

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Sometimes, when I sit down to write to you all, it's hard to know where to start. The things that are filling my headspace might not be the same as the things filling yours, and I want to make sure that whatever you are reading is worth your precious time. If I'm struggling to find my opening words, I tend to look at the readings in the Church of England lectionary for that week to see if I can get any inspiration.

This week, I found these excerpts from the readings for Sunday 30th April:

At that time I will deal
with all who oppressed you.
I will rescue the lame;
I will gather the exiles.

Zephaniah 3.19 (Old Testament)

The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off...
Acts 2.39 (New Testament)

The Gospel passage for this week is **Luke 24.13-35** – the story of two disciples meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus after his death and resurrection.

As I reflected on these three texts, I noticed that they are all connected by a common thread: every voice matters. Zephaniah writes of God noticing and responding to injustice: hearing, in particular, the voices of those who are most vulnerable. Peter, in the book of Acts, assures his listeners that everyone is included in God's family – every voice is important to Him. And Jesus, walking on the road to Emmaus, listens before he speaks. He gives his companions the time to share their story and their feelings before he responds. Just as he had done during his ministry, he allows everyone a voice and honours each of those who speaks, even when he may disagree with them quite fundamentally.

As a teacher, I remember watching the pupils in my classroom jumping up and down in their seats, hands waving in the air, waiting their turn to speak. I felt instinctively that many of them were not really listening to their peers but simply wanting their own voice to be heard. We spent a lot of time and energy on developing active listening skills!





I have to remind myself of this sometimes in my work today: the need to pause the voice in my head that is running through the never-ending list of jobs to be done and take the time to honour the person in front of me by really properly listening to what they have to say. It is in these moments that I often find the unexpected grace of a story shared or a question asked.

I have been following the American poet, Joseph Fasano, on Twitter (@Joseph_Fasano). He has been sharing his own examples of what happens when we listen with care, especially when this empowers the voices of those who feel voiceless. I thought you might like to see one and perhaps even have a go at the poetry prompt yourself!

(Title)

There are days when I am (my name)
and days when I am not.
My heart is a/an (adjective) (verb)ing (noun) in the morning
and a/an (adjective) (verb)ing (noun) at night.
If only I could (verb) in the (noun),
I would be (adjective).
If only I could let go of (noun),
I would be the (verb)ing (noun).
(Someone's name), this poem is for you.
To love you is to be the (repeat blue words).

(writing prompt by Joseph Fasano)

Dear Joseph Fasano,

I found your viral poetry prompt on Upworthy, and I used it with my twelve-year-old son, who struggles with verbal communication as a result of his autism (he has a stuffed giraffe he named Buzz that he carries with him everywhere, and sometimes it helps if I talk to Buzz and then Sam answers). We worked through the prompt slowly, out loud, and this is what he came up with. I can't even tell you how grateful I am that you're doing this work.

To Mom

There are days when I am Sam
and days when I am not.
My heart is a wild dog sleeping in the morning
and a tall giraffe hiding at night.
If only I could dance in the classroom,
I would be my own teacher.
If only I could let go of Buzz
I would be the dancing boy.
Mom, this poem is for you.
To love you is to be the dancing boy.

Truly, Joseph, thank you,

As ever, we are here to listen if you ever need someone to speak to – just drop us an email, pick up the phone and I promise, we will honour you by listening with care.

from Gillian Georgiou, RE & SIAMS Advisor



Upcoming LDBE Courses—

For more information—click the links below!

03/05/2023	10:00-11:00	Diocesan HT Briefing	Online
03/05/2023	17:30-19:00	Governor Briefing	Online
04/05/2023	16:00-18:00	Developing a Distinctive and Effective Church School - Religious Education	Online
9/05/2023	16:00-18:00	Developing Inclusion Through the Vision for Education: Teaching and Learning	Online
10/05/2023	16:00-18:00	Governors - 'Flourishing for All' SEND and Disadvantage	Online

Coronation Resources

Please see our website for resources from the Church of England -

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/coronation>



Conference for Governors of Church Schools and Academies

Date: 27th June 2023

Venue: The Showroom, Tritton Road, Lincoln

A conference to inspire and equip governors.

Keynotes speakers:

The Ven. Dr. Justine Allain Chapman,
Archdeacon of Boston

Will Ryan, author of 'Dare to be different'.

Choice of workshops, including:

Preparing for SIAMS

Developing effective monitoring processes

What makes good governance

[Click here for more information and to book](#)

Coming Together

A conference to inspire and equip governors of the church school and academy family.

27TH JUNE 2023
9:45am - 3:30pm

**The Showroom,
Tritton Rd, Lincoln,
LN6 7QY**

Workshops

- Preparing for Inspection (SIAMS)
- Developing effective monitoring processes to inform self-evaluation
- What makes good governance?
- Opportunities to network and ask questions

The Ven. Dr Justine Allain Chapman
Archdeacon of Boston

Will Ryan
Author of 'Dare to be Different'

For more details go to <https://www.lincolndioceaseseducation.com/professional-development-by-subject> or scan the QR code



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

Please can we remind all schools to complete the Diocesan Diversity Equity and Inclusion survey/ audit tool. There are a number of schools who have not yet contributed to our work in this area. It is really important that we hear about the work you are doing so that we are able to plan our diocesan wide support to best meet school's needs.

Please use this link <https://forms.office.com/e/AKkqDasWVj> to respond. All responses are entirely anonymous unless you choose to indicate which school you are from. The survey should take approximately 10 mins to complete.

The final date to submit your responses will be **Friday May 5th**.

We are also attaching a pdf of the questions contained in the survey/audit tool. It was always our intention that you could access these to support your work, but some schools have indicated that the audit tool doesn't allow the questions to be saved. We have also included links to the documents mentioned in the questions. We hope that these can provide ideas and support for your developments in school. It may also be a useful tool to share with governors to support self-review.

Our next DEI meeting is in June, we continue to work with the Church of England's Racial justice leads to develop this work in Lincoln diocese. It will be most helpful if we can have a full understanding of the work schools' are already engaged in and the further support which you need for this meeting.

Many, many thanks in anticipation of you taking the time to respond to this survey. June Richardson

Tydd St Mary— Charity Cycle Ride!

Sonya Ely, Executive Head
at Tydd St Mary and
Weston Hills, writes—

As a School Council, the children at Tydd St Mary nominate three charities to support each year. This year they chose to support BHF because in the summer holiday Mr Ely had a heart attack whilst out on



a cycle ride. He didn't return to school in September, and they wanted him to know they missed him. This was their way of letting him know they were thinking about him and wanted him to get better and come back as soon as he could. They also wanted to say a huge thank you to all those people who helped him get better and help them continue their good work by supporting this charity.

To help the children raise money for the British Heart foundation, five adults from our school—Mr Ely, Mr Spelman, Miss Day, Mr Walsh and Mr Browne - decided to cycle home from school...to Mr Ely's childhood home in Swindon! They will be cycling about 160 miles. The children set an initial ambitious target of raising £1000 to encourage the grown-ups, as they knew it would be tough. Mr Spelman hasn't been on a bicycle since he left university, Mr Walsh since he passed 'Bikeability' whilst at primary school, and Mr Ely since he had his heart attack! Amazingly, they reached their £1000 target in just a day of launching their just giving page (the total raised currently stands at £1650). With only a month until they leave, the cycle team are busy training and the school council are hoping to have one last push to break the £2000 barrier (the new target).

The cycle ride will take place in May half term and the school has set up a just giving page—<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sonya-ely> - to help the children reach their target. More than anything I am incredibly proud of our children for the empathy they displayed at a challenging time and the determination that something good should come from it! We have been focused on personalised fundraising for many years and the children always support charities which reflect our school's current situation.

Sonya Ely—**Executive Head**, Tydd St Mary CofE Primary School & Weston Hills CofE Primary School