Revd Dr Peter Hayler writes:

The search for wisdom is an age-old quest that is particularly acute in a place such as Cambridge; it’s a search that is inevitably value-laden, but also one that, in today’s late modern culture feeds off passionately held individual views. The noise of the referendum debate has been growing louder and louder since our last newsletter. Noise is not the same thing as wisdom or truth; in fact, sometimes, noise obstructs and obscures the search for wisdom.

Social media is no exception to this, but I was drawn to a ‘tweet’ from the recently retired Dean of Durham, whose wisdom I trust very much: Whoever wins an election gains the centre ground. (If this were a sermon, I would repeat that line!) Perhaps it’s not so much a case of who, but what has gained the centre ground in the last few days. In my view, fear and division have certainly gained ground, as have the arrogant attitudes that pursue independence rather that interdependence, and that’s very sad indeed. The Christian ‘antidote’ to fear is love (1 John 4:18). I suspect we’ll be needing much more of that in the days, weeks and months ahead. My own attempt to ‘tweet’ wisdom in the run-up to the referendum was as follows:

We have to be ambitious and go for the largest geo-political area of solidarity that we can realistically manage.

Solidarity is that collection of practices that support interdependence. Or put it another way: if we believe our wellbeing depends on the well-being of others, and vice versa, then we will want to develop practices that support this. Isolationism makes no sense; we simply were not created for it. Has 41 years of EU really been such a disaster? It seems to me that, in voting to leave the EU, our nation has not been at all ambitious in this direction.

It also strikes me that, through the referendum, and at least for those who have voted to leave the EU and prevailed, the sense of democratic control will have gained the middle ground. I wonder whether this will prove to be an illusion.
The noise and the fear with which both the campaigns were conducted is nothing to be proud of, and establishment bashing is not edifying for anyone.

One of Jesus’ best loved parables is that of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-end) in which a disillusioned young man seizes what he thinks is his by right, in a bid to take control of his own life. After the partying comes hard times and isolation and it takes until he ends up in the pig-sty before he realises his errors. When he retracts his steps his father is ready to forgive, but not so his big brother. Do the maths!—as they say.

The result of the referendum will have deep and lasting effects on our society, but on our church too, locally, nationally and globally. If our nation finds a new interest in democracy then we need to be clear about the purpose and goal of such a process. We must look for opportunities to speak and to act, and to be companions, guides and exemplars of the love and forgiveness of God, and of the common good.

For anyone that loves to read, I heartily recommend Luke Bretherton’s timely new book: 

**A Special Opportunity**

**Shirley Holder writes:**

On Saturday 24 September the accomplished poet Ann Lewin will lead a Quiet Day for us at Clare Priory in Suffolk. Ann writes very thought-provoking and accessible poetry and is much in demand as a retreat leader.

The lovely Clare Priory is one of the oldest religious houses in England and is situated in the shadows of Clare Castle on the banks of the River Stour. The cost will be £20 to include a light lunch, coffees and teas. Lifts will be arranged nearer the time.

There is a sign-up sheet in church or you can contact Shirley Holder drandmrshrholder@virginmedia.com or Anne Lindley, who can give you further information.

**Wait for the Spirit**

“Wait ..
Without expectation
Which might focus
Attention too narrowly,
So that we miss the coming.

Wait with expectancy, alert,
Hearts, minds, hands, ears
Open to receive the gift.”

Poem by Ann Lewin for September Retreat
MISSION SHAPED MINISTRY

The Vicar writes:

Fresh Expressions is the name of a new style of Christian ministry. It recognises that for many people church services and church language no longer makes sense or communicates with their experiences. But because they don’t go to church on Sundays, doesn’t mean that they don’t have a deep faith or commitment to Christian living.

At Great St Mary’s we are very familiar with this. We constantly meet people who work to support others in grim situations, who have a sensitivity to spirituality, and who reflect deeply on spirituality. We work with them especially at Michaelhouse, the Chaplaincy to University Staff and at Great St Mary’s through the week.

It’s a challenge and opportunity for our place at the centre of Cambridge. There’s much thought and study about these new forms of ministry. A Mission Shaped Ministry regional course was set up to introduce participants to this Fresh Expressions approach. It helps course members to make new discoveries about their own faith as well as helping them to share this with others.

Erica Bowler was a student on last year’s course and is now finishing. She is a member of Arbury Road Baptist Church and came to Michaelhouse for her course placement. She has helped us think through new forms of ministry in the chapel, and then encouraged us to carry them out – in fact she has done much of it herself. It’s turned out to be a valuable and innovative ministry which has helped us apply for longer term funding. She is in the Michaelhouse chancel on weekdays between 12 and 2 and can tell you more about the course.

We have been offered a limited number of free places on the course. The course is highly recommended – anyone who does it would make a huge contribution to our ministry. Leaflets are in church. Why not pick one up, then think and pray about it, and if you are interested talk to one of the clergy.

Course timetable and venues:
Saturday 17 September 2016
Tuesday 18 or Wednesday 19 October 2016
Saturday 5 November 2016
Tuesday 22 or Wed 23 November 2016
Tuesday 10 or Wednesday 11 January 2017
Saturday 11 February 2017
Tuesday 21 or Wednesday 22 March 2017
Saturday 1 April 2017
Tuesday 9 or Wednesday 10 May 2017
Saturday 3 June 2017

Bury St Edmund’s, and Ely
Cost £175 per person,
The meeting opened with prayer led by Devin McLachlan. New members were welcomed by the Chairman.

A Perspex case for a sculpture by David Jeal entitled Maternity following some damage by visitors to the church.

Members noted that a series of four talks would be held in June at Michaelhouse after the Sunday Eucharist.

The Wednesday morning Eucharist would be discontinued as no congregation had built up.

The Great Bible continued on loan to St. Mary’s, Warwick, in connection with a Shakespeare exhibition. The Heritage Lottery Fund would pay for a heavy cabinet on lockable wheels to be placed outside St. Andrew’s Chapel, with a storage cupboard underneath and room for a panel of prayers behind.

Quotations were being sought for replacing decking on the tower in the region of £30,000. New decking might last about 30 years; it was agreed the work should be done in September when the number of visitors was reduced and before the winter weather. It was hoped that the old oak could be recycled.

The levelling of the Michaelhouse Chancel floor and the removal of the middle set of pews were approved in principle.

Members agreed to accept the offer of a grant from Church Care on behalf of the Wolfson Foundation for South Aisle Roof Repairs on the basis that it would be subject to the Wolfson Foundation’s Grant Conditions.

It was noted that the final report would shortly be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund. There had been many schools’ visits for both RE and history sessions as part of the outreach ministry. The heritage education programme would continue on an on-going basis with the Heritage Officer working half-time. An application had been submitted to the Church Schools of Cambridge for a 3-year joint project building on aspects of the current HLF project and their ‘Foot Prints of Faith’ walks. In parallel, HLF were interested in the church’s ideas for a follow-on project.

Members discussed ways of developing congregational life, how the varying needs of older and younger people were met and whether to move the children’s activities during services to the North to a more appropriate space to involve young families and encourage Godly play. Study sessions, wider catering and a greater emphasis on the central Anglican tradition of worship at GSM, were also discussed.
The world had changed and would never be the same again.

In trying to deal with my feelings of loss and bereavement, and reach a more hopeful and positive state, I have been helped by the ideas of William Worden in his book, *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy*. He is writing about dealing with death, but his four tasks of mourning can be adapted to other losses.

The first is ‘To accept the reality of the loss’.

A majority of our countrymen have voted to leave and their decision must be respected. We will no longer be part of the European Union. It has also been made plain that we live in a disunited kingdom, divided by region, age, class and education. We are likely to lose Scotland, too, and there may be problems in Ireland.

The second is ‘To experience the pain of grief’...

...and rid ourselves of blame or bitterness.

The third and fourth tasks are those which enable the bereaved person to get on with life. They are ‘To adjust to a changed environment and to reinvest emotional energy’.

In this context I have considered them together. We are entering a new world, one of uncertainty and risk, but also with opportunities.

Like everyone else, including our leaders, I have no idea what will happen, but as a Christian I do have faith and hope for the future, for the possibility of change for the better.

Thoughts after the Referendum

Pauline Davison writes:

Some commentators on the EU Referendum described it as a debate between head and heart.

*Remain* emphasised the pragmatic, stressing security and stability, and warning of the consequences of voting out. *Leave* appealed more to the emotions, both positive, like patriotism and independence, and negative, nostalgia for a glorious past and fear and mistrust of strangers. The debate on both sides was bad-tempered, full of lies and threats. For me both the low and the high points of the campaign was the death of Jo Cox, where irrational hatred and grief was met with love and respect.

Though I disliked *Remain*’s ‘Project fear’ I agreed with the pragmatic reasons for staying in the EU, but my support was far more heart than head. It was about hospitality, inclusiveness, neighbourliness, a wish that in the words of Burns and Beethoven’s Ode to Joy ‘all men shall brothers be’. When in the early hours of Friday morning I heard that *Leave* had won, I felt as I might on hearing that a close friend had died or their marriage had broken down - disappointment, grief, anger, dread.
Both sides in the debate were guilty of encouraging some very nasty attitudes - arrogance and contempt from Remain, racism and xenophobia from Leave. I hope that this upheaval will cause some soul-searching and that people of goodwill will join together to create a more equal, open, loving society. As Jo Cox said in her maiden speech 'we have far more in common with each other than things that divide us'.

Ordinations in Ely Cathedral on the first weekend of July

Revd Monica Cameron is being ordained as priest on Saturday 2 July at Ely and will be celebrating the Eucharist for the first time at St Mary the Virgin Great Shelford on Sunday 3 July - supported by some members of the GSM choirs and congregation.

Nicola Bown was raised in an atheist family, but started going to church as a form of teenage rebellion. Nicola left home early, later working as a cleaner, civil servant, waiter, trade union activist and librarian before returning to education and studying for a part-time degree. She has been a lecturer in Victorian Studies at Birkbeck College in London since 2001.

After her children were born she started going to church regularly and found a deep faith and a calling to ordained ministry. Nicola, who has shared her time with us here at Gt St Mary's will be ordained Deacon.

A prayer for reconciliation after the EU Referendum

Eternal God, Light of the nations, in Christ you make all things new: guide our nation in the coming days through the inspiration of your Spirit, that understanding may put an end to discord and all bitterness. Give us grace to rebuild bonds of trust that together we may work for the dignity and flourishing of all; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Religion and belief are driving forces today. Society is unlikely to return to a past where religion and religious authorities dominated. Nevertheless, they raise issues that have urgently to be addressed. The religious landscape in this country has been transformed in the last few decades and now includes a large proportion of people who identify themselves as not religious, and it appears that this proportion is increasing rapidly.

At the same time there is a growth in religions other than Christianity, and in branches of Christianity such as the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches. The picture is made more complicated by the growth of fanaticism, by a suspicion amongst many that religion is a significant source of the world’s ills, and by a blanket denial by others of the legitimacy of non-religious approaches to life. Forms of hatred such as Islamophobia and antisemitism are also pressing societal issues, not only in the UK but also in the wider world. For these reasons, the Woolf Institute convened an independent commission to undertake over a two-year period the first systematic review of the role of religion and belief in the UK today and to make policy recommendations. There has been general agreement that in today’s society it is essential not only to understand religion and belief but also to reflect on how they interact with each other at local and national levels. Indeed, it is only with such an understanding that communities can be sustained, and that people can live with difference and contribute to the common good.

The report is intended to be an alternative to the popular *ad hoc* approach: systematic, consistent and rational, looking at the areas of education, the media, law, dialogue and social action. It seeks to provide a basis for deliberation and policy-making based on research and evidence, the needs of society and the daily experiences of increasingly diverse communities.

‘Ordinary people of good will, across different belief and political traditions … can help to re-humanise systems (public and private) that have lost their soul, reshape the economy by making smart financial choices, reclaim responsibility and belonging by strengthening Local virtuous institutions, [and] reconnect sections of a fractured society…. the vital work of building communities and loving people – work that is very difficult for a state to do.’

One of many responses to the Commission’s consultation paper.

To read the full report see: [http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/uploads/Living%20with%20Difference.pdf](http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/uploads/Living%20with%20Difference.pdf)
DIARY JULY 2016

EVENTS IN JULY

MONDAY 4 July
Public Meeting Supersize Cambridge—who benefits from the city deal? 7pm GSM

WEDNESDAY 13 July
Sabre Fest The Sabre Charitable Trust Fundraising fete in the Churchyard as part of Reach Cambridge's Community Outreach Programme

SATURDAY 30 JULY
Cambridge Summer Music Festival Finale Concert 7.30pm GSM

SERVICES IN JULY

Mondays
9.15am (GSM) Holy Communion
9.15am (MH) Morning Prayer 10.30am (MH) Ark

Tuesdays
9.00am (MHFH) Morning Prayer 1.00pm (MHFH) Holy Communion

Wednesdays
9.00am (MHFH) Morning Prayer 1.05pm (MH) Holy Communion

Thursdays
9.15am (GSM) Morning Prayer 1.05pm (MH) Holy Communion

LUNCHTIME RECITALS

TUESDAY 5 JULY
Charlotte Rowan Violin recital

WEDNESDAY 6 JULY
The Aldenham Singers

TUESDAY 19 JULY
Neil Colledge Piano recital

TUESDAY 26 JULY
Beatrice Nicholas Piano recital

SUNDAY 24 JULY
Bring and share PCC lunch

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The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions; if revisions required are major, they will be run by the author prior to publication.