

John Walker and Allen Standeven Write

“Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” Colossians 4 vv 1-2

It is almost a year since James announced his departure. During that time many have prayed faithfully and earnestly that God would lead us to appoint his replacement. Chris, David, Helen and Ian have worked hard and diligently to make the appointment – guided by God’s will, to appoint Rev Catherine (Cait) Walker as our next vicar – great news indeed. This is an historical moment for Mottram – the appointment of the first female vicar.

Paul, writing to the Colossians reminds them to treat all people with respect, and to continue faithfully in prayer. This is what we must all do for Cait.

Cait will not be the perfect vicar for everyone – no-one ever could be. You only have to see the diversity of answers to the original questionnaire to realize that, but she is God’s appointed leader and we should be prepared to follow God’s will.

This may mean that we may not get exactly what we want as individuals, but recognizing God’s supremacy we need be prepared to compromise and accept the wishes of others and above all accept Cait’s leading and God’s appointment.

That’s an important point – she is our leader not a sole worker, not some kind of wonder woman.

Cait will not be able to do everything on her own, and should not be expected to do so. She will need the help and support of everyone. This is not limited to the wardens, the readers, the pastoral team, team leaders etc, but includes everyone.

The church is not a building, it is people, and as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12 verses 12-14 we are all part of the same body. We all have a part to play, we are all equally important, and we are all necessary for the body to function. We must each recognize our part and be prepared to fulfill it.

It is not an easy time to welcome anyone, with all the restrictions on meetings and social distancing which will make it more difficult for Cait to settle into her new home and get to know people. We cannot even begin to plan her induction and formal welcome but whatever the timing we will as ever be ready to welcome her and work with her.

In addition to the practicalities of meeting people she will have to attend to the needs of her family. We have to respect her, give her all the support we can.

In the meantime we must continue to be faithful in prayer seeking God’s will and be thankful for His guidance in making Cait our next vicar.

John and Allen