership is to develop

Vision led proposals

that people understand involve sacrificial love for the Kingdom of God… (and they get it!!)

We have only really have time to look at one passage

But here are some tentative conclusions that we can reach from God’s word

* Change is the business of leadership,
* our mandate is urgent to call people alongside us as we model the change ourselves
* it is vision led,
* it’s **impact** is tangible and spiritual; and
* it involves personal sacrifice

And when that happens people/congregations/communities move along the path of God’s purpose for them.

What did that look like for us at Southover as we began to think about our Mission to the whole of Lewes and as we began to our change our identity from 3 churches into 1 …

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So this journey is one that goes back 7 years and so having been on the team at TRINITY for 2 years I was naturally the obvious choice to give you the low down! Thanks for that Steve!

Having said that, the recent history of the church and vision going forward was a huge part what drew me to the role with TRINITY so I’ve given the journey to date quite a bit of thought.

**Challenges** - The journey started with challenges across the board.

Southover Church seeking space and time to develop new contemporary worship expressions whilst continuing to value and grow it’s blended and traditional congregations.  And the church challenged by the reality of being the largest Anglican church in the town but operating in a relatively small “out of town” parish

St. Johns sub Castro and South Malling could no longer afford a full time-minister between them.

The likelihood of St. John sub Castro closing due to vast building restoration needs paired with a small elderly congregation

And South Malling struggling due to an isolated location and no realistic plan for growth.

It’s been my experience that it is often in the careful consideration of our challenges that new opportunities can be identified and vision begins to take shape.

And it was indeed in the pooling of all these challenges that a way forward of each church as one church, TRINITY was conceived.

**Clarity** - The next step which was a slow one and to a great extent is still ongoing was one of gaining absolute clarity on what it would be like to operate as one church.

A huge amount of time and effort was spent with the diocese, in leadership team and at PCC bouncing around the pros and cons of this possible joining as one church.

This was and is absolutely vital! If we are to lead people towards something you need to be absolutely sure where that is. People will not get on a bus unless they can see where it’s going!

**Consensus** - At 3 points along the way the PCC’s of each existing church have been given the chance to

be reminded of the challenges each individual church was facing,

hear the clearly defined hope and vision for TRINITY

and then express a consensus (or otherwise) that each church wishes to proceed to the next stage. The final opportunity for this was at the respective AGMs earlier this year and the great news was that there was still overwhelming support to proceed and legal become TRINITY Church in January 2018.

We had been betrothed, engaged and now the wedding date was set and assuming no PCCs get cold feet and leave the other two at the altar, we’ll be on honeymoon in the new year!

So we started with identifying challenges, wrestling to gain clarity and then seeking to express consensus.

**Construction** - But the past 2 years have also brought a new task into play. Construction.

This has been physical as we’ve progressed the restoration and repurposing of St. John sub Castro as a centre equipped to support the administrative & leadership needs of multi-site ministry,

an open door into the community based around a commercial cafe

and as a base for a new range of community focussed ministries under our Love in Action banner

and of course, as a home to 2 of our 6 congregations.

But it’s also meant constructing new ways of working. Staffing in a way that best supports our new shared vision and direction. Finding new organisational structures to support the new and more complex reality.

Standardising the way we schedule volunteers, plan services and communicate service plans across a large and varied leadership team, plan our church events schedule, handle bookings, hold all data and communicate to the whole church.

As you can imagine with 3 churches bringing a range of volunteers with existing systems and ways of working this is a complex area to get a handle on and reshape and one that we’ll be continuing to construct for some time to come!

**Culture** - Finally the greatest challenge we’re facing and will continue to face going forward is that of

shaping the culture of the church to match the direction and vision we have agreed upon.

We’re blending 3 churches and so just to simply transition people’s mind-set from being focussing on their historic church or congregation into being members of “TRINITY Church” and all that this means is at the very heart of this final task.

And given the 100s of years of faithful ministry that has gone before us in each church location it’s fair to say that we’ve only just begun!

**Practical Application**

Thank you Martin, – Kirsty 5 mins

Steve said that the Head of BBC digital media said –

“people don’t like change even when they know it is for their good”

But why? Why do people not like change?

**Why do people not like Change?**

All change is unsettling.

The longer we have been doing something in a particular way the greater the inertia and the greater the shock should we suggest change….

*How many Charismatics does it take to change the light-bulb – 50, 1 to change the light-bulb and 49 to share the experience*

*How many Catholics does it take to change a light-bulb – none – candles are way more holy*

*How many Baptists does it take to change a light bulb? - One to*

*actually change the bulb and 9 to say how much they like the old one.*

*How many Anglicans does it take to change a light-bulb – CHANGE – who said anything about CHANGE!!*

Why don’t people like change?

**1) Fear?? – Change** bringsuncertainty.

So in a sense only make changes when changes are necessary, when they are understood, when they have gospel benefit.

So you can’t please all the people all the time

so every change is going to upset someone,

so only do those things that are necessary.

**2) Attachment –**

**People like what they know** **and believe that what they know is good**…

And the longer someone has been doing something the better it must “therefore” be.

When a particular way of doing things has stood the test of time,

there is a natural feeling that it is probably superior to ALL the alternatives ***in at least some respects***.

*In one study, when one group of people viewed a* ***painting*** *which was described as having been painted in 1905*

*And another group of people viewed the SAME painting having been described as being painted in 2005*

*The first group consistently found it far more pleasing to look at than the second group.*

*In another study, people admired the appearance of a tree described as being 4,500 years old more than did those people who thought the same tree was just 500 years old; and*

***Chocolate*** *– in one study participants were given a piece of chocolate. It was described as coming from a recipe from either 73 years ago or 3 years ago. The more traditional recipe was consistently given better-tasting scores.*

So change isn’t simply about the fear of embracing something unknown — it’s also about giving up something old (and therefore good) for something new (and therefore not proven and instinctively not as good).

**3) They wouldn’t would they?**

*As Miss Jean Brodie once said about the Girl Guides,*

*For those that like that sort of thing its just the sort of thing they like.*

Which means, the only people you have with you, are precisely the people who like what you are doing …

So if I set up a shop in 1662 that only sold salted porridge (*and let me tell you right now that there is nothing wrong with 1662 salted porridge* let the hearer understand).

But if I set up a shop in 1662 that only sold salted porridge

THEN the only people who now frequent my shop in 2017 are people who like salted porridge.

*If one day I said to them – hey shall we try Museli –*

*They would ALL say “nooo… we like salted porridge – away with the Museli Monkeys!”.*

Hezekiah 3v16 *For those that like that sort of thing its just the sort of thing they like.*

**So people don’t like change for all sorts of reasons…**

**So the best way of introducing change is set out a Godly Vision.**

All change must start with a sense of “why”

why are we wanting to do this?

**Bad reasons for change are:**

Because this is what I want,

Because this is what the PCC want.

Because I have gone away and prayed about it…

Incidentally, I’ve noticed an interesting trend….

the more controversial a subject is,

the more likely it will be that the leadership will be tempted to simply issue change by command;

They’ll be tempted to say

We’ve prayed about this and we’ve decided this is what we’re doing… so let’s talk about it, and let us tell you the reasons why”.

I want to say, this is a Rookie error in consensus, collaborative, come alongside me, volunteer supported leadership.

*It works fine in the army,*

*It works fine if the building is on fire,*

*But If you are trying* ***to win hearts and minds for Christ****,*

*if you are trying to take people with you and*

*its* ***important*** *AND* ***controversial*** *–*

*the approach because I believe this is right, so now let’s talk about it” is a mistake…*

**Good reasons for introducing change are:**

We want to glorify Jesus by…

We want to help people encounter the good news of the gospel

We want to fulfil the law of loving God and loving others…

Set a Godly vision – HOW

**In three stages …**

**Initial exploration** - an open, wide ranging discussion about what concerns you, and different options - ways - to move forward.

Make tentative proposals about what’s in your mind/on your heart and begin to identify reasons “for and against”.

**Draft Proposal** (often in paper form!! – why in paper – because it

* clarifies your thinking,
* it is an opportunity to present balanced reasoning,
* you can show fairly any disagreements to demonstrate listening and engagement,
* it’s of a record of a journey that evolves
* and because it is draft – it is still open to input, to change, to new ideas.

This **draft proposal** may go through a number of iterations before you have something that everyone can buy into.

**A Firm Proposal** (at least seeking agreement in principle, if life is unclear – or a plan if everything is tickety-boo)

*Golden Rule - Festina lente – make haste slowly!*

Take your time,

it is surprising how long even simple decisions take

– especially if your PCC meets only once every other month!

**The importance of “values”…**

Now we’ve touched on this already

– but once the vision is agreed and you’re beginning to form a plan

How do you, your leadership team, the congregation discern whether it is the right thing…?

*Archbishop Temple gave part of it to us*

*The Church is the only organisation that does not exist for itself,*

*but for those who live outside of it*

That simple statement turns on its head

– most people’s values as to why we should or should not do something.

The upside down values of the Kingdom of God **are crucial** to get into the mind-set of our church our church if we are to overcome objections based around:

* I don’t like it
* This is not the way we’ve always done it
* This is going to be difficult for me to accept, get used to, understand, to like…

Jesus said

It is in giving that we receive.

It is in serving others that we are blessed.

It is in being last that we become first.

It is in becoming least that we become the greatest.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ –

Sacrifice for those who are not in our community

**These** are key gospel principles that everyone in church should being using to evaluate change.

*This is not necessarily what I want but for your sake I will do it…*

*Our small traditional and elderly congregation of 30 members at*

*St John sub Castro were asked to vote on whether they should invite 40 members of Southover to come and replace their service with a very contemporary, informal service that they knew they would NOT like.*

*They had been worshipping in their church for a generation:*

*at the time they wanted, in the style they wanted, in the place they loved*

*and I was asking them to give it all up to allow a new opportunity, a new ministry to begin.*

*They had a free vote.*

*They could say “no”,*

*They could say “I abstain”,*

*They could say “yes”.*

*ALL OF THEM said “yes” – no abstentions, no “no”s ALL yes…*

*Why? Because they reasoned*

*Although this is not what I want,*

*this is NOT what I would desire for me,*

*YET I realise its what is best for the Kingdom of God.*

The importance of our values and

**The importance of People…**

When I worked in the City – the task was ALL important.

If people didn’t like what you were doing they either shut up and supported you; or they left or you fired them.

The task, the bottom-line, AND getting the job done was all-important.

When I became a church leader that changed.

Relationships are what its all about.

People are important

You can win the battle over doing something and lose the war over the person.

The War is the heart and minds of the people that you lead.

The Apostle Paul said “what we do”

is no-where near as important as “the way in which we do it”.

He shows us the most excellent WAY

1 Cor 13v1

*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.*

*2If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

*3If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

So I want to suggest that sacrificing the TASK

to establish **THIS** **mind-set** in the people is our first priority…

* It is in giving that we receive.
* It is in serving others that we are blessed.
* It is in being last that we become first.
* It is in becoming least that we become the greatest.
* Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ –

I want to suggest that many times

THIS is often more important than achieving **the change** we actually want to achieve…

In other words –

Changing the hearts and minds of the people we lead IS the TASK…

THIS Task is often more important than the CHANGE we want to introduce.

So IF we are encountering **opposition**

to gospel oriented, vision led change…

*it can be as frustrating as hell…*

BUT I would suggest that it is FOR THIS

that we have been called;

that actually our number 1 priority as Pastors is to change people’s hearts and minds

it is not to win the battle but to win the war,

it is not to push through the change, to win the argument – but to change the hearts of those we are leading…

In other words –

Opposition is ALWAYS **an opportunity** to love someone sacrificially, to submit to THEM out of reverence for Christ

To give up what we hold precious to love them

And in so doing we live the gospel we preach.

The battle is the heart and mind of those we Pastor

not the winning of the argument.

***May I encourage you if you are a church leader not to get frustrated with sheep acting like … well… sheep ☺***

If you’re wanting to go in a particular direction and they find the grass at their feet way more interesting and they don’t want to move….

Or if they think the field next door is way more fun than your field,

It CAN really hurt…

But don’t get frustrated at Sheep acting in Sheep like ways… (

Firstly because, we ’re a sheep too and Jesus our Shepherd probably wants to smack his forehead in frustration with me more than once a day;

* Secondly our job is to lead Sheep - If sheep didn’t **act** like Sheep God wouldn’t have called us to be Pastors in the first place!
* Thirdly Tension isn’t necessarily bad – tension is how the body moves, muscles work against each other, it’s a sign of vitality.

*Our last PCC meeting had 4 complex issues – we were split, we disagreed, I didn’t get what I wanted –* ***it was a fabulous meeting !*** *We dis-agreed agreeably and that not bad!*