

The Church of England is currently meeting in their Annual Synod. There will no doubt be many controversial issues debated, with a particular focus on human sexuality. Whilst these issues are important to many people, and although they impact directly on the way the church will be perceived, the Archbishop of Canterbury left no doubt, in his opening address, about the direction and the focus that he believed the church should have at this time. Amongst other things, he said the following: “Churches across this country have an extraordinary opportunity to help reimagine a new Britain over the coming years. To do this, we must be a *cross-shaped, foot-washing, Jesus-following* church. We must be confident in faith, humble and above all outward looking.”

His emphasis on proclaiming Christ crucified and risen, and the servant nature of Jesus’ ministry struck me especially at this time, as we contemplate our own direction and vision for the future. At the Parish Council meeting last week we began this process by reflecting on the poem “We are called to say yes”, by Edwina Gately. I ask you to pray this poem in the coming months as we discern the ways we might be a church like that envisaged by Archbishop Welby...

We are called to say yes.
That the kingdom might break through
To renew and to transform
Our dark and groping world.

We are called to say yes
That black may sing with white
And pledge peace and healing
For the hatred of the past.

We are called to say yes
So that nations might gather
And dance one great movement
For the joy of humankind.

We are called to say yes
So that rich and poor embrace

And become equal in their poverty
Through the silent tears that fall.

We are called to say yes
That the whisper of our God
Might be heard through our sirens
And the screams of our bombs.

We are called to say yes
To a God who still holds fast
To the vision of the Kingdom
For a trembling world of pain.

We are called to say yes
To this God who reaches out
And asks us to share
His crazy dream of love.

This Friday, 24th February, I will be attending the Consecration service in Brisbane Cathedral of my good friend and colleague, the Ven. Jeremy Greaves. Jeremy is being Consecrated by Archbishop Aspinall as the next Assistant Bishop of Brisbane (Northern Region). Please keep Jeremy and his family in your prayers as he begins this important new ministry.

May William Grant Broughton, Polycarp of Smyrna, Matthias, and all the Saints walk with you this week... *Sam*