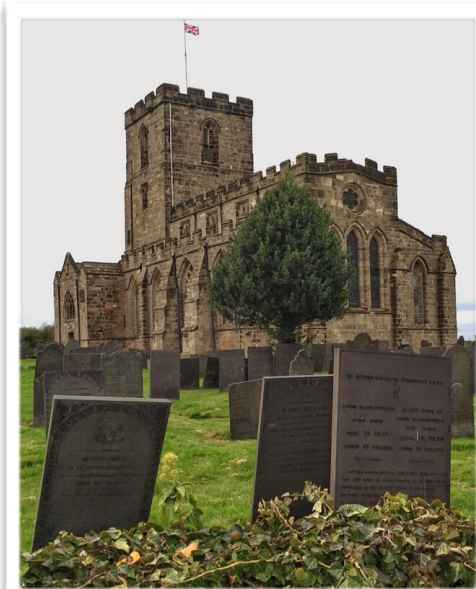


Team Talk 2016



Session 5

Week 5: A summary of the journey so far -----	2
Three objectives: how did we do?	2
Next steps.....	2
Journeying together	3
Keep listening!.....	3
Any questions?.....	3
Any Questions? -----	3
Questions given written answers: -----	6
Questions awaiting a written response: -----	6
Written comments:-----	7
A Shorter Celebration of Holy Communion for the Ashby & Breedon Team -----	7
Opening Sentences.....	7
Prayer of Confession	7
The Word of God.....	8
The Peace	8
The Eucharistic Prayer.....	8
The Breaking of the Bread.....	8
Invitation	9
Closing Prayer	9
Song	9
The Blessing	9
Comments received by email -----	9



Week 5: A summary of the journey so far

Back in week 1 of Team Talk 2016 I spent a few moments outlining the journey I'd hoped we'd go on together over the subsequent weeks.

Later this evening, we'll be asking you for your feedback on how these Team Talk conversations have worked: those things that you think have worked well, and others that you might want to suggest we refine or reshape before Team Talk 2017.

Before we do that, and before we take your questions, I wanted to offer you some brief reflections of my own.

I want, firstly, to reflect on the three objectives for these conversations that I set out in week one. Secondly, I want to reiterate the process going forward, and advertise to you two key events that will take place in May to further our fellowship and journey as a Team.

Three objectives: how did we do?

So, to those three objectives that I set for Team Talk 2016:

- ▶ firstly, that we would grow deeper in relationship with one another;
- ▶ secondly, that we would develop a better understanding of the givens, the parameters of our life together;
- ▶ thirdly, that we would each begin to catch a vision for the future of our Team.

So how have we done?

Firstly, I really think we have drawn closer as a body of people, as the body of Christ across the Team. From sharing our joys and sorrows, hopes and fears in week 1, to sharing our creativity in designing logos and names in week 4, we have begun to see in one another our brothers and sisters in Christ. I felt that most strongly at Viscount Beaumont last week where the evening

was punctuated with laughter and a sense of joy at being in one another's presence.

Secondly, I think we have developed a better understanding of the givens of our Team, not least through week 2's session when we confronted the realities of our ministerial resources, and laid that across our worshipping life in particular. Having this shared understanding is going to be vital in the weeks to come as we look at the detailed 'So, what?' of our life together, particularly in terms of our service patterns.

Thirdly, I think we are beginning to reflect on what the future of our Team might be; the God-given vision that might inspire and drive us. We have kept returning to that phrase in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians; to those who 'live without hope' (4.13) and have begun to wonder about how we could shape our life together that we might share our hope - our sure and certain hope - with them. I think this third objective is a work in progress. We began to think about it in week 3 when we wondered about the impact our Team might have across our communities by 2026. There is still more to do here - and we'll pick some of that up in Team Talk 2017.

Next steps

So, what of the process going forward?

Our next piece of work is to look at our service patterns. It might help if I just reiterated that process.

- ▶ after Easter, on the afternoon of 7th April and all day on 25 April, Tim, John and I will meet to work up some different proposals for a new service pattern;
- ▶ on the evening of 27th April we will meet with the Team's worship leaders - with clergy, Readers and others authorised to lead worship in our churches - to get their response on

these different proposals and to agree on a preferred option;

- ▶ in early May (date TBC) we will meet with our Team's churchwardens and pro-churchwardens to seek their views on this preferred option;
- ▶ on the evening of 19th May we will hold a meeting of all the PCCs to give a presentation of the recommended service pattern and to seek approval to trial it from September 2016 to April 2017.

And at each of these stages we will be communicating carefully with our Bishop who will be the one to authorise our service pattern.

Don't worry: all those dates will be in the notes and I am this week writing to those involved inviting them to these different consultations.

Journeying together

In addition to this specific process, there are two other key ways in which we will seek to continue to journey together as a Team.

The first, on Saturday **7th May**, is a literal journey; a pilgrimage walking from one end of the Team to the other, praying God's blessing as we go. We want this pilgrimage to be as inclusive as possible and so we will advertise where we will be at what (approximate) time so that those who can't walk, or can't walk all of it, can join us for times of prayer and refreshment at each of our churches on the way. The Team Rector, though, has to walk all of it!

The second, on **Sunday 22nd May**, is the first of what we hope will be an annual 'Team Commissioning Service' where we will pray for our joint mission and commission one another for the particular ministries we each fulfil within that.

Keep listening!

That's all I want to say at this stage apart from, briefly, to come over all Bruce Forsyth. At the end

of Strictly each week he used to get together with Tess Daly and say 'Keep dancing!'

I started Team Talk with a commitment to 'long listening', suggesting that 'love comes from long listening.'

At the end of this season of formal Team Talk conversations, can I encourage you to 'Keep talking' to me - and to one another - and 'Keep listening' to God and to one another. I want to keep listening - talk to me.

Any questions?

Talk to me, and to John, now, in fact in our 'Any Questions?' slot....

Any Questions?

The questions asked and answered publicly are shown below. Where there were questions asking similar things, these are shown indented below the answers.

ARE WE GOING TO BE ABLE TO KEEP SEVEN CHURCHES?

John answered: The former Bishop of Leicester said, 'We are not in the business of closing churches.' There are no plans to shut any of the churches.

HOW WILL WE CO-ORDINATE LOTS OF NEW IDEAS, ENSURING WE DON'T DUPLICATE?

Mary answered: Communication is key here. We will want to look at creating good communication structures for the whole Team – a monthly newsletter, perhaps, and a website. In addition, those leading in particular areas will want to find ways of communicating clearly with one another. That's why we got those groups together at Viscount Beaumont School last week – churchwardens, treasurers and secretaries, worship leaders, children's workers – to begin to build those networks and to grow communication.

ARE THERE ANY THOUGHT OF HAVING A TEAM MAGAZINE?

Mary answered: This would be an option for the future, but isn't one we've actively considered yet. But a network of magazine editors would be another important one to grow so that information can be shared, and activities and services at other churches published.

Why can't all services and events be published in each parish magazine on a monthly basis? Perhaps a loose leaf programme to be inserted into each one?

HAS ANY THOUGHT BEEN GIVEN TO THE GROWING OF PARISHES IN THE TEAM? WOULD NOT THE INCLUSION OF SMISBY AND PACKINGTON WITH ASHBY BE NATURAL?

Mary answered: Although this might be natural geographically, that is not the way Church of England boundaries work! Smisby is in the Diocese of Derby and in the Melbourne benefice and Packington is part of the Woodfield Team with Measham. I see no signs of and no appetite for Packington joining the Ashby and Breedon Team.

ARE THERE PLANS FOR TEAM CONGREGATIONS TO COME TOGETHER?

John answered: Mary has already mentioned the Team Commissioning Service and the Team Pilgrimage. These are both good opportunities for the Team to come together and we must keep doing that.

Could an annual or quarterly full united 'celebration service or social event be arranged across various church venues?

CAN ONE CHURCH IN THE TEAM RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM ANOTHER CHURCH IN THE TEAM?

John answered: Yes, that is possible if one church wants to give to the work of another. That has already happened in this benefice. It is

up to a church who has spare resources deciding that is what they want to do.

WHY DO WE NEED TO CHANGE THE NAME AND LOGO FOR THE TEAM AS IT WILL BE A VERY COSTLY AFFAIR AND MAY NOT ACHIEVE MUCH?

Mary answered: We don't 'have' to do this, but we may choose too because we think there are advantages in having a shared identity. At the moment we don't have a single strap-line or mission statement across the Team which expresses our life and mission together. As we seek to work more closely, I think this will be important. A logo would be a visible reminder to ourselves and to others that we belong together. And it needn't be especially expensive: there are companies who will design logos based on the brief you give them at little expense. A new name might also have an impact on our mission, if it communicates well about who we are and what our values are.

IS MISSION TO BE ORGANISED ON AN INDIVIDUAL CHURCH BASIS OR BENEFICE WIDE?

Mary answered: Both. Individual churches will still want to run their own initiatives, but there will be times when the Team wants to get together to run a join initiative – a Team-wide youth project, for example – and then there will be other occasions when, for a particular season – the Team decides to put resources into one particular parish to kick-start and support a new initiative – a Café Church in Breedon, for argument's sake.

WILL OUR TEAM BE INCLUDED IN THE ASHBY COUNCIL OF CHURCHES?

Mary answered: It already is, in that Tim and I already sit on Ashby Churches and talk about this Team in that context. We have, for example, been briefing our colleagues on Team Talk 2016. It is true that the focus of these

meetings is on Ashby town, but we do have conversations with Alan Dawson from the Methodists about our villages where we have a shared ministry. It is important to find ways of including the villages in these conversations, but Ashby Churches may not be the best forum for that.

IF WE END UP HAVING MORE JOINT SERVICES, HOW WILL THE COLLECTION BE DISTRIBUTED AND FINANCES BE ADMINISTERED?

Mary answered: Its good practice to give by Standing Order and Direct Debit where possible, and having joint services from time to time wouldn't disrupt this way of giving. I know that some people prefer to give into a collecting plate and that is valued too, of course. Even then, joint services won't be so frequent as to have an impact on individual church finances and if, over the course of a year or so, these services move round to different churches in rotation, the losses and gains from the collecting plate should even out.

CAN WE NOT PAY RETIRED CLERGY OR OTHER AVAILABLE CLERGY TO HELP AT COMMUNION SERVICES? SURELY IT CAN'T COST THAT MUCH?

Mary answered: We can and we do. Priests who are not licensed to a particular parish but have a Bishop's licence to conduct services – known as 'Permission to Officiate' (PTO) can be invited to conduct services. Their fees are £45 per Sunday service, although these are not payable in the church where they normally worship.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO OFFER A WARM WELCOME TO SOMEONE?

Mary asked people to answer that for themselves. Comments included: a warm smile, a warm building, welcoming people into church as if into your own home.

Mary added: Welcome is not just about a smile or a warm building it is also about our services themselves. I have been going to church all my life: I know my way around a service book, I love the language of the 1662 Prayer Book. But I am an exception in my generation. Very few of my contemporaries have that same experience. We need to ask ourselves how welcoming our liturgies, our services are, to someone who doesn't have that background. What might we need to give up to offer a real liturgical welcome?

THE TEAM LEADERS HAVE KINDLY ASKED FOR OUR OPINIONS, I JUST WONDER WHAT OUR LEADERS OPINIONS ARE OF A WAY FORWARD?

Mary answered: I think the way forward is a 'mixed economy' Team, that is a Team with 'inherited models of church' (the sort of Sunday services we are accustomed to now) and Fresh Expressions of Church (café church, Messy Church and so on). Coleorton is a great example of this in that it has both traditional Sunday services and Messy Church. That is a 'mixed economy.' The Diocese of Leicester is committed to having as many Fresh Expressions of church as inherited models of church by 2020. We need to be part of that vision.

Where do the leaders think we should be in ten years time?

WILL ST HELEN'S HAVE A FUTURE CURATE?

Mary answered: The acting Bishop has written to all incumbents asking them to express an interest in training a curate. I am going to speak to the St Mary's and St Helen's PCCs next week to see if they are in favour of me expressing an interest in training another curate.

IS IT POSSIBLE WHEN ADELE AND ELAINE ARE PRIESTED FOR THEM TO TAKE THE EUCHARIST TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE ON OTHER MINISTERS?

John answered: Elaine is going to serve her curacy away from the Team so she will not be available to take Holy Communion here, even when priested.

Adele answered: My curacy is at Holy Trinity. Whilst I may go and lead Holy Communion at other churches to develop my experience, Holy Trinity will continue to be my main place of service.

Will we be getting any more curates who could support and assist our two stipendiary priests?

ARE WE UP FOR ASKING THE BISHOP FOR COMMUNION BY EXTENSION TO BE AN EVERYDAY THING TO TAKE A LITTLE PRESSURE OFF THE VICARS?

Mary answered: We don't yet know what Bishop Martyn's stance on this will be. If he did seem willing to give permission, we would still want a thorough conversation before we made such a request to understand some of the implications of what we were asking, about what it says of our life together, and also about Holy Communion. This is something we would need to think carefully about.

COULD MARY, TIM AND JOHN TELL US WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST PLEASING ASPECT OF TT16 AND WHAT, IF ANYTHING, THEY WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

Mary answered: One of the greatest pleasures has been building a working relationship with John and Tim. Since before my induction we have already met dozens of times and we have worked really hard to build relationships with each other. This has not always been easy. We have not always agreed. But we have found ways of disagreeing with each other and finding a way forward. This is really encouraging. The other encouragement has been the preparedness of all of you to come out on cold February and March evenings to cold-ish churches and take

part in these conversations. I am fully aware what a challenging role mine is, but your presence and commitment gives me hope that there is potential to do things of real significance together.

John answered: I want to echo what Mary has said. I had a great friendship with Brian, but things moved on

Questions given written answers:

WHICH SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT WHICH CHURCH?

WILL THE SERVICE TIMES BE CHANGED TO MAKE THEM MORE UNIFORM?

Mary writes: Both of these questions will be ones we consider after Easter using the process outlined at TT16 weeks 2 and 5. It is likely that service times will be changed to make the service pattern deliverable. We haven't yet spoken about what these times might be.

DO YOU THINK THE CHURCHES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM HAVING THESE MEETINGS? IF SO, WHAT ARE THE GAINS?

See Mary's reflections on how far TT16 has met the objectives she set for it in week 1.

Has the response to Team Talk 2016 met the clergy's expectations?

Questions awaiting a written response:

- What one thing would improve the quality of your life as a vicar of this Team?
- Where will we be in a month from now?
- How can we as a congregation best support the changes?
- What must we do to interest and involve young folk in rural parishes?

- ▶ What exactly are we offering to the non-church goer, to those not in the Christian community?
- ▶ What action is planned to increase the number of young people attending and taking part in church services and other activities?
- ▶ We have loved the fellowship and getting to know one another. Are there ways in which we could continue to share talents and expertise...but without too many meetings?
- ▶ Do you think we have failed to address the most significant issue – lack of faith in the population and thus dwindling congregations?
- ▶ What do Mary, Tim and John think will be our main focus for Team Talk 2018?
- ▶ How much (if any) influence will the discussion we have had have on future Team policy?

Written comments:

- ▶ I have enjoyed Team Talk, meeting members of other churches, discussing future services, thinking of a logo and explaining about Messy Church. Very good fellowship.
- ▶ Social get togethers for the whole benefice would be great now that we know each other. Maybe meals, coffee mornings, BBQs, or garden parties.

A Shorter Celebration of Holy Communion for the Ashby & Breedon Team

Opening Sentences

As if this were the only time, and this the only place,
and we the only people, Jesus Christ will meet us.

As if this were the only time, and this the only place,
and we the only people, let us worship God.

Prayer of Confession

God of life, do not darken your light to us

All God of life, do not limit your joy in us,

God of life, do not shut your door to us,

All God of life, do not refuse us your mercy,

Lord, do not refuse us your mercy.

O God of life,
eternity cannot hold you,
nor our little words catch
the magnificence of your kindness.
Yet in the space of our small hearts
and in the silence
you can come close and repair us.

Silence is kept

O God of life, grant us your forgiveness

**All for our careless thoughts,
for our thoughtless deeds,
for our empty speech
and the wounds with which we wounded.**

Silence is kept

O God of life, grant us your forgiveness

**All for our false desires,
for our hateful actions,
for our wastefulness
and for all we left untended.**

Silence is kept
O loving Christ,
hanged on a tree
yet risen in the morning,
scatter the sin from our souls
as the mist from the hills;
begin what we do,
inform what we say,
redeem who we are.

**All In you we place our hope,
our great hope, our living hope,
this night and for evermore.
Amen.**

The Word of God

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Matthew 28.16-20

Silence is kept

The Peace

Please stand.

Not an easy peace,
not an insignificant peace,
not a half-hearted peace,
but the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ
is with us now.

Let us share it with each other.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high,
voices, full and joyful -
these you deserve.

For when we were nothing,
you made us something.
When we had no name
and no faith and no future
you called us your children.
When we lost our way or turned away,
you did not abandon us.
When we came back to you,
your arms opened wide in welcome.

And, look, you prepare a table for us
offering not just bread, not just wine,
but your very self
so that we may be filled, forgiven,

healed, blessed and made new again.
You are worth all our pain and all our praise.
So now, in gratitude, we join our voices
to those of the Church on earth and in heaven:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

For us you were born,
for us you healed, preached, taught,
and showed the way to heaven;
for us you were crucified,
and for us, after death, you rose again.

Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now,
for all that you have done
and all that you have promised,
what have we to offer?
Our hands are empty,
our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things.
We were not fit to gather up the crumbs
from under your table.

But with you is mercy and the power to
change us.

So as we do in this place
what you did in the upstairs room,
send down your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine
that they become for us your body,
healing, forgiving and making us whole;
and that we may become, for you, your body
loving and caring in all the world
until your kingdom comes.

The Breaking of the Bread

Among friends, gathered round a table,
Jesus took bread, broke it and said,
'This is my body, it is broken for you.'

And later he took the cup of wine and said,
'This is the new relationship with God,

made possible because of my death.
Take this - all of you - to remember me.'

All Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.

Invitation

This is the table,
not of the church, but of the Lord.
It is made ready for those who love him
and who want to love him more.

So, come, you who have much faith
and you who have little,
you who have been here often
and you who have not been for a long time,
you who have tried to follow
and you who have failed.

Come, not because it is I who invite you:
it is our Lord.
It is his will that those who want him
should meet him here.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have put your life into our hands;
now we put our lives into yours.

Take us,
renew us and remake us.
What we have been is past;
what we shall be, through you,
still awaits us.

Lead us on.
Take us with you.

All Amen.

Song

All You shall go out with joy
and be led forth with peace
and the mountains and the hills
shall break before you;
there'll be shouts of joy
and the trees of the field
shall clap, shall clap their hands.
And the trees of the field shall clap
their hands,
and the trees of the field shall clap their
hands,
and the trees of the field shall clap their
hands
and you'll go out with joy.

The Blessing

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Comments received by email

Hi Tim,

One or two comments re. last nights
presentation and time to talk.

For me, the whole evening was encouraging -
more so to me than the 9th Feb. meeting.

Responses requested by Mary for Fundamentals
of Worship: and written up on flip chart:
God:Others:Me

I had initially assumed the responses requested
were in relation to our worship to God (as part
of our prayers and services etc.) and not
Worship as meaning our 'church services', which
most responses seemed to relate to. Hence my
response: 'praise and adoration'.

In respect of our 'church services' I would add:
'contributing and receiving'.

Re the group session: (I think Marion did a good job in getting comments down on our response sheet but I didn't read all written so a few comments from me.)

With regard to the issue of need for and frequency of communion:

- The general opinion within our 9am group was that the communion element of that service for every week was perhaps the least essential element of that service; other aspects including time of service, style of service, preaching, music and hymns, quieter/more peaceful background etc. being the valued elements which attract attendees. One possible solution was having a monthly HC and overlapping the 9am and 10.30am services so that both share the HC element.

- I and our group recognised the 'impossibility' of maintaining the current level of HC services, which would lead to:

- burnout of ministers,
- already current situation of 'flying vicars' not spending time with the congregation after a service. This can often be the most valuable time – like time talking to others in the bar after a conference.
- reduced opportunities to make use of perhaps one of the most potentially valuable and underused assets the church has, namely its readers and other non-ordained who can lead services. This can lead to frustration for them, and disincentive to others considering their next step, akin to 'the glass ceiling' in business and industry.

- There was little support in our group for joint services.

- Our experience has shown that more often than not when joint services are arranged many regular attendees choose not to attend.

- It takes time and regularly worshipping and meeting up in groups with others to develop relationships, trust, mutual support, encouragement and growth.

- There is more support for sharing expertise with others, such as church admin. functions, training sessions on various aspects, such as children's work, outreach, pastoral care, making our services more appropriate for people we aren't reaching etc.

I hope that is helpful and not just my take on our session! (Hopefully I've copied all others in our group in but I may have forgotten someone.)

Frank Bedford (Holy Trinity)