

Ritelines

Autumn

2017



EDITORIAL

Please be kind to your new temporary newsletter editors, Maggie and Dilys. As so often happens to Broken Rites members, life has a habit of altering our plans and Janet, our new newsletter editor asked for help to produce this edition of Ritelines. We know that Janet has a vision for how the newsletter could be and so we look forward to seeing her first edition. In the meantime, we hope that we have been able to include the kind of things you look for from Ritelines.

The next edition of Ritelines will be our Christmas special. Please send any articles, poems, pictures or even cracker jokes to editor@brokenrites.org

In this edition:

Developments re Clergy Wellbeing

News of new contacts at home and abroad

AGMs – reporting on 2017 and a date for 2018

Poems that may strike a chord

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CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

The first half of 2017 was a busy time for the Co-Chairs. We have to begin with a big “thank you” to everyone involved in the organisation and running of the AGM. Perhaps the medals for outstanding devotion to duty should go to those who stood out in the cold to direct us, their visitors, into the warm. The afternoon programme was varied and interesting, especially for those of us used to the Church of England. Would that every church had similar policies in place to support separated and divorced spouse and partners. But the biggest thank you comes last. In the morning we thanked the committee members who stepped down this year including Viv Tillin after 14 consecutive years of service. I now want to thank all those who volunteered to take up roles on the committee and hope that all of you are like us looking forward to an interesting year.

There have been a number of interesting developments. In January we were contacted by Pavlina Wilkins, a member of the C of E HR team at Church House who was interested in consulting with us about a discussion paper on Clergy Wellbeing. Margaret duly attended

a session of the House of Clergy on 13th February. The paper was presented to General Synod in July and there will now be a period of consultation (in which we hope we can be involved) which may lead to a Clergy Covenant. The Covenant is intended to be a way of setting out the church’s commitment to the clergy regarding issues such as supervision and support as well as the clergy’s commitment to the church. Wives and families will not be directly included but clearly any issue which affects clergy well-being affects their families as well. Pavlina decided she is interested in attending our AGM next year to meet members and hear their views. We have also made contact with Yvonne Warren who has been involved in drawing up the paper and has agreed to act as our link with General Synod.

Soon after this we were contacted by the Archdeacon of Macclesfield, Ian Bishop who is writing a dissertation on “Self-control” focussing especially on clergy adultery. Perhaps unsurprisingly he was finding it difficult to recruit adulterers who were willing to admit and talk. He thought that we might be able to help and has since spoken to a number of members via the Facebook page. He commented that working with us has given him

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a new perspective on the issues facing clergy spouses. Ian is hoping to have an article published in the Church Times and as a member of General Synod could be an advocate for us there. He has joined as an Associate member and would be “thrilled” to talk to us at an AGM.

One of our international enquiries was from an ex-clergy wife who is a lawyer and works as a legal activist. She has contact with some other ex-clergy wives in South Africa and is greatly concerned about the way ex-clergy wives are treated, in comparison to their husbands. She is interested in setting up a group similar to Broken Rites there. Margaret met with her in London and the committee is considering how best to respond to international enquiries. We are delighted that one of our new members will be taking this forward.

In May the two Co-Chairs had a letter published in the Church Times in response to an article about the Sons and Friends of the Clergy. As a result the new CEO, Jeremy Moodey contacted us via the website to thank us for our letter and at his suggestion Katharine Harrison and Margaret met with him in early June.

Apologies if this report seems very biased towards the C of E. The Clergy Wellbeing discussions have in fact provided possible links with other denominations, which we are currently investigating. We would very much like to hear from those of you who belong to other denominations about how we can best support you.

Margaret Wilkinson and Dilys Stone

Co-Chairs Broken Rites

REPORT FROM AGM



Unfortunately the full report on the 2017 AGM held in Edinburgh is not yet available as we go to print. We are hoping it will be in the next issue, as it was a good day and the speakers gave us a lot to think about. (You can read John Miller’s talk “What happens to a vow when it is broken” in the News section of our website www.brokenrites.org)

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Pictured right: The Scottish members who gave us such a warm welcome in Edinburgh.



Do you remember Margaret Blackall?

Broken Rites was very pleased to be contacted recently by Margaret Blackall, one of our former members who was involved in the very first meetings with Frank Field. Margaret would like to get back in contact with friends from those early days. If you remember Margaret she would love to hear from you. Contact chair@brokenrites.org for details.

They might not need me – yet they might –
I'll let my Heart be just in sight –
A smile so small as mine might be
Precisely their necessity.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

This little poem reminds us to recognise the common humanity of those we meet every day. We never know how important a small connection, a gentle gesture, might be. It is these small things, like the small smile, which allow for the door of the heart to be opened wider in time.

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ENQUIRIES CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The first six months of 2017 have been busier than usual. There were 23 enquiries compared with an average in previous years of 12 in the same period. All except one came through the website. The majority of enquiries have come from separated or separating clergy spouses. Most of these have been referred on to Area Reps or Links or to the Facebook group but some have not given the necessary permission to pass their details on. There has been one enquiry from a separating clergy husband who was referred to another ex-clergy husband.

The one enquiry which did not come via the website came through contact with a member. This was an archdeacon who was seeking material to assist with his dissertation on "Self-control with reference to why clergy commit adultery". (More details in the Co-Chairs report.)

There have been three International enquiries, one each from America, South Africa and Kenya. The enquirer from South Africa is a separated clergy wife who is a lawyer and activist for the poor. She has contacts with other ex-clergy wives

and has been lobbying on their behalf. She is interested in forming some sort of group in South Africa. This was discussed at the committee meeting in July and we have agreed to support her in her plans and one of our new members has volunteered to take on the role of supporting international members and enquiries.

It is always helpful to hear from Area reps how their contact with new enquirers is progressing. The network of links and reps will be even more important if this level of enquiries continues.

We had three enquiries following articles in the media, a reminder of how important it is to take any opportunity to tell people about Broken Rites whether in the press, social media or by word of mouth.

Margaret Wilkinson,
Enquiries Co-ordinator

DO YOU HAVE A VALUE LINKED LOAN?

Would you share your experience
with other members?

The committee is collecting members' stories of Value Linked Loans, whether good or not-so-good to share anonymously with people considering taking one on. Just send one side of A5 or about 500 words to chair@brokenrites.org

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AGM 2018

Saturday 21st April

Church House Westminster

All welcome

Declining verb

I love you
Three simple words

I loved you
Past participle

You lied to me
Perfectly true

I am leaving you
Gerundive tense

I live alone
Present reality

I shall be happy again
Future principle

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Broken Rites Officers 2017-18

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