

18 October 2018

Dear Parishioners,

I am writing to you to announce my resignation as your vicar, effective 3 February 2019.

Over three years ago God started preparing me for a move to pastures then unknown, until now. During my Camino to Santiago de Compostela in May, God revealed a new call to help lay the foundations for a post-Christendom, charismatic expression of faithful Anglicanism in Canterbury. Exploration has recently started with *Anchor*- a Sunday evening charismatic fellowship in South Christchurch with charismatic Anglicans who feel unable to stay in their parishes because of the changes made by General Synod in May concerning same-sex blessings. It is my hope that these will become the core of a new church designed to be millennial-friendly, more intently focussed on evangelism and making disciples. I now view the disruption this church is going through over same-sex relationships as a major opportunity to strengthen the church for its mission in the next few decades.

My position on same-sex blessings is spelt out in my sermon from 2012 republished earlier this year. For me to formally bless such relationships is to announce a blessing on something that I don't believe that God blesses, furthermore, it would be irresponsible and unloving to do so when there is the risk that the behaviour could lead to exclusion from the Kingdom of God. I will have to give an account before the throne of God on how I have taught and pastored people under my spiritual care, and thus, it will not surprise you that this is a matter of conscience.

Some will ask why I am leaving when the changes made by General Synod do not require me to act outside of my conscience. I believe that any Anglican can find a place to stand with integrity if called to either within the church as it is, within the Christian Community being formed by the Affirm Network, or within the new Anglican Extra Provincial Diocese being formed by those who are disaffiliating. At first, I thought that my place would be within the Christian Community, but the simple fact is that my particular calling is to be worked out within the new Anglican Extra Provincial Diocese.

What of Anglican Life Rangiora? The Vestry survey that you have participated in reveals that the changes made by General Synod will inevitably disrupt you. My hope is that you will engage in the next stage of discussions planned by the vestry without reference to me and my future. I trust that God will show the parish the best way forward.

I need to declare a conflict of interest with *Anchor*, which will need to be managed carefully and also to pledge my commitment to you as your vicar until the final Sunday. I also place on record my thanks to God for this parish, it's people, and for all that we have done together over almost 16 years.

With much love

Andrew Allan-Johns (Vicar)