



Bro Cybi Ministry Area



Letter to Bro Cybi

20th of January 2021

Dear friends

Here we are looking towards the last week of January next week, already. For some of us it seems as though the days are dragging, as we look forward to better times; our Covid jobs can't come soon enough and we wait in the hopefulness that we can get out of our homes and meet friends and family again. Human touch and human interaction is so important to our wellbeing. We are tired of looking into computer screens as the only form of human contact and we just want to feel more normal again. The news seems to be continually threatening; but things will get better, the days are getting longer and the season is beginning to change; soon we will see snowdrops and Spring will follow soon after.

I have managed to see a few of you, albeit at a distance. And this is good enough and safe enough for the moment. As Ministers we spend much of our time on Zoom, in meetings, planning for a better future. And we also wait for the phone to ring with the next funeral, this at least gives us the possibility for some direct human interaction and the opportunity to minister in the way we have done before and in the way we have been trained to do. A welcome funeral? It seems obtuse for us to be gaining comfort and wellness from ministering to bereaved families and we can feel guilty for it. But that is how strange this time is for us as Ministers. We are not 'allowed' to visit you at home, even though we desperately want to; we thrive on human interaction. Many of us are confused about what it is we *should* be doing, we like many others have not been prepared to do our job in these conditions. You would be well justified in saying that us Ministers have nothing to complain about, we certainly have an easier life to those wonderful healthcare workers and those who work in the often-undervalued jobs such as retail and home deliveries. I probably thought that I was bearing up well during this pandemic in terms of my wellbeing. And then last Monday evening we were all part of a Synod session looking at mental health, led by Archdeacon Andy's daughter Rachel.



Bro Cybi Ministry Area



I've done a fair bit of mental health training in the past, and the thing about mental health is that you(or I) rarely recognise that our own mental health is deteriorating. It was so helpful to hear again that we all need to give ourselves a pat on the back, often for doing just small things. And that it's ok to feel down, for mood to be low, but we do need to do things that make us feel better, and that's ok. So please be gentle with each other and with us, we know we could do much better and we do value constructive criticism, but please also remember that we bleed like you do and this time is not easy for us as Ministers. We really value your prayers and your support. I feel that we are in this together and God willing, we will come out of this difficult time together.

I want to tell you that we are planning things for Lent and Easter. We know that we will be in lockdown at least at the beginning of Lent if not also the end. So this year we are going to post out to you a reflection for Ash Wednesday and a small amount of ash. I will live stream and also record an Ash Wednesday service, so that you can join in if you wish and you can follow the service at home and this year, ash yourselves if you wish to.

We are also planning activities for Holy Week which we will hopefully be able to do in Church, but which we can also do at home if we are still in lockdown. And we have already started our book 'Breathing Under Water' by Richard Rohr. There are discussion sessions on Zoom but you can of course read the book at home and I will send you the questions which we use to guide our discussions. Please do think about reading this life changing book, its challenging and its good.

I do hope you enjoy the things which we send you, I will be sending a weekly letter to you from now on and you will also be receiving two reflections per week, one from Neil and one from myself. Wishing you an abundance of life giving Hope as we continue in our faithfulness to our life-giving God.

With love and blessings, Rob