

Sunday 17 May 2026

Dear sisters and brothers,

A recent verse from our church Bible reading plan spoke powerfully to me. When I met +Esther a couple of days later, she began our meeting with a verse God had drawn her to while she was praying for me before we met – the exact same verse from Isaiah 26. We were both encouraged by that, so I would like to encourage you all with these words:

*You keep (those) in perfect peace  
whose mind is stayed on you,  
because (they) trust in you.*

*Trust in the LORD forever,*

*for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock. (Isaiah 26.3-4, ESV)*

I love the phrase ‘whose mind is stayed on you’, speaking of where our focus should be, and that such focus is an act of will *not* to focus anywhere else. And in doing that we grow in trust and find perfect peace, resting on the solid ground of God our everlasting rock.

I am writing to share that I am soon to step down as vicar of this parish, so this is likely my final pastoral letter. Many of you have expressed your love and support for Jess and me, for which we are both grateful. However, Jess and I believe it is time to move on, we hope and pray into a time of healing for us all. The exact details and timings of that are yet to be agreed with our bishops, and will be shared in due course.

I love the people of our church and parish, so where I have fallen short – especially where I haven’t adequately expressed that love – I am deeply sorry to God and to you all. It is a precious thing that God works in and through sinful and broken people.

In all things, the Bible says, we should give thanks and praise to God. I am so grateful to God for all he’s done among us so powerfully. The signs of the growing kingdom of God have been exciting to notice and nurture and see bearing fruit: for example in new Christians, new and growing leaders – younger and older – and an increased confidence in sharing our faith. These are significant and have encouraged me to keep going through difficult times. I am also grateful to and for those I’ve worked alongside who have led the church with diligence and prayerfulness in good and in challenging times.

Sadly, despite the signs of God’s kingdom and what I see could be in this parish, over the last 18 months or more – and in recent weeks – it has become increasingly clear that it is no longer right for me to continue serving God as your vicar. There are some fundamentally opposing views held among us on how to lead an Anglican church, and what vision to hold as we seek and pursue God’s immeasurably more for this church, parish and ourselves.

My absence in recent weeks has not been because of illness or any disciplinary matter, but because I needed to step back for my own wellbeing. As you pray and reflect on the future, I want gently to urge honest and prayerful conversations about how the pattern of life and relationships within Christ Church might be addressed with truth, humility, and love. As can be the case when God brings into the light things that have been hidden, that may not be easy work, but it is necessary if there is to be deeper health and flourishing ahead. I know that Bishops Michael and Esther and Archdeacon Jenny will continue to walk alongside and support you in the days to come. We are richly blessed to have such godly senior leaders, and I am deeply grateful to them for their informed, wise, and steadfast support throughout this time.

Jess has also been a constant support to me, as well as my wider family, friends and network. For her and for all those inside and outside this church who have encouraged and corrected me with grace and love, I praise God.

What the future holds for any of us, I do not know. There is much pain on all sides, and repentance is required from us all, that we may receive forgiveness and healing. So as I have tried from the moment I arrived, I urge you to fix your eyes on Jesus. And whatever the future holds, I pray the Father's light and love for us all in Jesus might bring healing, wholeness and new life.

'Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord' – Psalm 144.15.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben', written in a cursive style.

*Revd Ben Green*

*Vicar, Christ Church Selly Park*