

St John the Baptist Anglican Church

Newsletter August 2017

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A note from Stan...

5 Honest Struggles Most Church Leaders Don't Want to Admit

By Carey Nieuwhof

July 17, 2017

Most of us who get into full-time ministry do so because we sense a calling, not because it was a 'career path.' Chances are you got in this because you love God, deeply, right? So it's always a bit surprising and unusual then when ministry leaders find themselves struggling with the very God who called them into this in the first place. This is true whether you're paid, bi-vocational or even a full-time volunteer.

Ministry can not only be *hazardous* to your spiritual health, it can be **confusing**. But the good news is that struggling with God is normal. You are not alone. The best leaders struggled with God.

Jacob wrestled an angel.

Moses almost quit more than a few times.

Jeremiah tried to quit but couldn't.

Today's struggles might be a bit different, but in some ways struggle is inevitable. I personally have struggled with every one of the five challenges I outline in this post. And what's amazing to me is that you can get through them. You really can.

Sometimes all you need to know is you're not alone. And you're not, even if you feel that way. Here are five ways ministry leaders struggle in their relationship with God:

1. You See Setbacks in Ministry as a Personal Statement From God About You

Hey, everybody thinks this way when life circumstances don't tilt in their favour (why did God allow me to have cancer/lose this job/be in this place?). So it's natural that this line of thinking would emerge in ministry. Just because things aren't going the way you want in ministry isn't an automatic sign that God is angry with you. I'm always amazed that constant imprisonment didn't cause Paul to second-guess himself or God. God isn't always punishing you, even if it feels like he is. The key is to take the setbacks in front of you seriously, not personally. You'll be so much healthier.

2. You Believe That Greater Faithfulness Should Result in Greater Impact in Ministry

Ever tried to improve your personal devotional life so your church would do better? Gosh, I wish this wasn't true, but in the early days of ministry, I really thought greater personal fervour would automatically translate into greater ministry impact.

I'm all for a rich personal walk with God, but it's really not a push-this-button-and-God-will-do-great-things-through-you kind of proposition. In fact, it's a bit self-centred to think that way. Pursue God, and pursue a great mission. Both are critical. But God doesn't reward the most faithful with the best results.

3. You Are Convinced God Should Protect You From Pain

So here's a confession. Much of the pain I've experienced in ministry is self-induced. I have created crises in my mind and in relationships around me. The solution for me was to confess my sin and realise so much of the pain around me was caused by the strife within me.

As to the rest of the troubles that inevitably come our way? I seem to remember Jesus' brother James saying we were supposed to throw a party when they come and celebrate because God uses them to perfect us. God doesn't always protect us from pain. He uses it to grow us. And the part that's self-induced? Get on your knees.

4. You Confuse Your Work Life With Your Devotional Life

I always ask myself, "If I couldn't do ministry tomorrow for whatever reason, what would be left of my life with Christ?" Hopefully, the answer is "lots" or "virtually everything." So my devotional life has little to do with what I'm teaching, and I try to pray about things I wouldn't pray about if I wasn't a pastor. But naturally, I also pray about things related to ministry. Pretending you're not a ministry leader in your relationship with God is a great way to stay vibrant as a ministry leader.

5. You Find It Hard to Believe That God Loves You Simply Because He Loves You

Your identity is not based on what you do, but based on what Christ has done. I know you preach that, but you have a hard time believing it, don't you? Don't confuse what you do with who you are in Christ. Need to hear that more clearly? I wrote this one for every leader who's ever struggled through a Monday.

There are no sources in the current document. (Carey 2017) He loves you. He just does.

These are five struggles I've experienced and have to regularly check in my own life.

What are you discovering?

Carey, Nieuwhof. "Pastors Newsletter." *Church Leaders*. 17 July 2017. churchleaders.goto@churchleaders.com (accessed August 3, 2017).

Kindly, Stan Pilbrow

In and around St John

Sunday Services: 8am, 9.30am, Eucharist.

5pm (study/discussion group). All welcome, come as and when able.

Fourth-Sunday School: 4th Sunday of the month at 9.30am

Evening Women's Fellowship: 7.30pm 2nd Tuesday of the month

Men's Supper & Bible Group: 7.30-9pm twice a month on a Wednesday. Check the weekly service sheet for each venue.

Next Garage Sale: 14th October

Hall Users

Rowe Dance - ballet classes for 3-8 year olds on Monday 2.45-4.30pm, Wednesday 3.45-5.30pm and Thursday 3.30-4.30pm in term time.

Rowe Dance - dancing for adults, Friday 10-11am.

Rowe Dance - Personal tuition by arrangement.

Joy Russ Dance - Monday 8.30-9.30pm.

Positive Balance Yoga - Mon, Tues 6-8.30pm, Thurs 5.45-8.15pm in term time.

Weight Watchers - meet in St Jude's Room weekly, Tuesday 5.30-7.30pm.

Jumping Beans - Wednesday 9am-1pm in term time.

Scottish Country Dance - Wednesday 7.30pm - 10pm throughout the year.

Northcote Steps - meet in the St Jude's Room, Friday 7-10pm throughout the year.

Soccer for Tots - Sat 9am - 1pm during term time

Northern Performing Arts - Saturday 4-8pm.

English Folk Dance - 2nd Friday of each month, 7-10pm

Early English Dance - 4th Friday of each month, 7.30 - 10pm

AlAnon family support group - 3-5pm first Sun of each month.

The Korean Yaewon Church: Sunday 10am-5pm (hall), 1.40pm-3pm (St Jude's Room).

Plus occasional use by...

Northcote Residents Association

Northcote/Birkenhead Boat Owners Association

St Thomas, Syrian Church.

Readings for the month

August 6 Transfiguration of the Beloved Son

Reading: Daniel 7: 9-10, 13-14

Epistle: 2 Peter 1: 16-19

Gospel: Luke 9: 28b-36

August 13 Ordinary 19

Reading: Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28

Epistle: Romans 10: 5-15

Gospel: Matthew 14: 22-33

August 20 Ordinary 20

Reading: Genesis 45: 1-15

Epistle: Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32

Gospel: Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

August 27 Ordinary 21

Reading: Exodus 1: 8-2: 10

Epistle: Romans 12: 1-8

Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-20

September 3 Ordinary 22

Reading: Exodus 3: 1-15

Epistle: Romans 12: 9-21

Gospel: Matthew 16: 21-28

EVENING WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Evening Women's Fellowship meets this coming Tuesday evening, the 8th August, at 6.30pm for our annual Fellowship dinner.

It is all happening in the Church foyer. Note the change of venue and the earlier start time! All members welcome - see you there!



PASTORAL CARE REPORT

Each Wednesday praying the Office of Midday Prayer has continued. Although I had not used the full service for many years it was my habit every day somewhere between 12 noon and 3.00 p.m. to pause and pray the Collect (NZPB page 164). *Blessed Saviour, at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms; grant that all the peoples of the earth may be drawn to your uplifted love; for your kingdom's sake. AMEN.* It is a powerful spiritual experience to pray this now looking at the crucifix in the Chapel seeing that representation of those outstretched loving arms.

On 19 July Midday Prayer incorporated some of Prayer Before A Funeral as we prepared to farewell dear Betty Wellacott. Our prayers continue for her family in their grief.

On 09th August the Office changes again to that of Evening Prayer although at the afternoon time of 2.00 p.m.

In the Church Foyer you might notice a stand with a small bowl of water. The official name for this is a Stoup. The water has been blessed and is provided for people who like to pause before entering the Church. Dipping in a finger (and possibly using it to make the sign of the cross) is a reminder of one's Baptism. The practice is well known in the Roman Catholic, Anglo-Catholic or High Church Anglican traditions. It is being provided at St. Johns in response to a request.

Other pastoral care work of visiting and home communions continues as does the process of revising the Parish Roll.

Vivienne Hill (The Reverend)

UPCOMING RSCM AUCKLAND EVENT

SUNDAY; September 10th, 2.30pm

St Andrew's Church, 100 St Andrew's Road, Epsom

Sing your favourite hymn!

A hymn singing session of favourite requested hymns, followed by a 'cuppa'.

Email your name and requested hymn to nesushroff@xtra.co.nz by 1st September.

THANK YOU FROM BETTY'S FAMILY

Thank you to the congregation for all your love, kind words, support and prayers over the last 6 months as we travelled Grandma's (Betty Wellacott) last few months. Although she has left a huge hole in our lives she is now at peace with her beloved Saxby.

Ann and Hugh, Angela, Murray, Christina and Marc.

MEN'S SUPPERS IN AUGUST



The first gathering will be on **9th August**, at Peter White's home. 14 Vincent Rd, Northcote Point.

The second gathering is on the **23th August**, at St Jude's Room, in the church complex.

It's not a late night - **7.30 - 9pm**.

If you haven't been to our Men's Suppers, come along. We just love them.. Great companionship, great chats, some good laughs, some great 'stories', great sharing, and great Bible readings. And then we finish off with some really great suppers. (just bring a plate of shareable supper)

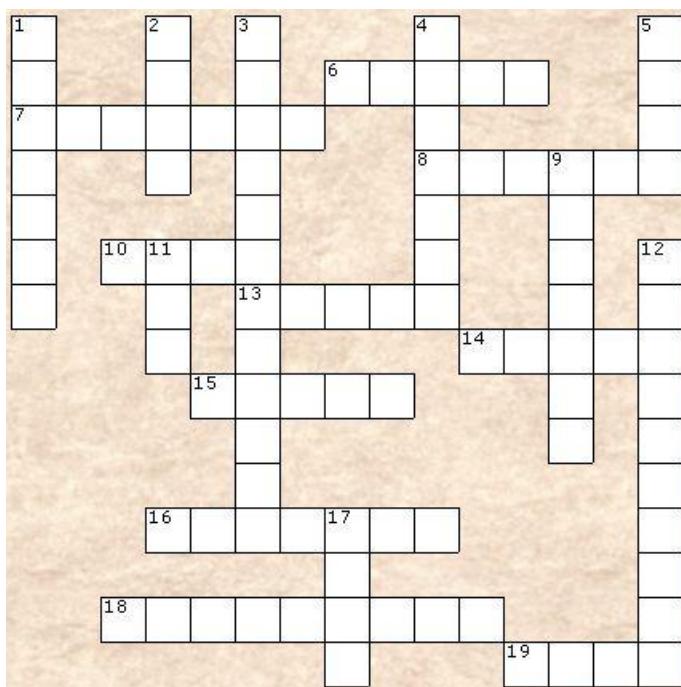
Any questions or queries, Phone Peter (419 4380) or Richard (4199 026.). Come and join us for a Men-Only night out!

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Thanks to Ondrej Paska (See Matthew 14:24-33)
PETER FINDS HIS FAITH TO BE MUCH
STRONGER IN THE WINTER

01-04-2008

CROSSWORD: GENESIS**ACROSS**

- 6 Tower site
 7 Wife of Isaac
 8 Where Noah's ark landed
 10 He killed Abel
 13 City destroyed by fire
 14 Biblical unit of length
 15 He dreamed of a stairway to heaven
 16 Abraham's firstborn son
 18 Adam's and Eve's garments (2 words)
 19 Son of Adam and Eve

DOWN

- 1 Eden tempter
 2 First murder victim
 3 In the beginning God created the ____ and the ____
 4 First patriarch
 5 Lot's wife became a pillar of ____
 9 God's sign in the sky
 11 Noah's ____
 12 Oldest man in Bible
 17 Father of Seth

Your newsletter is prepared by Natalie. You can contact Natalie by emailing her at sjbanglican@gmail.com. The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of the month and the deadline for submissions is the previous Tuesday.

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Recorder

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Women's Fellowship

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Men's Supper and Bible reading group

Peter White 419 4380

Catering Committee

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ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S CROSSWORD