**Ministerial Meandering**

I know that for some of you this is a tough time. For any number of reasons. For myself - it is always something of an anticlimax after the high of Easter, and the long work-up to it. There is a tendency to be so tired that your brain becomes, what Richard Adams in his book, ‘Watership Down’ called ‘tharn’ - which is a description of the stunned state that a rabbit goes into when faced with extreme danger. Our psychologists would group it together with ‘fight, flight, freeze, or flop’. It is the ‘freeze’ part. Actually, I think my brain has gone into a combination of ‘freeze’ and ‘flop’.

Either way, there are those of you out there who have other reasons to be somewhat down in the dumps - and I know about some of them, and I feel for you. Others, still, will be thinking that there are only a couple of months left before your summer holidays - and ***this*** year you can take off to foreign parts (hopefully) and enjoy your travels.

That always leaves the church and our little community with a bit of an hiatus. And as the saying goes - ‘when the going gets tough - the tough get going’. Those of us who will be holding the fort over the summer months will miss you who are away, and we need to make sure that what you come back to is a vibrant and living church community. That won’t happen without effort, and we will need each other more than ever over the difficult times.

There are words in our gospels where Jesus talks of himself as ‘living water’ (John 4:10), and I like to take that image in more than one way. First, that of course water will satisfy our thirst, and second that water is something that will cleanse us, but more than that - it can also support us.

I love to swim, and learned to float early on as a child - with a parent’s hand beneath me to start with, and then pretty soon, without. I loved the sense of being held by the water, as it softly lapped around my head while I looked up at the clouds.

I like to think of this image as of Jesus gently supporting us when we need to rest - we’re not on a journey anywhere, we are just ‘being’ with Jesus, and he is providing all we need for the moment - support and comfort. When we haven’t the energy or the will to get up even to make a cup of tea or coffee, we can rest in Jesus’ arms as in a warm lake of water, knowing we are safe and it is OK to just ‘be’ for the moment.

So for those of you who are struggling a bit out there, stop: you don’t need to. It’s all right. And it’s all right to feel sad and down too, sometimes. You are still loved, still supported in the living water - so rest back, and even if the sky you are looking at seems full of clouds, remember that the sun is still up there - shining behind them, and will warm you again very soon.

Philip+