

Keep Calm and Pray.



One the Way Proposal for prayerful consideration

This week saw the launch of our Deanery Proposal for On the Way. It's available from the following link:

[https://mcusercontent.com/063bbccd652bc2cc2f495d4c7/files/390ed500-50c0-9866-9384-50a83d5f511e/East Wivelshire Letter and Proposal Immediate Release.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/063bbccd652bc2cc2f495d4c7/files/390ed500-50c0-9866-9384-50a83d5f511e/East+Wivelshire+Letter+and+Proposal+Immediate+Release.pdf)

The various groups across the Deanery had a discussion earlier this week about some of the language contained in the proposal. One of the terms used is 'discipleship'. This is a very relevant word because on Sunday we're considering Jesus' calling of the first disciples after the great catch of fish in Luke 5. Jesus calls us to follow him. Many see this as merely a calling to 'sign up' or ascribe to his teaching and ethics or a kind of assent in intellectual terms only. Rather, Jesus calls Christians to something deeper and richer.

The New Testament word used is '*mathetes*'. This is more than simply thinking something through as we would in maths. It involves sitting at a teacher's feet and learning from him or her. For Jesus this meant not only leaving all to follow him, it also involved personal allegiance to him and giving him an exclusive loyalty. The late Howard Marshall (formerly a Professor of New Testament at the University of Aberdeen) says that for some this:

'meant literal abandonment of home, business ties and possessions, but in every case readiness to put the claims of Jesus first, whatever the cost.'

It requires an attitude that went far beyond the understanding of discipleship as understood by the rabbis. Jesus therefore gives a new and richer sense of meaning to the word disciple.

The Deanery proposal has some far-reaching implications for us all. It contains that which will excite and enthuse as well as some aspects which will raise concerns. We cannot stay as we are and so we are being asked to prayerfully consider this document over the coming weeks.

Please consider attending our **Cluster prayer group** (which is soon to become a Deanery wide prayer group) on Wednesday mornings at 9am for half an hour. We can also consider wrestling further with the language and its meaning rather than be put off by it. Anyone that reads this document will understand that none of us will be allowed to simply carry on the way we are. It is a wake-up call to the whole Deanery about how serious the current situation really is. But let's not panic, instead it's time to reflect, pray and get involved in the process.

As in discipleship, Jesus calls us to follow him, sit at his feet and pass on the Good News to others who have yet to hear and understand and then experience their own call to be disciples. It was given to us by those who were willing to pass it on and now it's time for us to live it out in the richer, deeper sense, which Jesus gives to the word 'disciple'. It's also time to be courageous and pass it to others.

Blessings,

Joe (Rector)