



St Mark's Church, Reigate

July 2018

Letter from the Curate, Reverend Anna Moore

Dear Friends

What amazing news we received this month! Through the sheer determination and stamina of our Kitchen Project team, Mel, Nicci and Barbara have been able to secure enough grants to start the work in July. I am astounded how hard these 3 people have worked, the various hoops they have had to jump through and red tape they have crossed, yet all the while have remained positive and enthusiastic throughout. They committed their time and energy to a project which seemed so distant and yet, the strong sense of teamwork carried them through a journey of epic proportions! Such an amazing achievement!

Speaking of journeys, during a recent 'Quiet Day' I attended, guest speaker Andrew Rumsey, Rector of Oxted encouraged us to take stock of where we had come from and where our destination lies. We were encouraged to reflect upon our lives as a journey, using the imagery of the M25 surrounding London, the various A and B roads that pump life in and out of the city, the various train routes which intersect, disappearing underground through long tunnels as they continue their journey out of sight. Looking upwards we see the planes, hear roaring engines as they power out of Gatwick, and yet the North Downs possesses the most ancient of roads; the Pilgrim's way which stretches from Winchester to Canterbury and has over the years embraced hundreds of pilgrims on foot. There is a myriad of routes ancient and modern which are open to us in a relatively small area of east Surrey. As we picture this, we can ask ourselves where are we on our journey? Where have we come from, where are we now and where are we heading?

As Christians we proclaim that God is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, God is also the bit in-between too! So taking time to reflect is a useful exercise; to put into perspective where I am now and where I see God in my life. Where do I encounter the A roads that pump life and sustain me, where do I try and escape by the fastest means possible! In my recent sermon I focused on God's Kingdom not being a place we aim to get to; the Kingdom is a spiritual reality of the here and now rather than a territorial domain. God's kingdom is already around us, but in order to receive the Kingdom it requires us to set aside our earthly wants and needs and look for the beauty and sense of fulfilment in focusing on what sustains and gives us life. That can be achieved through the realisation of how good it feels when we are able to travel together, to belong, to share experiences as I am sure Mel, Nicci and Barbara would agree!

Our lives are full of intersections where we decide to take one route only to find another would have been quicker, but I bet the longer way the scenery is so much

nicer! Now and again we get caught in a jam, we have nowhere to turn and our only option is to sit and wait it out. These are all metaphors that helps us to picture our lives and to try and see from a different perspective how God is present in each and every situation no matter how hard or easy the journey may be. Our lives can be very busy at times with no room to manoeuvre yet other periods may offer opportunities to try new routes, new ventures as other commitments fall away.

Most Sundays you will hear a plea of some kind asking for volunteers or donations, which although necessary for various events to happen, for some this can feel a bit overwhelming, especially to those who have even felt quite guilty because they are unable to respond in a way they think they should, or feel others think they should!

These pleas are opportunities for people to respond if or when the time is right, for folk to offer a helpful lift, to take a detour off of their main route, where the extra time is given freely and willingly, rather than out of a feeling of duty. For some, the time is not right and that is fine, church should not feel like a chore but rather a place of rest, a place of comfort like the service station, when you are out of fuel, desperately hungry or need a comfort break. This can be a place of utter relief, and a breather from the road where full concentration is needed! Church should be a place of refreshment, and sanctuary as we refuel for the week ahead. But it's worth remembering, like fuel it remains with us until we run on empty and we grind to a halt, so top up regularly in order to keep moving!

God Bless

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna." The letter 'A' is large and stylized, with a long vertical stroke and a curved top. The rest of the name is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Reverend Anna