

Clergy Wellbeing Matters

Easter 2024

Dear colleagues

Welcome to the first Clergy Wellbeing Matters newsletter. My hope is that these will be issued a number of times during the year as an opportunity to share updates and resources to support our ministry and wellbeing. If you have any news items or concerns that you feel should be included, please do let me know.

Living Ministry Research Report

The latest Living Ministry research report has been published, providing an update on clergy wellbeing as experienced by the participants in a longitudinal study. Based on survey data collected in March 2023, the report examines how different aspects of wellbeing have changed since previous waves of the research and through the pandemic, as well as exploring for the first time how clergy experience and manage change. Other new questions address social class and cultural and psychological wellbeing. The report can be accessed here

[Scan code to download
or click here](#)



Prayer

Come, creator Spirit, source of life;
sustain us when our hearts are heavy
and our wells have run dry,
for you are the Father's gift,
with him who is our living water,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Working from a place of rest.

It is good that our Bishops are keen to clarify that all clergy are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours in each period of seven days and one additional rest period of 24 hours in each month, and in the remaining weeks of the month to take a rest day and a light day. Where there are genuine difficulties in taking rest days, please either feel free to speak with me or your Archdeacon to see if there are ways we can help.

Health Assured

Clergy Assistance Programme

The Diocese of Blackburn has teamed up with Health Assured to enable an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to all Stipendiary and Self Supporting Clergy. Although Clergy are not employees, this term is standard to use for most Assistance Programmes.

The programme provides a confidential 24-hour helpline service containing legal, medical and financial information along with tips on how to cope with topics such as bereavement and mental health. Visit the Clergy Wellbeing page of the Diocesan Website for details of how to access this.



Clergy Cottage Pentewan

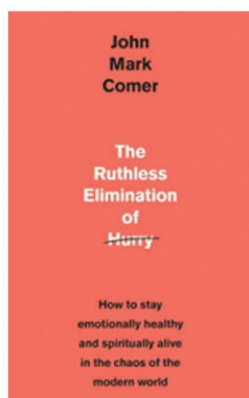
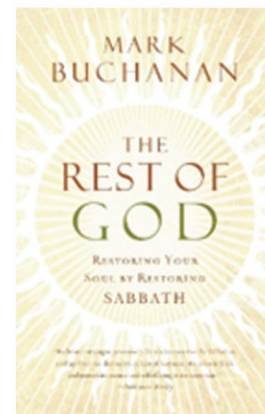
The Clergy Cottage Trust is a voluntary group that provides a low cost retreat holiday in the lovely trust cottage in the village of Pentewan, Cornwall. Pentewan is nestled in the heart of the Cornish Riviera on the south coast of Cornwall. It has a fantastic long beach with a sailing club and the Hubbox Beach Bar. There is a Post Office, a small grocery shop at the village petrol station and cycle path all within walking distance.

clergycottageatrust.org

Book recommendations

The Rest of God – recommended by Rev. Craig Abbott, who writes...

We will all have different approaches to taking sabbath rest and we will all, no doubt, have struggled with maintaining the boundaries of our day off and more prolonged time off but what we all probably agree on is the need for sufficient time to rest and recuperate. Sometimes, it is helpful to read how others have managed the boundaries of rest in order that we might better approach the gift that Sabbath can be when understood more fully. I found Mark Buchanan's book, 'The Rest of God' a helpful companion in learning to appreciate that gift of Sabbath. He takes time to explore how Sabbath has been understood throughout Scripture and inviting us to reflect on what it might become for us, more than just a weekly day off, but an attitude of heart. At the end of each chapter, there is a Sabbath 'liturgy', something to try, a question to ponder or an invitation into a new way of thinking/acting which makes this book helpfully practical as well as thought-provoking. Buchanan's premise is to show us the importance of rest in order that we might discover the 'rest' of God, the aspects of His character and love that we may ordinarily miss in our busy, sabbath-starved lives.



The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry – recommended by Rev. Karen Herschell, who writes...

In the busyness of life and ministry I return to a book that has helped me to re-focus and manage the competing priorities. This book helps us to identify where the problem of speed and hurry lie in our fast moving world; offering practical solutions to help us slow down, catch our breath and focus. Comer reminds us that Jesus with the demands made on him in his ministry found time to go away to a quiet place and rest, so as to be able to be present in the moment with those who were calling on him.

Comer, likewise, offers the practices of Silence and Solitude, Sabbath, Simplicity and Slowing to help when we are feeling overwhelmed by all that needs to be done and it is a good and needful reminder to help us to be truly present to God, to others and to this moment, now.

Clergy Support Trust

CEO Ben Cahill-Nicholls visited our Bishops' Appointment Team this week. 30% of our clergy have sought support from the CST this last year, and they are keen to work with us in lobbying and developing preventative measures to ensure that all clergy have the support they need to thrive. To explore ways in which the CST may be able to offer you support, visit

www.clergysupport.org.uk

Final Word

I'm currently enjoying a tour around the diocese meeting clergy in their various deanery chapter meetings and was very pleased to attend the recent lunch for PTO and retired clergy in the Cathedral. I hope that some of the conversations I've been able to have may help to shape the support we need to offer across the diocese. If you feel there are ways that I can help and support you, please do not hesitate to be in touch. And if there are details of resources that you have found helpful in ministry that might be worth sharing, please let me know.

This comes with my prayers that Holy Week and Easter might be a time of refreshment and renewal for us all in our different ministry contexts.

Neil Kelley,



Canon Neil Kelley
Assistant Archdeacon for Clergy Wellbeing
neil.kelley@blackburn.anglican.org

07980 872203