

The Church Upside Down

by

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**Investigations in Rural Ministry
New Zealand: Jan/Feb 2001
And possible lessons for the English Church**

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Dedication

To
Aimee Greta Joubert.

On the day this project began, January 3rd 2001,
she was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

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Lichfield Theological College Trust, and Derby Diocese for their grant from the Education Budget, but also for their support and blessing for the time out of my parishes.

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Preface

I was ordained deacon in 1972 and felt by my silver jubilee of priestly ministry in 1998 that it was time for a sabbatical. Something of a regeneration was needed, but hitherto, I had felt unable to leave a post long enough. The putting together of this regeneration for the parish and me came with the co-incidence of events. Derby Diocese produced the report “A Better Way”¹, coping with the reduction in clergy numbers, at the same time that my parish responsibilities were re-formed as the United Benefice of Ault Hucknall and Scarcliffe.² Ironically, the report’s title results from a comment to the Bishop of Derby that “There has to be a better way of organising the ministry of the church than merely spreading clergy ever more thinly on the ground and lumping parishes together.”

The English parish re-organisations of recent times have been due both to the reduced resourcing from the Church Commissioners, and the drop in numbers of stipendiary clergy coming into parish ministry. Much Parochial Church Council time concerns fundraising and money issues, often at the expense of time for the consideration of the main purposes of the church. Sadly, it could be identified that the priorities of the PCCs have become finance driven while mission and education issues have been relegated.³ Given that the Church Commissioners heavily subsidise the English parishes, and that this support is retracting, one of the considerations for this sabbatical was the study of ministry in areas where no Church Commissioners exist.⁴

I visited New Zealand in 1993, so had a contact with the Bishop of Christchurch, David Coles, who I met then. New Zealand is much more rural than England, and has no Church Commissioners. I had hoped to take the sabbatical in the New Year of 2000, but events conspired against this, not least the Millennium palaver, but also the failure to win enough funding. The Christchurch Diocesan Education department, in the person of Jenny Dawson, provided the

¹ March 1998

² Order in Council came into force December 1st 1999

³ Despite the reduction in staffing in my two parishes, both of their quotas payable to the diocese for 2001 have been increased by almost an eighth, five times above current inflation levels.

⁴ Consideration 12

contacts both by her identification of Twizel, and by advertisement to the Diocesan Clergy. This advert enabled my provision of Sunday cover for Brenda Walker of Ellesmere parish. She was able to take her annual holidays, and I was able to gain an insight into another ministry model in New Zealand's "Ruritania" south of the city of Christchurch. Jenny, it must be noted, was not only an enabler of my sabbatical, but a prime mover in the development of ministry models to which this report is devoted.

The report, therefore, will refer to the issue of finance, but behind it is the driving force of ministry needs in human and spiritual terms. There are new forms of ministry developing, Every Member Ministry, Total Ministry, and changes and expectations in the parishes that are still traditionally staffed. The changes I noted are a pastiche of old, new, and those in between, and the parts of the New Zealand church I witnessed gave me the impression of some being further on the journey of essential change than others. Part of that may have been the inability to see the need for change, or the resistance to it, or the insistence, for whatever motive, on a different agenda or ministerial model by some clergy or congregations. This is more often the point of conflict in England than I witnessed in New Zealand. In England congregations are used to Church Commissioners' subsidy and there has been less of an imperative to change. Clergy availability and countless generations of clergy monopolising and controlling ministry have deskilled the ministerial gifts of the laity, reduced their expectations of using them (or even of having them) and set a clerical dominated model of ministry amongst laity that will be very hard to change.

Economically, of course, the rural church will often be the first to be struck by a decline in resources because there are fewer incomes to sustain the church. Meanwhile, the relatively small density of population will cause the rationalisation of staffing levels to hit the sparsely populated areas first on any pro rata expectation. The net result of this is that country areas are often the first to have finance driven changes in staffing and therefore ministry strategies.

My own experience of enabling lay people who do not want to be enabled has often been of hostility, with the questioning of my motives that "the Vicar is trying to get out of doing his jobs." Statistically, however, one cannot maintain a totally clerical model of ministry when clergy numbers are dropping, and the Commissioners' money is not going as far. With parish amalgamations the sympathy

of a congregation is often couched in terms of “we have lost half our Vicar to the next parish” and “how can he/she cope with all the extra work?” Residually, many lay Christians clutch the model of “if only the Vicar would do more visiting, more people would come to church, give more money, and then we would have less fundraising to do for our costly building.”

This must somehow be changed to the expectations of congregations that they must use their gifts and skills, (or learn the skills) in the ministries that sustain and build a local church, using stipendiary ministers not as the exclusive workhorses, but the enablers of locally lay-worked and lay-led parishes.

If Derby’s Better Way report really means that clergy are to become more episcopal, and Laity more priestly, then we must be ready for the ordination of more local Christians to Holy Orders, even if only to provide celebrants for Eucharistic expectant congregations.

We must also ask if the devil has given us the conservation of ancient buildings to keep us occupied so that we do not put energy into building the church of Christ in human terms. Not only are they taking endless hours of work and fundraising, but are frequently, by their layout, straightjacketing the congregation into outmoded liturgies. Heritage or conservation lobbies or authorities frequently debar changing this structure, so that the church can no longer speak in its worship the liturgical language of the present generation.⁵

The spirit of A Better Way, which is to enable and mobilise lay ministry, is correct. “Diocesan Synod therefore propose a strategy for ministry based on the fundamental conviction that baptism marks the beginning of Christian discipleship, and all disciples are called to ministry.”^{6 7} The realisation embodied must, however, be realised by the baptised themselves, and their expectations of their own discipleship and ministry motivated. In my New Zealand experience I saw this occurring, but its success

⁵ In New Zealand, the youth worship I witnessed needed space for movement.

⁶ A Better Way 5.1

⁷ Consideration 1

depended on the wholehearted adoption of ministry in a *grass roots* revolution of these expectations.⁸

⁸ Consideration 2

Introduction

It was clear from the earliest experiences with the New Zealand church that every question I asked and pursued could potentially add a chapter to any final report. As time progressed, the report could have accumulated to a major book. Some of the considerations (Chapter 7) could be subjects of books themselves. Large tomes, in my experience, seldom get read due to the shortage of time left for reading by those chasing their tails in full time ministry. I resolved to attempt a document of about twenty A4 sheets. My apologies, therefore, if the work lacks academic comprehensiveness, but I will try to maintain the balance between brevity and reference to the facts that give the findings credence. My awareness of printing costs will also constrain the number of pages in the appendices. The further consideration is the weight of the final document for postage. Not surprisingly, the New Zealand church members have expressed a clear interest in reading this report.

Some of the ideas herein may be new to readers, but I claim nothing new here of my invention. The concept of ecumenism has been with us since at least 1910⁹, and the Dean of Edinburgh was investigating the concept of Total Ministry in 1997¹⁰. A programme of TM was being introduced in Nevada in 1972¹¹ and lay ministry has always been a major driving factor in the work of the church, despite the overriding clericalism of past centuries. The fight against the tendency to deskill lay Christians by the controlling clergy was being led as far back as the late 1800s by such figures as Roland Allen.¹² That I was in New Zealand stands in a tradition of the worldwide church talking to its dispersed geographical self as far back as the peripatetic Apostles and St Paul writing his letters.

I certainly learned new things, and gained new theological insights, and I hope these will be useful to the reader as this report continues.

⁹ Edinburgh Missionary Conference

¹⁰ Tim Morris: Report on a sabbatical term

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² "Missionary Methods: St Paul's or ours?" 1912

1: History of Twizel Town & Church

Every Member Ministry. (EMM)

This report comes out of my experiences within two parishes in Christchurch Diocese during January and February 2001: Twizel and Ellesmere, and meetings with several Christians taking responsibility for developing church ministry in Canterbury, New Zealand. The greatest impact upon this report comes from my four and a half weeks in the former township, and a brief history would be helpful to give the background to its unique way of being the church.

Twizel NZ did not exist as a community until the Ministry of Works Hydro schemes in the MacKenzie basin began to house workers in 1969¹³. The township was conceived of as a temporary community that would be completely bulldozed when the work was complete after about twenty-five years. At its peak in 1976, the population was around 5,184¹⁴. The project when completed enabled the production of one third of New Zealand's generated electricity.¹⁵ As the work began to near completion, however, Twizel's community spirit and identity evidenced itself, and the political effort to survive as a community began, and Twizel was declared a county town in 1984¹⁶. The alternative economy, replacing hydro electrics and the building of dams and canals was to be tourism. By the mid nineties, half the properties were owned by non-residents as holiday homes.¹⁷ Apart from the residual electricity workers and community service industries, the only other economic factor is salmon farming, with two farms on nearby canals.¹⁸ By 1996, the population was 1,179¹⁹. During Christmas and New Year (mid summer) the population can rise to 5,000.

Expectations that the township would be a sink community for the benefits dependant or a retirement ghetto only briefly appeared to be a danger in the transition from works town to

¹³ Dam Dwellers. End of an Era: Marion Sheridan

¹⁴ Case Study of Twizel: Gerard Fitzgerald and Nick Taylor. Oct 2000

¹⁵ Meridian Energy, 1999

¹⁶ Case Study of Twizel: Gerard Fitzgerald and Nick Taylor. Oct 2000

¹⁷ New Zealand Census 1996

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ New Zealand Census 1996

MacKenzie township. Most of the demographic indicators are now showing most indicators to be around the average of all the relevant New Zealand social and economic statistics.²⁰

Since half of the houses are holiday homes, several of the congregation members of the church are holiday visitors, as I witnessed on the four Sundays of my presence with the congregation.

As an economic centre, the local farming stations have never really identified with Twizel. Their suppliers have continued in Fairlie, some 102k distant, and for the Christian farmers, a residual identity with Tekapo church remains.²¹ Twizel was never conceived of as a centre for the local farmers, since it was not expected to exist after completion of the hydro scheme. Similarly, the church would have disappeared according to that scenario. Only recently has the Twizel church shown interest in reaching the farming population.²² By coincidence, I baptised one of the grandchildren of a farmer at Twizel on 28th January²³ so it is possible that the thaw has begun. The baby's parents had celebrated their marriage at Tekapo.

The Twizel church building had been transported from the earlier hydro project at Otemetata in 1971. The land upon which it was sited was the one ecumenical site granted by the Ministry of Works and the building managed eventually by a 1995 charitable trust.²⁴ In 1971, a delegation of combined denominations had declared the church a shared unit, the first in the history of New Zealand.²⁵ The parish of All Saints had been "Co-operating" from the first, being a chaplaincy of an association of Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Associated Churches of Christ.

Though the church was ecumenical, it had always had the presence of a stipendiary minister. As the population shrank, it became less viable financially to support such a stipend, until in 1998, the Anglicans were the last denomination to give notice that its

²⁰ New Zealand Census 1996, plus Fitzgerald and Taylor.

²¹ Conversation with Allen family, Ruataniwha Station 21st Jan 2001

²² *ibid.*

²³ Aimee Greta Joubert, son of Jennifer (nee Allen) ex. Ruataniwha.

²⁴ Sheriden

²⁵ *ibid.*

subsidy was to cease.²⁶ By then, the co-operating authorities were the Anglicans and Presbyterians. The former is centred on Christchurch (269km) and the latter in Timaru (138km). The nearest minister in the same church administrative units is an Anglican in the co-operating parish of Fairlie (102km.) with its daughter church at Tekapo (47km). Twizel is close to the border with the Diocese of Dunedin and the next Presbytery, described as a “different world.”²⁷

The last part-time stipendiary minister was Earle Williams. He spent eighteen months working through programmes mentioned later, after some consultations in the parish with The Anglican Diocesan Ministry Educator, The Reverend Jenny Dawson. Fifteen of the fifty-five members attended this meeting with Jenny, but it was soon apparent that there was an enthusiasm for a lay led form of ministry²⁸ to which Earle would guide the congregation in the time he had left. Earle is recorded as working eleven or twelve hours a day during this period.²⁹

The parish is concerned to relate to the worldwide church through its denominational “parents” but if not a jungle, there is a multiplicity of meetings generated by the Anglicans, the Presbyterians, and the Joint Regional Committee (JRC) which co-ordinates ecumenical church life in its areas of jurisdiction. One of the quotations of uncertain origin that occurred several times was that “they thought that their parents would get married.” In 1974 the church unity attempt at drawing the denominations into a single identity had failed.

What sort of animal the new ministerial lay led structure was to form was uncertain. Most of the headaches outlined below were for the parent denominations. The Anglicans had been developing Total Ministry^{30 31} (TM) for some years, and there had been Co-operating Parishes working under the joint arrangements of the JRC. Twizel was to become a hybrid of these. The Presbyterians, however, had no equivalent TM scheme up and running. The

²⁶ Report on Visitation to Pukaki Co-operating Parish for Presbytery of South Canterbury

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Consideration 2

²⁹ Minutes of the Presbytery of Canterbury 11th Aug. 1999

³⁰ Total Ministry, Tim Morris, Episcopal Dean of Edinburgh 1997

³¹ See Chapter 2.

Anglicans were reluctant to impose TM unilaterally. The congregation was insistent upon weekly Holy Communion³². That posed an issue for the Presbyterians with an arbitrary rule on the age of elders (55-65) and no candidates of that age in Twizel. Presbyterian tradition, moreover, usually calls for quarterly Holy Communion. Meanwhile the Anglicans could not ordain local TM Anglicans without some accommodation with the Presbyterians.³³

The meetings were laborious and inconclusive at first. Some of the Twizel people, sadly, left the congregation. The distances involved for Twizel members, given that they also had time commitments as members with secular employment was also part of their frustration.

The present situation for communion celebrants is accepted by all to whom I spoke as being temporary and unsatisfactory. Rita Miller is the only remaining licensed Presbyterian elder of two, and she is licensed annually due to her age not falling in the 55-65 range. Anne Sweney is licensed by the Anglicans to administer the Blessed Sacrament that has been consecrated by a priest. "Jesus is kept in the fridge" for weeks on end to allow Anne's administration whenever she is presiding at communion.

The issue here is the conflict of authority of Orders with the Holy Communion being a living remembrance by the living and present congregation, rather than the distribution of bread and wine from a remembrance elsewhere where someone of legitimised authority has "done the magic bits."³⁴³⁵ The Twizel church of All Saints has patiently sought to remain part of the wider church community, even under the jurisdiction of two church courts, and its geographical remoteness. My final service in All Saints on 28th January included a Baptism, for which none of the congregation is authorised, except in emergency, and the consecration of more bread and wine than at any other single time in my ministry so that their stocks may not run low.

³² Minutes of the Presbytery of Canterbury 11th Aug. 1999

³³ Consideration 3

³⁴ Consideration 3

³⁵ Consideration 4

Having committed themselves enthusiastically to “Every Member Ministry”³⁶ (EMM) as the new hybrid was to be named by Earle Williams, the congregation entered training with a will.³⁷ The process involved identifying the ministry the church should be performing, the gifts possessed by the members of the church, and the marrying of the gifts with the ministerial positions identified. Subsequent to this was the identification of ongoing training needs. Earle Williams’ notes record Alpha Programme 17.2.97 – 17.5.97, a Sunday programme “Discovering our Motivating Gifts” from August to November 1997, May-July 98 “Exploring and Training for Ministry,” August 30th 1998 start of Sunday programme “Satisfying sustainable Service” among others. Earle asserted to me on 5th Feb 2001 that this programme was right for Twizel, but need not necessarily be the right programme for every parish.

Under the Co-operating Parish scheme, the church would need to adopt the denomination under which it would be administered for the next 3-5 years, and they needed to know the costs to be incurred if a Ministry Enabler³⁸, Anglican style needed to be funded. On August 9th 1998, Earle records that “denominationalism is not an issue” and they did not want to incur costs to provide transport for an ordained person for communion, though they did want communion weekly.³⁹

On All Saints Day 1999, the Patronal Festival, the congregation took responsibility for itself with a dedication of teams and leaders for the next twelve months. Earle’s time left at Twizel was nearing its end, and this gave a brief period of a resource person for reference as the new roles were applied.⁴⁰

Two weeks later, on 15th November, the Parish Co-ordinator was appointed and dedicated⁴¹, and two or three names under secret ballot were put forward for training and ordination under the limited licence for word and sacrament. By 22nd November, Earle notes that “two parish councillors have each conducted one funeral.”

³⁶ Earle William’s notes record a unanimous commitment by congregation later on August 9th 1998.

³⁷ Consideration 6

³⁸ See Chapter 2

³⁹ Considerations 2,3, and 4

⁴⁰ Consideration 7

⁴¹ Rosalie Hutton

Earle was extremely thorough and thoughtful in providing reference documents for the roles and functions of the various ministers and ministries. These were then worked over by two parish councillors.

The adaptation of the new scheme was difficult for the Anglicans immediately due to the Bishop of Christchurch's full diary. 1998, for instance, was the Lambeth Conference year. The Presbyterians appointed an overseeing Minister, Ken Linscott. Previously, the Archdeacon of Timaru, The Ven. Philip Robinson had been (as defined by the Presbyterians in 1999) Interim Moderator. He had been "giving the parish a boost along."⁴² In my conversation with Philip, he felt my query that he fitted the role of the New Testament peripatetic apostle needed consideration. He is also the enabler for one Total Ministry parish in Timaru while being Vicar of St Mary's, and is seeking to make the four Anglican churches of Timaru more integrated.

The parish has churchwardens as it relates to Anglican affairs: Brian Hutton is the People's Warden, and Dave Massam is Vicar's Warden, appointed by the Bishop. The other roles and functions of ministry as identified in April 1998 for Twizel by Earle Williams were

1. Preaching and Teaching
2. a) Conducting Sunday Service
b) Presiding at Holy Communion
3. Visiting. (Congregation, sick, bereaved new) liaise with 10 below.
4. Parish Council
5. Life, education and worship committee.
6. Religious Education in schools⁴³
7. Correspondence and secretarial.
8. Parish Newsletter.
9. Twizel Church Charitable Trust (Building owners)
10. Pastoral Care Committee
11. Liaise with Catholic Church.
12. Baptism, Weddings, and Funerals⁴⁴

⁴² Ministry Committee Minutes of Presbytery of South Canterbury, 27th July 1999.

⁴³ Two congregation members are invited to teach in the local secular school.

13. Community Service (e.g. ANZAC, Anniversaries)
14. Omarama – Visit, services, liaison
15. Wider Church: be accountable and maintain relationship with Presbytery, Diocese, JRC. Attend Synod etc.
16. General Oversight – oversee, co-ordinate, be reference for parish.

At my welcome on January 6th in All Saints church hall, my hosts listed on A1 paper, in brainstorming fashion the ministries they have. It might be telling to see what they identified as their salient ministries from the tops of their heads, compared with the above list.

- Monthly Newsletter
- Radio⁴⁵
- Grans in touch
- Mums in touch
- R.E. (as 6 above)
- OP Shop⁴⁶
- Wednesday praise and prayer
- Tuesday praise and prayer
- Alpha
- Men's breakfast
- Sunday service
- Friday get together
- Pastoral care

Earle Williams' "Discovering my motivating gifts" led the congregation into areas of

- Serving
- Perceiving (prophesying)
- Teaching
- Encouraging
- Giving
- Leading (administering)
- Caring and Compassion⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Baptisms (except in emergency) and weddings at Twizel still require the attendance of a visiting ordained minister.

⁴⁵ Two congregation members have regular shows on Twizel radio

⁴⁶ All Saints runs a second hand charity shop in a church owned building on the church site.

Additionally, Jenny Dawson and Graeme Nicholas were providing training, while Archdeacon Philip Robinson was Interim Moderator. The input of Jenny and Graeme was much appreciated, not least in boosting confidence.⁴⁸

On Sunday 21st January 2001 I conducted a questionnaire of the congregation. There were (eventually) 22 responses. By then, Earle and Elspeth Williams had been retired for over two years.

<i>Question</i>		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Same</i>
1	Every member ministry is better?	17	2	
2	I do more for the church?	12	1	7
3	Are your gifts better used?	13	1	2
4	Prefer a full time minister? (ftm)	10	7	
5	With ftm would you do more?	4	2	15
6	Do non-churchgoers see the church differently?	5	2	12 don't know

It is interesting to note that the overwhelming feeling was of a better church with EMM, yet there was a majority for wanting a full time minister again. What was lacking by the absence of a full timer, most responded, was the theological and educated input into church life and teaching, as well as the figurehead or representative role that a stipendiary normally fulfils. Anne Sweney found that after her licensing to administer the Blessed Sacrament, she became identified by several in the community as the fulfilling the “Vicar’s” position, and she found that disturbing.

The overwhelming majority had a positive experience to report, and many related the experience in spiritual terms in conversation. The Holy Spirit, in their view, had been guiding the process. The questionnaire included questions that invoked answers of prose, rather than yes or no. One of these was the question of who leads the Twizel church. Eight offered the Church Council, and seven said “everyone”.

As they introduced themselves to me in turn on January 6th 2001, around the room they each identified the denominations from which they originated. I only recall three naming their origin as

⁴⁷ A world away, it is noteworthy that there are many co-incidental overlaps of the above lists with the functions listed in “The Better Way” 8.1, 8.2

⁴⁸ Consideration 8

Anglican. Denomination of origin was not usually discussed because it is not usually an issue. Twizel is a church that expects to be one, and toleration of tradition and worship practice is utterly normal. My comment in my first sermon on 7th January 2001 was therefore well received that (in words to this effect) we should celebrate someone else's worship practise if it gets that person closer to God, and regardless of the fact that that practise does not necessarily do anything useful spiritually for us.⁴⁹ The worship practise in Twizel is indeed tolerant, but works out in the practise of evangelical liturgical freedom, use of one of the denominational lectionaries, and the "consecration prayer" in communion that is allowed for the use of laity in communion by extension.

Pastoral care is taken very seriously. A team of nine members is listed in 1999. Val Hamilton had much respect in the church for gifts in that field, and her availability for counselling was much in evidence from those seeking support. It was hard to see this church function as a committee driven system. It had much more to do with the spontaneous responses of those called upon for help and advice, and people of Twizel saw the church as providing that resource.⁵⁰

Co-operation with the Roman Catholic Church is done with affection with various events over the year. There was a breakaway core group that left All Saints to found what became the New Life Church. This meets on a Saturday in a local schoolroom. The evidence of changed self-destructive lives yet compensates the sadness of apparently dividing the Body of Christ with this. (This was attested by the local non-church policeman.) Unfortunately, most of the congregational children went with the breakaway. Twizel is, however, an integrated community, and much communication between Christians takes place. Marion Sheridan, Roman Catholic, is to be found worshipping with the New Life Church on Saturdays along with her son, the Pastor, Brett. On Fridays, Marion meets in the All Saints church with members Mary Massam and Rita Miller to pray for the community and world. Much is made in the New Life Church of the manifestation of the Spirit. As I noted to Brett and his wife Bernice, (formerly a Sunday School Teacher at All Saints) it is one manifestation of the Spirit, not "the" manifestation of the Spirit. I was concerned that some worship aims for spiritual highs and

⁴⁹ Consideration 4

⁵⁰ The nearest hospital is at Timaru.

attracts some members because of the entertainment value. This could be “Sunday froth” with little building of the Kingdom in world, community or individual life once the worship is over.

Not once did the All Saints members mention fundraising. The giving is expected to be sacrificial, and tithing is widely practised. The treasurer⁵¹ informed me that some individual regular offerings were so generous as to give a distorted view of the normal average giving. My observation is that regular church functions and events in Twizel were either social, or more prominently to develop the attenders spiritually, for prayer, or education/training. The church in Twizel expects to pay its way out of the regular offerings of the worshippers. Since there is no stipendiary, there are few expenses of office, of course, but the People’s Warden⁵² informed me that the parish could afford a half stipend. Their generosity to me was very apparent.

The wider church has not abandoned the church in Twizel, although one of the clergy I met implied that the rest of the church was ignoring it in the hope it would go away. I suspect this is unfair, but problems are posed when a congregation innovates, and even more problems if the innovations are theologically sound and the parent churches are not up with the changes.⁵³ It has to be salutary that a local congregation, rightly, is more integrated as the Body of Christ than the two parent churches to which it owes allegiance.

The Consulting Moderator⁵⁴ has the duty to “ensure that the mission and ministry exercised in the Pukaki Co-operating Parish⁵⁵ is well resourced, competent, supported within the parish and by the wider church, and that it is fulfilling the reasonable expectations of the Partner Churches.”⁵⁶ Among the key responsibilities is the duty

- to establish a personal trusting relationship with key leaders
- be available.....for consultation on procedure, mission or ministry

⁵¹ Peter Brown

⁵² Brian Hutton

⁵³ I mean Considerations 3, 4 (especially) & 5.

⁵⁴ Currently Ken Linscott

⁵⁵ Pukaki is the former village now submerged by the damming of Lake Pukaki, near the township of Twizel.

⁵⁶ Quote from Position Description of the Consulting Moderator produced by the South Canterbury Presbytery.

- visit the parish at least 5 times annually, not necessarily with invitation.
- Facilitate further reflection...enhancing learning from experience....
- Facilitate further development of local mission and ministry
- Twice a year to discuss with those offering ministries the further training they might need
- Liaise with Anglican Ministry Educator....
- Report regularly to the Parish, Presbytery, Bishop, Archdeacon and JRC on well being of mission and ministry in the parish, and what support or encouragement from the churches might be appropriate.
- Familiarise him/herself with the ministry standards and requirements of the Partner Churches and assist people in the Parish to know these and fulfil them;
- Familiarise him/herself with the special character and customs of the Pukaki Co-operating Parish in order to support its mission.

The qualities required to fulfil this role are in line with the expectations the Anglicans would have of an Enabler⁵⁷.

A church is not, however, like an analytical document, a matter of structure and history. It is people united in the common cause of the Gospel, living and working in the power of the Holy Spirit. Seeing the Twizel Christians together, it struck me that they would have proclaimed the Gospel whatever meetings had taken place, and whatever church structure had emerged.

Every successful church needs a majority who pray, are faithful in worship, and witness to their faith in action in work and community. Twizel church is rich with such people, even if they are a minority of the whole town's population. Their warmth of welcome, their spontaneity and unselfconscious willingness to pray and show wholesome affection, their mutual pastoral support, and their generosity in sacrificial giving is worthy of the quotation "see how these Christians love one another."

No church, no matter what the structure, will survive a lack of these qualities and motivation. It had to be noted that each Christian

⁵⁷ see qualities of Enabler below

was proud and supportive of the gifts and roles of the others, and all were seeking to improve their skills in the roles they had.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Val Hamilton for instance had developed her qualification as a counsellor.

2: Total Ministry

Overview

This has been the subject of a sabbatical study already.⁵⁹ Of the seventy-two parishes in Christchurch, around fifteen (not including Twizel or the Waimate area) are now Total Ministry parishes. Jenny Dawson⁶⁰ is very much the overseer of process, input and promotion in Christchurch Diocese. Six dioceses have adopted a similar form. Alaska and Northern Michigan have had a similar form called “Mutual Ministry” since the mid 1970s. Five ministry units in 1998 had adopted this structure in Christchurch, and another ten were exploring.⁶¹

In the 1990s, in Otago and Southland, the Anglican church reduced its stipendiary staffing by a quarter, and the Presbyterians in the south and mid Canterbury region and the West Coast reduced its stipendiaries by just over 38%.⁶² The effect on a church of engaging in ministry without a stipendiary is massive. Economically, the congregation does not have the financial burdens of the stipendiary office, and resources are released to support and finance new departures in ministry. The energy of a whole congregation engaged in ministry, albeit part time, is nonetheless many more “man-hours” (includes women-hours) than the stipendiary doing the ministry on behalf of the rest. Lay congregation members reach many more people than even the most energetic stipendiary. Politically, congregations without a stipendiary are “owning their own profile”⁶³ in the community, rather than leaving the public profile of the church to the man with the collar.⁶⁴ Mission demands that we present our

⁵⁹ Tim Morris 1997, Episcopal Dean of Edinburgh.

⁶⁰ Ministry Educator

⁶¹ “Total Ministry” April 1996 & revisions Feb & Dec 1998 published by the Christchurch Diocesan Ministry & Training Division.

⁶² T Graeme Nicholas: Growing Organic Ministry in Rural New Zealand, delivered at the ANZATS Conference on Ecotheology July 2000

⁶³ *ibid.*

⁶⁴ This function, however, was recorded as missed by Twizel in my questionnaire of 21st Jan 2001.

faith with confidence, without inhibition, and without the expectation that it is someone else's job.

Perceptions still abound that only those with a full-time stipendiary are a "real" church⁶⁵ but as local churches accept the call to Total Ministry, the perception is changing. It may take a generation, on both sides of the world, to accept that it is still a real visit from the church, even if the visit is from somebody not wearing a clerical collar. In England, many of the lay Christians visit neighbours, but fail to see this as visiting from their church and a part of the church's ministry.

The economic factors are strong influences to this trend, and do not necessarily parallel the English scene. Remoteness such as at Twizel and other communities is not seen on this scale. Population decline is a factor in NZ rurally. Economic conditions have affected agriculture in both countries. England however has, usually, a net surplus migration of suburbia to the rural idyll unparalleled in New Zealand. With it it has the potential spending power, even to support the local church building appeal, since the dreaming spire is possibly a factor in the value of the house in its scenery. The clapboard buildings of New Zealand, however, swallow much less resources than their English counterparts. It made me smile to see the notice pointing to the beautiful Church of the Good Shepherd beside the spectacular Lake Tekapo: "Historic Building." The church was built in 1935. My church in Ault Hucknall, Derbyshire, is Saxon.

It may be that the English church may limp on with the stipendiary model for some time. The fundraising capacity of the English countryside outstrips that of New Zealand, and the conservative view of ministry in the hands of the stipendiary is much more ingrained, especially with the added factor of Establishment. The English parson still has the expected role in the community that "owns" the church it does not have to attend.

That the development is economic is shown by the slow development of Total Ministry in the urban scene, although there is very little urban territory in Canterbury NZ outside Christchurch, Timaru and Ashburton. Archdeacon Carole Graham mentions one TM parish in her Archdeaconry, and two others in Christchurch, all of whom could no longer afford a stipendiary, as well as the Timaru

⁶⁵ Nicholas

parish enabled by Philip Robinson. This is not to demean the concept or the practice of TM, but merely to highlight one of the factors that push its promotion.⁶⁶

Concept of Total Ministry

One of the sources of inspiration and theology is the work of Roland Allen (1868-1947), Anglican missionary to China in the 1890s and later, and author. His assertions were to enable the laity in the face of disabling clericalism. He considered the church's mission to be about building churches, not missionary stations. He withheld one of his most satirical works because the style of criticism was couched in the "Screwtape Letters" style. This work satirised the process whereby the missionaries maintained their total authority and control over the local population, rather than allowing the baptised Christians to assume responsibility for ministry in their localities.

He asserted⁶⁷ the following:

Every Congregation...

1. ...has within its own membership sufficient gifts for its own life and mission
2. ...should be entrusted with the Bible, Creeds, Ministry, and Sacraments
3. ...should be responsible for recognising the spiritual gifts and needs of its members, and calling forth those ministries.
4. ...should share its message and life with neighbouring communities not yet evangelised.
5. The Holy Spirit working on the human endowments of the community leaders is sufficient for its life. Don't overtrain. Don't import leaders.
6. Any Christian community that can't do these things is not a church but a mission field.

A more recent proponent of locally based ministry, rather than the professionally centred outside supplied sort comes from the February 2001's Rural Network News (see Chapter 5) of Christchurch. An article by Bruce Irvine of Narromine, NSW identifies the misvaluation of the church as a consumer commodity to be

⁶⁶ Consideration 12

⁶⁷ 1912: "Missionary Methods: St Paul's or ours"

supplied by professional outsiders. He compares this with the original Christian settlers worshipping and serving together in ministry locally. Then they raised enough funds to pay a full time minister, and “that’s when the rot set in.” Instead of the church being a local manifestation of the Kingdom of God lived out in the community’s Christians, it has become, in the mind of the locals, a centrally supplied service that can be cut off when the central administration of a denomination decides.

Introduction and Practice

According to Allen’s definitions, most of the parishes in England are mission stations, not churches. If The Better Way, and similar initiatives in England are to mean anything, the clergy, as well as the laity must radically rethink their ministerial roles and responsibilities. Stipendiary clergy become “enablers” in the TM model, with the oversight of several parishes, responsible for training and encouragement, enablement of the personal discovery of personal gifts by the laity in their area of responsibility, and all that goes with non-directive leadership.

The belief that “ministry begins with baptism” is a crucial concept that historically is linked to changes like communion for everyone from baptism and rethinking initiation. It is no accident that Total Ministry began to develop at the same time as these theological and liturgical moves were happening.⁶⁸

The effect on older clergy is mixed and its acceptance in general terms depends on whom you talk to. More than one minister asserted that older priests are not necessarily making the adaptation to new ministry practices and structures, and I was told there have been early retirements and resignations. I met no clergy personally who rejected Total Ministry as a concept or policy for future ministry, but anecdotally, its development has not been universally welcomed by those with a more traditional practice of ministry. I was also informed, however, that many of the older clergy were its greatest supporters.

⁶⁸ This paragraph is a quote from a Jenny Dawson email.

Parishes eventually enter the Total Ministry scheme by a “calling”. The Ministry Support Team⁶⁹ explore with the congregation the way forward⁷⁰, and an enabler is appointed. Training processes not dissimilar to that of Twizel (above) ensue, leading to the Bishop being present at the Calling, leading up to the celebration of the ministry of the baptised. Types of licensed ministry include

1. Preachers
2. Worship Leaders
3. Catechists
4. The Pastoral Minister
5. Other Licences could include
 - a) Eucharistic Ministers
 - b) Evangelists
 - c) Administrator
 - d) Minister of Anointing and Healing.

But the assumption of the model is that all members of the parish have a ministry to perform, and all should seek to identify and fulfil that ministry.

In the oversight of the TM developing parishes, the bishop’s executive officer in the field is his Diocesan Educator⁷¹, and answering to her are the Examining Chaplains and the Enablers. Examining Chaplains have a task of offering diocesan ratification of the local calling, and maintaining the link with the Diocese, supporting the developing local life of the church. The role is seen as non-directive in managerial terms, enabling the ordained or identified candidates for ordination to express and develop their own distinct ministries, rather than to create a standard priest clone. Enablers take on the long-term oversight of the parish, alongside other parishes, or areas of stipendiary ministry. “Remember an Enabler is not merely a facilitator; an Enabler is also required to challenge, to express catholicity, to offer theological skills and input, and to play a

⁶⁹ Defined in the Total Ministry Statute of 1999, Christchurch Synod. Membership of the team shall consist of the Administrator and other licensed lay leaders and priests and deacons as agreed and called by the Total Ministry Unit and the Diocese...

⁷⁰ Details of this process in “Total Ministry” April 1996 & revisions Feb & Dec 1998 published by the Christchurch Diocesan Ministry & Training Division.

⁷¹ Jenny Dawson

significant part in carrying out the vision.”⁷² This is often seen to need further training for those used to a single stipendiary cure.

The qualities of an enabler are listed on p27 below, but the recruitment leaflet also specifies that if

- You like strong up-front leadership
- You enjoy engaged on-going pastoral ministry
- You prefer to delegate to, rather than collaborate with
...then your ministry may be best exercised elsewhere.

The Enablers are present at four identified stages in the Total Ministry development of a parish: Exploring, Preparation, Candidacy, Reflection and Sustaining. Their roles are as much about personal qualities as specialist know-how. The Christchurch Diocesan pamphlet⁷³ includes “being a non-anxious presence in both the Exploring and the Preparation stages. In the Candidacy stage “An ability to trust and encourage trusting” is mentioned.⁷⁴

Definite ordinations take place and the orders of deacon and priest would be recognised anywhere in the Anglican Communion. Those so ordained, however, are given limited licences to work only in their own parishes. This is no second class ordination, and it is indelible, not “water based.”⁷⁵ The process of identifying and calling local people as Local Priests and Deacons from among the congregation is the same as that for other ministries. The ordained are not ‘more important’ than any other person in ministry.”^{76 77}

“Special Commendation Forms” are issued to parishioners for the commendation of others to the offices of the ordained. From these forms, and after his earlier contacts with the parish, the Bishop identifies the individuals to be ordained. Special meetings of the congregation follow to pledge support as training continues, and eventually, a liturgical celebration and affirmation of the new ministerial responsibilities takes place.

⁷² Pamphlet Christchurch Diocese July 1999 “Some of the skills required of Enablers at the different stages of Total Ministry Development.”

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Consideration 6c

⁷⁵ The answer to a question put by me to Jenny Dawson in an email.

⁷⁶ From “Total Ministry” (above)

⁷⁷ See Considerations, especially 7 & 9

Comments were expressed to me that the TM model involves more work for fewer congregation members than does the EMM of Twizel. The danger is recognised in the diocese.⁷⁸ Without direct experience, I could not comment. It does occur to me that those with a residual model of the ordained having a monopoly of ministry could simply substitute the locally ordained for the centrally stipendiary ordained, putting greater pressure upon them. This tendency was identified personally by Anne Sweney at Twizel.

The priest or deacon is not necessarily, however, the pastor, teacher, or administrator. In a stipendiary model, he or she is likely to be all of these. The local priest is seen as the symbol that makes coherent the “priesthood of all believers”⁷⁹ and the deacon is not just undergoing an apprenticeship for priesthood, but has a distinct and permanent function. They need not be leaders in any other capacity. Consideration 6 (below) as applied to Twizel could well apply to any parish adopting Total Ministry. Affirmation and mutual trust is of the essence.⁸⁰

Preparation, training, mutual learning and reflection are essential at all levels of the introductory and maintenance levels of the system by all personnel concerned. There is little room for the half-hearted, the sceptical or the mere fantasist. Mutuality and trust exist at all levels along with the hunger to study and learn together.⁸¹ The status priest of the older “Father is always right” catholic traditions would definitely conflict with the egalitarianism of all ministries, ordained or lay in the TM or EMM models as I witnessed them in action. Radical departures are not easy to accept for those who have spent many years with a traditional model of ministry. More than one person asserted to me that older priests are not necessarily making the adaptation to these new ministry practices and structures, and there have been early retirements.

The Christchurch Diocese produces concise and very helpful pamphlets and booklets identifying roles and functions, qualities and gifts required for the various identified ministries in Total Ministry. Every stage is set down in a rigid checklist. With such guidelines there is a clear set of reference works, and there is the necessary

⁷⁸ “Total Ministry” (above)

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Consideration 10

⁸¹ Consideration 10

evidence of ministerial support. These appear to be giving confidence to those with the embryo calling to ministry and church function that has hitherto been seen as the exclusive work of professionals.

3: Others on the Journey:

Waimate & Qualities of an Enabler

Twizel being a holiday destination, with many holiday homes, the Sunday congregation frequently has visitors. On the 7th January, Rosie Staite attended the worship in All Saints Twizel to find me preaching that day. Rosie is a lay enabler on a 20 hours paid contract plus expenses, with a responsibility to guide and enable the rural churches around Waimate⁸² (St Andrew's & Waihao Co-operating Parishes) towards a co-operating and lay led and worked ministry. Sparsely populated and remote small communities predominate, with the only significant centre being Waimate itself. Co-ordinating with Rosie in this responsibility is Ken Linscott of Timaru, an appointee of the Presbyterian Church and JRC chairman, as well as the Twizel Enabler. Rosie is JRC Secretary.

Because Rosie is a lay Christian enabler, she finds her presence does not carry the agendas and expectations of being a clergy leader. Gentle progress is being made to the development of a lay led ministry that will eventually be another hybrid of TM and EMM, worked out by the lay ministers themselves.^{83 84} Rosie is their enabler; the epitome of the ideal enabler as listed in Christchurch Diocese's recruitment brochure for Enablers.

- A person who collaborates
- A teacher
- A trainer
- Known for your flexibility and creativity
- One who empowers and inspires
- Able to listen rather than talk
- Passionate that local people know best about their own life
- Able to let go
- Committed to and understand the principles of Total Ministry

Rosie's job description in her two year contract include the tasks

⁸² About 160km from Twizel

⁸³ "Lay Ministers" could be synonymous with "congregation".

⁸⁴ Considerations 1 & 2.

1. To arrange appropriate ministry training for groups, using all available church resources and the appointee's own skills. Some liaison with the Waimate and Timaru churches will be desirable as will the contact with the Ministry Educators of the various denominations.
2. To provide pastoral and spiritual oversight of Lay Leaders active within their parishes in their various roles, offering guidance, encouragement and support.
3. To arrange a satisfactory time schedule to meet the needs of the two parishes in consultation with the respective Parish Councils, and to be self-motivated to accomplish the tasks in a sensitive and capable manner.

Evidence exists, however of the more conservative forms of ministry in Christchurch Diocese. Waimate itself, the community at the centre of Rosie's visionary enabling ministry, (but for which Rosie has no responsibility,) having a population of about 3000, has full church plant prominent centrally that belongs to each of the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Salvation Army, Roman Catholics, and other evangelical churches. I have no concrete statistics, but a guestimate average of between twenty-five and forty souls attends each. (The Catholics may have more.) In the midst of this plethora of maintenance effort, the Anglicans are actually expanding to build yet another church hall. Each has, apparently, its own full time minister.⁸⁵ Maybe it takes an outsider such as me to see the inconsistency and waste of effort and resources, as well as the witness to a divided church.⁸⁶

The ultimate shape of the rural ministry around Waimate is not yet defined, but is evolving, with Rosie's enablement, to fit the local vision of those who will realise their spiritual gifts and take full responsibility for their local church. That will come from the lay ministers themselves. Total Ministry is shown here not to be a prescriptive formula, but a frame of mind and an attitude to ministry, whatever gifts are identified by the minister him/herself, or the role or order of ministry that they eventually undertake.

⁸⁵ The Methodists have "a third of a Minister."

⁸⁶ Consideration 11

Ellesmere

This parish south of Christchurch is the area bounded by the Rakaia and Selwyn Rivers, and approximately the main Route 1 road. It has 6 Anglican worship centres, though Leeston has a separate Co-operating Church combining Methodists and Presbyterians, as well as a landmark Roman Catholic church.⁸⁷ The Anglican parish centres on Leeston, which has its vicarage there. Southbridge was once the centre of a second parish, now amalgamated. Each of these two former parishes had two daughter churches. Leeston had Brookside and Irwell, and Southbridge had Dunsandel and Sedgmere. The present Vicar, therefore, is responsible for six worship centres.

Even in this fairly traditionally organised set of churches there is evidence of change in the expectations and patterns of ministry. The Vicar, Brenda Walker asserted that her predecessor, an Anglo-Catholic⁸⁸ had closed out much of the lay ministry that his predecessor, Carole Graham had developed. (Carole, in 1978, was probably the first female incumbent, certainly in Australasia, and possibly of the world.⁸⁹) The consequence was a reticence by lay people to volunteer again when Brenda sought to encourage lay ministry and responsibility beyond the traditional parish models.

Brenda reversed the trend to clerical domination of ministry, along with the slide into debt that the parish was suffering. A stewardship campaign was conducted early in her ministry. By my visit in February 2001, the only parts of the service I had to conduct,⁹⁰ with the exception of that at Dunsandel, were the sermon and the consecration prayer. The children's work and worship was lay led also. Several lay members of the church were assisting with pastoral work, and there was clear evidence of substantial administrative support from the laity. There are five parish wide Licensed Lay Ministers, and ten church-centred Ministers of the Word shared between the six churches. There are also three Pastoral Eucharistic Ministers working in a community wide capacity.

⁸⁷ The priest here had just retired, and was not to be replaced.

⁸⁸ noted factually, not pejoratively

⁸⁹ Hong Kong ordained women earlier than New Zealand.

⁹⁰ I experienced five of the churches over the two Sundays of my stay.

Ecumenical development is in evidence, but the different worship centres show different levels and qualities of integration. Similarly, the various worship centres have various levels of lay development of leadership. Clearly, Brenda is aware of the national diocesan trend towards Total Ministry, and although there is no suggestion that this traditionally structured parish is a candidate for TM in the near future, the trend to the frame of mind that will bring it about is germinating.

I arrived after the end of a series of united Sundays of worship, where all had cancelled their own separate acts of worship to combine as one each Sunday. Given that all households normally have their own transport, the concept of coming together as one was acceptable. Most of the church buildings are, at most, easily within a twenty-minute drive. I did not ask if this was to be repeated regularly, or if it was to be the start of a policy towards combining congregations, but the possibility is there.⁹¹

⁹¹ As it could be in England if the nettle could be grasped about reducing the number of worship centres the Church of England must maintain, frequently at the sacrifice of what it is really there to do. See Consideration 11

4: Youth

Industrially, Ellesmere parish is agricultural, but unlike Twizel, the farmers are clearly identified with their local church, and have been for generations. The generations attending church, however, are largely those over the age of forty. This is true of all the parishes I saw in New Zealand. In this, there is a clear parallel with the English Church. Twizel had a few children and no teenagers present at worship. Both parishes had evidence of contact between church and the local schools, but this did not translate to church attendance in numbers.

Even in the New Life church at Twizel, the children of the worshippers, and the younger generation were few in numbers. I do not recall any teenagers.

The one occasion where teenagers abounded at worship was at a “Summer Harvest” organised by a New Life church, bringing young people together from Christchurch and Canterbury at the Tekapo Army camp. The culture shock to most traditional Anglican worshippers would be phenomenal, but the loud rock music and sensory atmosphere attracted and involved those present. The lyrics were indeed Christian if you could discern them in the volume.⁹² I can only record that this was an event I witnessed. How this generation is brought from the otherwise “froth” of pop worship into the service of ministry and building of the kingdom, and identified with what brings all Christians of all cultures (even in the same community) remains a question, but an essential one with which to engage.

Unfortunately, the sect attracting this youth is fundamentalist, and I doubt whether many of those enjoying the worship would allow their developing intellect to continue swallowing the absolutes of the literal bible history of Genesis that most intelligent people consider myth.

The rural region around Waimate has made children a mission focus that has had some success. Holiday and after school programmes in Waihao touch about fifty children regularly, and a Youth Alpha has begun. Friday after school activities in Glenavy (Waihao parish) have 10 children, and St Andrew’s, another part of Rosie Staite’s patch,

⁹² Consideration 13.

has moved from no evident children to a presence of between fourteen and seventeen once a month.

5: Networking

The Diocese produces Total Ministry Times, of common interest to those so engaged. The church, however, has to engage the world in which it ministers, or it is a private religious club, irrelevant to the world to whom it prophesies and to which it conducts mission.

Christianity is a whole life experience: there are no “no-go” areas to God or His will. The church has to engage in the issues that concern the world, as well as those that concern the church. New Zealand has a generally primary producing economy, exporting some of the best wool for Armani suits, and has a full range of meat, dairy and fruit produce.

In the Southern Hemisphere harvest takes place in Lent. Rogation cannot therefore be the fifth Sunday after Easter. As my parishes back in England were jointly marking Plough Sunday, New Zealand farmers were watching the grain ripen. The church has not really kept step liturgically with the reversed seasons in New Zealand. “In the Deep Midwinter” is not really an apt Christmas Carol. In England, the church largely lost touch with the working classes at the Industrial Revolution, but the rural communities still found harvest real, and showed the church engaged with their concerns. The links in New Zealand between the agrarian workers and the church is less work/faith link based, but this may be changing.

If lay ministry in its variant forms is developed, then the economic concerns of the congregation will be seen as a relevant offering in the liturgy. If the church keeps its networking practices between the Bishop, the Diocesan resource and administration bodies, the Archdeaconries and the parishes,⁹³ then the issues of the community could be voiced when necessary, prophetically, by the Bishop. In the same way the bishops of colliery dioceses spoke out in the 1984 Miners’ Strike in England, and the Church of England engaged with issues of urban deprivation in Faith in the City 1985. The potential always exists when the church maintains full communication between all its parts for a whole body response to all the issues of society.

The structures for such networking exist in New Zealand, particularly surrounding the rural church and communities. One such networking

⁹³ There are no deaneries as a tier of administration in New Zealand

group is the Rural Ministry Unit, which held a planning day at Methven on 25th January 2001. This body, a think tank and liaison body made up of denominational representatives and two university personnel seeks to engage with the issues surrounding the church and the local rural economy, the new evolving ministries, interdenominational subjects, then do the theological reflection and articulate the findings. They produce a regular magazine to publish their findings.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Rural Network News: printed and distributed by Anglican Diocese of Christchurch: Edited by Robyn McPhail of the Rural Ministry Unit.

6:Thinking of England

It may be that the English church may limp on with the stipendiary model for some time. The fundraising capacity of the English countryside outstrips that of sparsely populated rural New Zealand, and the conservative view that ministry belongs in the hands of the stipendiary is much more ingrained, especially with the added factor of Establishment. The English parson still has the expected role in the community that “owns” the church it does not have to attend.

There are major changes on the ground, however, that are running contrary to the community expectations of how church is “done”. It is physically impossible, for instance, for parsons to keep running the Sunday rural church as it was fifty years ago when they lead worship at between four and ten worship centres instead of the one or two of their predecessors. Sheffield quotas are rationalising staffing levels in all dioceses. The finance of many dioceses is at critical level, if the report of the Church Times of 16th February 2001 is to be believed. Many dioceses have a policy, written or otherwise, of leaving parishes in interregna for at least many months, thus saving that period of stipend from the budget. Lay leadership and ministry is developing apace, because the changes are being forced. The planning of the transition to an indigenous, as opposed to stipendiary ministry takes place is not for this document. It would be best if that was planned rather than introduced by default by the stealthy multiplying of interregna.

There is also the continuous struggle by the English Church to maintain a realistic giving level from its members. Non-churchgoers, meanwhile, find it easy to accuse the church of being wealthy as long as the Church Commissioners continue to subsidise the parishes (by providing stipends) from the inherited and invested wealth.⁹⁵

My New Zealand experience indicates that attitudes changed when the congregation was given an ultimatum. Twizel changed when the Bishop of Christchurch personally gave them notice that the Diocese would not subsidise a stipendiary from a given date. Total ministry was already an acceptable alternative parish ministerial structure, and the training was available to the laity, as well as their willingness

⁹⁵ Consideration 15

to avail themselves of it. The nearest England has at present is the non-stipendiary minister (NSM), and he/she is “the same as a Vicar, only unpaid.” Structurally, nothing in ministry has changed with an NSM. Even the role of Readers in England is a sort of clericalism. A Better Way, rightly, makes much of the work of Readers, but the attitudes of the periphery worshippers do not recognise any difference. One of my Readers was once referred to as “that other Vicar” by the parents of an infant I baptised. England has not moved on in ministry from the “helping the Vicar” model, rather than having the broad base of everyone baptised having his or her own ministry.

Total and Every Member Ministry are radical alternatives to stipendiary parish based ministry that are as challenging as the ideals of Roland Allen. They broaden the base of ministry and the expectations of the ministry of the baptised exponentially, particularly as seen in Twizel. The resisting factors possibly identified, however, are the loss of controls that a hierarchy has when it deals with volunteers instead of paid staff. One could sympathise with the anxiety of a Bishop giving a licence to someone he feels is undertrained. There are countless clergy whose tradition is one of pastoral duty, service and leadership, who may be prepared to delegate their responsibility for ministry to someone under guidance, but not release it to someone who feels guided by the Holy Spirit to take the role over from him, and work as an equal.

I could also see the perceived threat of stipendiary clergy resisting such change as an attack on their security of tenure if these ministries were developed. The role of stipendiaries in the New Zealand models demands a very different style of ministry and leadership from the expectations of most English parishes.⁹⁶ I was not aware of enforced redundancies, however.

The theology and thinking is not far from being in place in England. The ministry of the Baptised is at the forefront of A Better Way. What seem to be lacking is the expectation of the laity to take on in large numbers their new responsibilities and roles. There is a failure to generate the bottom up revolution where worshippers demand their opportunities for ministry, and their congregations endorse their calling, and incorporate them (in their new roles) into the church structures at all levels of ministry. There seems to be no policy to broaden the base of the ordained in the radical structure of Total

⁹⁶ See p20 & p23 for qualities of Enablers.

Ministry. For all the sound theology of the discipleship and ministry of the baptised, when it comes to the crunch, it is still the Vicar's job.

The whole church at all levels needs to learn the message of the old settler churches. The church is the local body of Christians in ministry, not the central administration that has formerly supplied professionals to do ministry for them. This is being re-learnt in the Antipodes, and it needs to be learnt afresh in England. This would probably have to be in the face of opposition from those stipendiaries who fear loss of control. It may well be opposed by those local Christians who fear, after generations of being deskilled, the need to discover and use their gifts in ministry.

The theology here is that sacrifice is not vicarious, it is direct and personal. I cannot claim grace or honour because I imposed a sacrifice on someone else, even though I may honour and praise the sacrifices of others. Similarly, a congregation cannot rightly employ a minister to save them having to fulfil their own call to ministry. Ministry is not "the Vicar's job"; it is the job of any Christian called to discipleship. A Vicar may pray, but it does not remove the obligation of his/her parishioner to pray. For prayer, in this sentence, one could substitute any item of ministry that does not require the authority of Holy Orders. When analysed in detail, there are not many such items needing such authority.

7: Considerations

1. Ministry begins with baptism, not with ordination. (A Better Way, Derby Diocese, UK, but not exclusively)
2. Ideas may be proclaimed by authority figures, but real change is only effected if it is brought about by the wholehearted support of the grass roots i.e. revolutions are invariably “bottom up”.
3. Priestly authority is not only conferred from the authorising laying on of hands, but by the acceptance and endorsement of the world congregation from which the former lay person came, and to which the priest will minister.
 - a) A priest normally cannot celebrate Holy Communion except with the validating presence of a congregation.
 - b) In the event, for whatever reason, that there is no priest, the Grace of God would not be restricted by the absence of any one individual. The whole congregational prayer, in the absence of a priest, would consecrate the elements, whether or not a person stands behind the holy table. This assumes the validation of the congregation itself as being of the “catholic” church, and not a maverick or breakaway.
4. The rules and regulations of denominations do not dictate the Grace of God.
5. Theology is done reflecting on the past events that were guided by the Holy Spirit. The significance of the events as being so guided may be missed at the time.
6. Essential factors identified by me for the success of EMM or TM church model
 - a) The willingness of a congregation to adopt and believe in the model, without alternative agendas or models being promoted to frustrate the success of the model adopted.
 - b) The willingness for individuals to commit to the identity of their own gifts and be willing to use them in the model.
 - c) The need to trust the motives of the leaders, the wider church, and the other congregation members who are applying their gifts in the model.
 - d) Attitude: To be mutually supportive and forgiving of other’s shortcomings. (Equally one could use this in clerical models of church where congregations can be very unforgiving of their clergy.) To be humble in the face of the Holy Spirit at work in and through others.

- e) Generosity in giving of both time and money.
 - f) Unselfconsciousness in public prayer, activity and leadership, and the realisation that anyone can, and may pray publicly.
7. Clergy are enablers of others' ministry, not monopolistic performers of all ministries.
 8. Essentially, training opportunities must be provided for ministry, but there must be the expectations that these are to be availed of.
 9. Whatever model of ministry is adopted by any denomination, each ministry is of equal importance, whether stipendiary or otherwise. See 1 Corinthians 12.
 10. If Christians are present in worship, the Holy Spirit has called them. (1 Corinthians 12.3) Their motives in ministry need not, therefore, be questioned under normal circumstances.
 11. It would be the devil's way to give the church a preoccupation to avoid it putting real energy into building the Kingdom of God. The maintenance of buildings could be one. The long-term and heated engagement in trivial arguments about doctrine or authority could be another. The energetic effort put into a small beer issue of morality, a sop from the devil, could be a third.
 12. David Jenkins, former Bishop of Durham once considered in the early 1990s that the financial problems of the Church of England and the Church Commissioners might well be the Holy Spirit causing the church to re-engage with the way its ministry is carried out.
 13. Worship is expressed in the culture of the worshipper The brass bands of the 1860s, and Booth's "Why should the devil have all the best tunes?" related directly to the "pop" culture of his day. However, Christian brass bands, not surprisingly, seem to be in a time-warp, and are unlikely to attract early 21st century youth. The church must keep up with the cultural language of the day, and enable the Holy Spirit to speak in the language of the hearers
 14. "Just because we realise for the first time that the Spirit is moving in our lives does not mean it is the first time that the Spirit has moved, and certainly not the first time the Spirit has moved in our lives."⁹⁷

⁹⁷ My sermon at Twizel NZ 21st Jan 2001

15. Thoughts on giving.

- The maintenance of a local church financially should be met entirely from the sacrificial giving of its living members, not from fundraising efforts or subsidy, and certainly not from sacrificial gambling.
- Giving is a Christian discipline as much as is prayer, Bible study or regular worship. It is not prompted by, or dependent upon the needs of the local or national church.
- Giving is not about comparisons with the amounts other people give whether to give more or less. It is about one's own pledge after spiritual communion with God, and due attention to the demands of Our Lord in scripture.
- The secrecy surrounding giving is to protect the modesty of the generous, not the embarrassment of the niggardly. It is quite in order for one person to hold in confidence the giving records of those pledging for the sake of good accounting.
- The call to give is the first call on the income of the Christian, not the last when all other expenses are met.
- Sacrificial means that something has been lost to the giver, and known and felt to be lost, otherwise it is not a sacrifice.
- The Widow's Mite was about giving all she had, not about giving a tiny amount.
- The criticism of the giving of Pharisees was not the amount they gave, but their attitude in giving it. Jesus never attacked the tithing system.
- Church social events should be just that, not fundraising efforts in disguise.
- Giving should take account of the fact that the church, once in receipt of the pledges of its members, has a duty to meet the perceived needs of others in charitable donations, and a tithing pledge from the church account is not unreasonable.

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