



The Priory Church of St Mary



Welcome. This month we consider the impact of change in an uncertain world where our lives are impacted by a volatile environment. This requires us all to be open minded and flexible when faced with different approaches, even in Church where we may struggle with the new ways and changes that are taking place.



Prayer on Change By Betty Lewis

Heavenly Father, thank you for the assurance of your unchanging faithfulness and love in our ever-changing lives.

Change is part of our being.

Change is all around us in our lives.

Change is growth and enlightenment and can be refreshing.

Change can also be un-welcome and disturbing.

Change is sometimes a choice and other times it is thrust upon us.

Faithful God, please guide our future steps and equip us with love and caring, courage and wisdom to lead lives which are joyful in hope, being shining lights of your ways and the people you would have us be as we experience the mystery of life and the changes that take place throughout each of our lives.

Gracious God, please comfort and provide understanding to all for whom change has been a burden or caused great sadness. Help them to see the brighter sides of life and the goodness which abounds around us.

Caring God, all of us have experienced many changes in these uncertain times when everyone, everywhere has been affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. We recognise the connection between all of us and also the world in which we live. Help us to keep our hearts and minds open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit in our lives and put our trust in you to guide and help us along our paths of many changes.

Our Thanks and Praise to you Lord.

Amen.

A reflection on change

‘When the winds of change blow, some people build walls, other build windmills’ – This is an old Chinese proverb which has made me reflect on the changes which are happening within and to our Ministry Area. There are real concerns that the changes which are afoot will not be for the better; that we may lose more than we gain – but we must be careful not to build walls but rather have faith in, and support all who are working hard to build windmills – Bishop Cherry, Sally and the rest of the clergy team, together with our representatives on the Ministry Area Transition Team. With our prayers and God’s help they will see us right – all will be well.

Sarah Byford





“WE TRUST GOD TO LEAD US INTO THE NEW AND SHAPE US FOR THE MISSION AND MINISTRY TO WHICH WE ARE CALLED”

The Right Reverend Cherry VannBishop of Monmouth



As work around establishing Ministry Areas in the Diocese of Monmouth is progressing, the team have produced a number of documents that lay out how these Ministry Areas will operate. Copy link for more details:

<https://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk/en/clergy-and-members/ministry-areas/>

Church Times (April 2021)

Recently I read this interview published earlier this year with the retiring Archbishop, the Most Revd John Davies. The words are a good reminder of the changes that have already taken place in the Church since the vision set out by Judge John Bankes in 1917. There is recognition of failure as well as success and the need to keep changing. The extracts may be of interest copy this link to take you to the complete article

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2021/23-april/news/uk/church-in-wales-humbler-but-richer-says-retiring-archbishop> **Debbie Harper**

“I have a sense that we are still some way from completing either the task or the journey that he envisaged, and that we have not always been sufficiently committed to making the amount of progress which we might.”

It was only recently, he said, “that we have begun to take concrete steps to fully grasp that vision”. The Church had faced the fact that “we have sometimes been too easy-going in our approach, failing to keep alive the vision that Bankes so clearly articulated”

The Archbishop rejoiced, however, that there were real positives and a joyful sense that Bankes’s vision was being revived. The Church was now ready to recognise the reality of the weakness of its position, and where it actually stood in relation to its influence on Wales as a nation and on its people. There was also joy in the model of “shared gifts, pooled talents, and working together”.

He rejoiced, too, that the leading of worship and the practice of pastoral care was “no longer confined to those in clerical collars”. He noted the increasingly rich treasury of the liturgical worship resources, old and new, on which to draw.

The Church was also awakening to the need to turn more and more habitual attenders or gatherers into reverent worshippers and growing disciples, he said, “rather than taking church life for granted while simply waiting for those others to come — they won’t, because we can seem too introvert and uninteresting, and, frankly, a bit odd”.

He continued: “There must also be joy that we admit the hurt we have caused and are now ready to reach out to some in our midst and in our communities who have been made to feel unwanted, excluded, and unwelcome because we have not understood them, talking about them instead of to them. They must not be shut out any longer.”

PRAYER:
In Times of Transition & Change

Mighty Everlasting Father,
everything is changing around me,
Oh God: my life, my circumstances and
even the world.

Oh Lord, my God, help me to not fear
this change, allow me to embrace it
as I embrace You daily.

Give me strength
to rise above every situation and
overcome the darkness.



“Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.”

[1 Corinthians 15:51-42]