

# Musings from the Manse .... Week 21

09/08/20

Loose change edition. *Musings comes of age 21 weeks! Who would have thought it? Who noticed I changed the title type face?*

Yes, this week we are all about Change. Sorry, I know that is a taboo subject in church, but we need to grasp it. Wouldn't life be good if everything just ticked along nicely. We had our lives sorted just how we wanted them to be. Ahh, we can sit back in our favourite chair and put our feet up and relax in peace. Nothing to disturb the status quo, perfect. Then out of the blue something comes along and rocks our world. In our generation it has been Covid19. A year ago, we were innocent of its existence. Now just about every person in the world has been affected by it in some way. It has changed the way we live in this country. I may have said this before, but we have two distinct groups of people that have emerged. Those who are careful and considerate taking the advised precautions to protect one another and the NHS and those who are just out for themselves following their own agenda to maintain life as normal. Except it is not normal it never will be for the foreseeable future, things have changed. Elders at Goring and Sompting are doing a great job in maintaining and preparing the churches for opening. It has not been easy communicating under these circumstances. There has been so much information flowing in from Synod and Government, it has to be filtered and tailored for the individual local church. Just a reminder Elders are elected by church meeting to act on behalf of the church providing ministry and pastoral care. At the moment the Elders are taking on a great responsibility for the safety of members and friends. Again, I say they are doing a brilliant job, please trust them and support them with your prayers.

**Beirut explosion.** Thousands of lives changed in seconds by a tragic accident. It could be anywhere in the world at any time. Ordinary people going about their everyday business ... then it all changes. The devastating explosion has killed at least 137 people and injured about 5,000 others, as many as 300,000 people have been made

homeless. Our prayers must go out to that troubled nation and its people.

Change in general. No matter how hard you try, there will always be people who are not pleased by any plan. This is where we can learn from Napoleon's Rule of Thirds. This might sound like a strange place to look for advice, but I think it can help churches as we navigate change. In Napoleon's army, he saw three distinct divisions of people. The **first division** was made up of those who were ready for change. Anytime he wanted to conquer new territory or implement a new initiative, they were ready to leave the camp and join him. The **second division** was made up of those who never wanted to leave camp and were reluctant to change. They wanted to stay right where they were. Then the **third division** was made up of those who were playing the middle game and were waiting to see who had the momentum. In times of change, we can tend to focus on the wrong group of people. We focus on changing the minds of those who do not want to change instead of creating momentum with those who are ready to move forward. During this season of change leading toward a new normal, we should focus our time and attention on those who are ready to conquer new territory with us and create momentum. These are challenging times but times of opportunity if we truly believe God is ultimately in control.

Exodus 13:17 Crossing the Sea

*When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might **change** their minds and return to Egypt." God will guide His people at all times.*

When you become a believer, because God loves you his Spirit lives within you. He is there to guide you, watch over you, transform you, correct you, and encourage you in other words change you.

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. (1 Corinthians 6:19) Remember the Spirit is in us not the building.*

What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality.

- Plutarch.

Praise the Lord!

*Andrew and Jill*