

RESOURCING RENEWAL

Spring Newsletter 2024



RESOURCE

ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT
ACTIVE IN MISSION



Alive in Christ A new course on freedom, forgiveness and purpose
Hopes for Rural Renewal Growing lay leaders in smaller churches
Feeding the Five Thousand Reflecting on our National Conference

Our work enables little, local and ordinary churches to engage
with the Holy Spirit for renewal, discipleship and mission

Contents

- 4 Alive in Christ:
ReSource's latest course
- 6 Meet some new
Alongside Companions
- 8 Faithful? Foolish? Called.
Bishop Mark Tanner's new
book
- 10 Feeding the Five Thousand:
Reflecting on our National
Conference
- 12 Hopeful futures for little, local
and ordinary churches
- 13 Meet three new Trustees
- 14 News and upcoming events

ReSource

Meeting Point House
Telford
Shropshire
TF3 4HS

Charity no. 1180394

01952 371300

www.resourcingrenewal.org

 @resourcingrenewal

 @ReSourceARM



There is something inherently chaotic and messy about the picture of unity offered in Psalm 133.

If our idea of unity tends towards something more ordered - documents signed by senior clerics, for example - the idea that unity is like oil poured on the head, spilling onto Aaron's clothing, is rather unexpected.

But perhaps it is to such imagery, and the promise of unity in unexpected places or contexts, that we will need to turn for inspiration as 2024 proceeds.

It is certainly clear to me that if we care about the ongoing renewal of the church, we cannot be complacent about disrupting its unity. During the 1960s and 70s, as we have learnt during recent Charismatic History seminars, the sense of God growing unity among diverse Christians - particularly between Protestant evangelicals and Catholics - felt literally miraculous to those who experienced it.

We undoubtedly need new miracles of unity in our own day.

I was shocked when a rather sober-minded friend said he couldn't see how the Church of England could reach the end of 2024 in one piece. It surely has to be a cause of deep lament that divisions within the church now run so deep.

I have noted before that I regret the way in which John 10:10 is too often

**How good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!
It is like precious oil poured on the head,
running down on the beard,
running down on Aaron's beard,
down on the collar of his robe.**

Psalm 133:1-2

misappropriated as a verse speaking solely about fullness of life. We ignore the beginning of the verse at our peril: there is a thief, who comes to steal and kill and destroy, in marked contrast to Jesus' vision of human flourishing.

There is an important truth here for the church, which should have unity as a precious gift at its heart. The thief longs to distract the church from its core purpose, and a favourite tactic is to sow seeds of disunity at every level.

The point, surely, is that each of us therefore has a particular responsibility to resist this temptation towards division, and instead nurture the pursuit of unity in whatever context to which God has called us. This is not about 'unity at all costs', and it may involve a costly and even prophetic articulation of truth, but it is also about giving unity its appropriate significance.

And whatever happens in the structural life of one denomination, God will continue to call those with ears to hear towards a deeper, celebratory unity, where Christians of all kinds of tradition affirm the value of life shared as part of the one vine, seeing even deep historical divides in a different light.

One of the most unexpected joys of my role as Director continues to be the forging of friendships with those from

other denominations and traditions who serve organisations akin to ReSource in their own context.

Each of us has stories to share about painful divisions in our own churches. But the unlikely joy found in fellowship across divides inspires this call to friendship and fellowship within the one Body – however messy or unlikely it may seem. After all, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.

Christopher Landau

Director of ReSource

*Christopher's book, **Loving Disagreement**, has been reviewed in the Church Times. The former Bishop of Norwich, Graham James, wrote: 'In this gently written and yet challenging book, Christopher Landau shows how the Gospels and the teaching of St Paul focus emphatically on mutual love between the followers of Jesus as fundamental to unity and mission... I do hope that this welcome book has a wide readership, and that The Unity Course bears fruit. We need it.'*

The five session Unity Course can be accessed free of charge at theunitycourse.co.uk

Alive in Christ: ReSource's latest course

ReSource has often been asked about a course that would work well as a follow-up to Saints Alive – and here it is! Canon Dr Alison Fleetwood, one of our Trustees, is the course's lead author.

What has inspired you to write the course?

I became a Christian at university having come from a non-religious background. Due to a mixture of circumstances, I grew up believing that I was a second-class citizen and not good enough. So I was a Christian, going to church, but very much attending rather than living as an active disciple. Then I came across various talks and material about identity, including Freedom in Christ's discipleship course. I met with God powerfully and it transformed my life. I then began to serve God, and life continues to bring new adventures every year! I hope that this new course will help others to find that freedom and purpose.

So how did Alive in Christ come about?

After God had called me to serve in the Carlisle Diocese as Healing Adviser, and as a ReSource Trustee, I found myself much more in contact with traditional church settings. I had a sense of God calling me to write a course on identity and purpose aimed at these wonderful little, local and ordinary contexts.

How is the course structured?

Over five sessions, aimed at small groups, the course begins by looking at

“It's been wonderful to hear about the enthusiasm from people meeting God afresh through this material”

the parable of the prodigal son and the love of the Father. Session Two focusses on our status as children of God – that we are loved, safe, significant and called to be fruitful. In the third session we look at how we handle temptation and the reality of evil. Session Four has a focus on forgiveness, both being forgiven and forgiving others – it uses the Lord's Prayer as a framework, for turning away from the things we need to leave behind, and turning towards God. The final session considers the onward journey, and what it is to keep our compasses firmly focussed on Christ and being part of his Body, called to serve in the kingdom.

How do you hope churches will use the course?

It would work well as a Lent course, but could be used at any time of year. I've been really encouraged by a number of churches and benefices who have piloted the course. It's been wonderful to hear about the enthusiasm from



Photo © John Fleetwood

people meeting God afresh through this material and stepping into a new season of freedom and fruitfulness.

Was there a particular testimony that stood out for you?

I was so struck by hearing of one person who had served faithfully in her church for decades and found that the course unlocked new insights for her in faith. She wrote to me, “This course has enabled me to start seeing myself in His light... a wonderful course, I looked forward to meeting each week, and went home to review what we had read, seen and spoken about.”

Where do you hope the course will be used?

I hope it will be used in a whole variety of churches. Many of our pilots were in Anglican churches, though I was delighted that one of the pilots involved a Churches Together group including Anglicans, Methodists and Catholics, all

of whom seemed to find the material engaging and helpful.

What kind of support is available to churches running the course?

Some churches may simply wish to download the course material and just run with it; we are also delighted to offer intercessory prayer support for courses, and there is also the opportunity to have a conversation with one of the Alive in Christ course team if that’s helpful.



**Canon Dr Alison
Fleetwood**

Alive in Christ Author

Find out more at resourcingrenewal.org/alive-in-christ.

Alison will be leading an online version of the course on Monday lunchtimes for five weeks from 19th February, 1:00-2:30pm.

Register your interest at resourcingrenewal.org/events.

Meet some new Alongside Companions

The Alongside Scheme is now just over two years old, and we are so thankful for its steady growth. The scheme has already reached 100 clergy and church leaders, and there are now more than 60 volunteer Companions supporting them. Here are four new members of the team...

Revd Canon Amiel Osmaston

I've been prayerfully supporting the work of ReSource for a number of years, since having been a close colleague of Kevin and Anne Roberts when they ministered in Cumbria. Now I'm retired (still in Cumbria and loving the mountains and views!) and delighted to be free to take up the voluntary role of being an Alongside Companion. For 13 years, I much enjoyed being Ministry Development Officer in the Diocese of Carlisle, overseeing the ongoing training of clergy and lay leaders. Before that, I had a similar post in Chester Diocese. I also spent nine years teaching ordinands at Ridley Hall (having the dubious privilege of being the first woman on the full-time staff there). Through all this, and through my own experience of some of the joys, challenges and griefs of ministry, I'm deeply aware of how much ordained and lay ministers need support and spiritual encouragement.



Bishop Mark Ashcroft

I became a Christian in my teens and am still amazed by God's love for me! I am married with children and grandchildren. Since ordination I have been privileged to serve in a wide variety of contexts including in a theological college in Kenya, in a parish in a deprived part of Manchester, as an archdeacon and, until retirement in 2023, as a suffragan bishop.

I would like to think I can bring gifts of a love for people, encouragement and insight, an ability to see the bigger and strategic picture, and joy in seeing others fulfil their God-given ministry across a range of contexts and traditions.

Underpinned by prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit, the Alongside scheme is a wonderful way of walking with others in what can sometimes be a lonely and isolated ministry. I look forward to contributing as a Companion in whatever way I can.



Revd Mike Leigh

My name is Mike Leigh and my current post is as Chaplain for the Scargill Community in North Yorkshire. I've been here just over three years and really value the ministry of hospitality and loving welcome to the many guests who visit here each week. I also am responsible for the ongoing pastoral care of a community that is both ecumenical and international.

Before arriving at Scargill I was in parish ministry in the Church of England for 18 years, serving in Hull and then in Scarborough. In Scarborough I went from having one big urban church to setting up a Group Ministry working across urban and rural communities and also took on the role of Area Dean. I have seen first hand many of the challenges of parish ministry and experienced how that has affected my own ministry and mental health.

I am really looking forward to being part of the ReSource Alongside Scheme, as I have a real heart for the care of clergy and lay leaders and am excited about how, through the Holy Spirit, we can support those serving the church.



Mrs Caroline Lennartsson

I'm grateful for the experience of church and mission in several countries over the years, different contexts, and denominations, and for living the last 23 years in South Oxfordshire,

From consistent involvement in pastoral care, prayer ministry and spiritual direction, I am profoundly aware of the challenges that face ministers and members in the CofE. Especially for leaders juggling family, small or adult children and a full life alongside ministry.

Our culture presents so many accelerating areas of change, divergence, and opportunity, requiring deep prayer, complex choices, and the need for great courage. I have immense respect and compassion for all who minister the transformational love, grace, and acceptance of the Lord Jesus into their communities.

To enable an opportunity for confidential, secure sharing, where an individual can lay aside the weight they carry, be heard and validated, is the best form of giving, it is a privilege.



Faithful? Foolish? Called.

ReSource's Patron is Mark Tanner, the Bishop of Chester. His latest book explores the theme of Christian vocation, using insights from 1 Kings and reflections on pantomime...

Can I give you a call?

How many times have you said that over the last few months? Or had it said to you? My life is full of conversations either in person or on a screen, and I love it. What if it's God on the line though?

Calling?

Talking?

Inviting?

Commissioning?

How would you know?

Might you be mad?

Does He only bother if He wants you to be a Vicar-type anyway?

Some time ago I realised that 1 Kings 18-22 is really a bit of a pantomime in the middle of the Hebrew Scriptures. (Oh no it's not! Oh yes it is!) Ahab and Jezebel are overplayed baddies at every turn, and if you read the chapters you will see a series of flawed, bit-part heroes (including Elijah) who somehow remain faithful. I love the way we see the fallible stumbling goodness of real people being called to real stuff and just clinging on to the coat-tails of our real God in real and challenging ways.

So I wrote it down for fun... and it became a book.

Faithful? We need to keep trying as there is nothing better when it comes to relating to Jesus.

Foolish? Probably; but that's no bad thing. The life of the Kingdom often looks bizarre in the light of this world.

Called – this is the key and it is what we glimpse in those who accept it, and those who reject it, in 1 Kings.

When we take time to notice, these passages are genuinely funny (and fun), as well as being deadly serious and life-changing. They are the best of the panto tradition: lowering our defences with a bit of slapstick and then slamdunking a profound challenge when we least expect it. Here we glimpse the joyful determination of a loving God determined to break into the unfolding everyday lives of His people...

... and it is not just about the "God-jobs". It's about politics, motherhood, leadership, weather forecasting, and a bit of preaching. It is about God's people offering Him the whole of their lives and all their loves. It is about offering failure and success; hope and

fear to the One who knows you, loves you, and wants you to partner in His work.

Every time I confirm someone, I get to remind them *“God has called you by name and made you His own.”* He knows and loves you and has made you for your own part in His great dance of grace. Vocation, which is just a posh name for being called, is about hearing, responding, trying, giving, and blessing. It’s not about perfection, religion, Latin, or lots of formal education. Your vocation arises from your relationship with Christ.

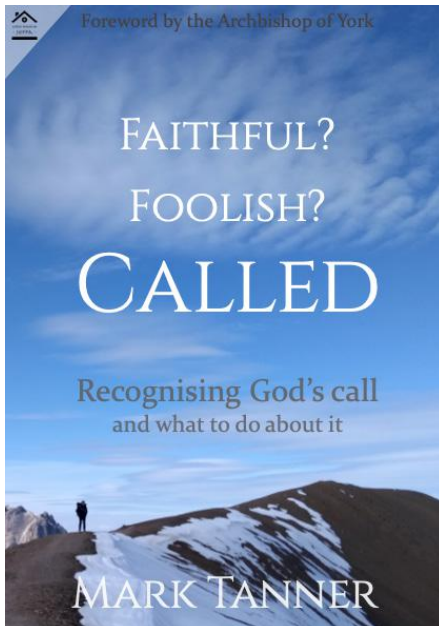
As Reb puts it at the end of the book, *“It is a wonderful journey realising the things that both lighten your soul and terrify you, noticing as you do the ways God has been changing your heart as you have walked with him...”*

If these kind of questions ring true with you, then you’ll find more in *Faithful? Foolish? Called*. There’s a little bit about vicar stuff, but mostly you will be invited into a playful and practical space where you can reflect on how you are hearing God speak, what He might be saying, and how you can participate. More importantly, come back and look at the lives of Ahab, Jezebel, and the gang and allow the Spirit of God to speak over you.



Bishop Mark Tanner

Bishop of Chester, ReSource Patron



Vocation is about learning to trust. It is a life-long and daily wrestle with how we do obedience to God, and faithfulness to those we serve. It's about how we learn the secret of contentment... it works really hard at loving people and loving God. It's listening hard... laughing easily... not taking ourselves too seriously or thinking of ourselves too highly. And, vitally, our vocation is about delighting in Jesus... In so doing you will discover the utter joy and glorious liberty of participating in God's own work and find life in all its fulness for yourself and others.

Feeding the Five Thousand

November was a key month for the ReSource family as we gathered for three days in Telford, thanks to the hospitality of Telford Minster. On 21st, the ReSource Ministers had their annual meeting; on 22nd, we held a day conference on renewal in smaller churches, with a focus on the five thousand such parishes within the Church of England; on 23rd, the latest cohort of Companions in the Alongside Scheme met for training and fellowship.



Bishop John Holbrook, our chair of Trustees, leading the celebration of Holy Communion



Key supporters of *Alive in Christ* marking its launch



ReSource Ministers Adrian and Esther Stone led some of the sung worship.



Canon Dr Michael Leyden, principal of Emmanuel Theological College, was our keynote speaker. He reflected on the account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand as an example of renewal; and later he led a seminar on Healing Prayer.

Revd Laura Lenander with her artwork created during the conference.
*"I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland"* (Isaiah 43:20)



Creative prayer

ReSource Minister Keith Powell shared these ten points for prayer for the church in the year ahead:

- 1. Pray that the Church will preach the Word of God without apology (2 Timothy 4:2)**
- 2. Pray that the Church will devote itself to prayer (Colossians 4:2)**
- 3. Pray that the Church will boldly share Jesus as the only hope for salvation (Acts 4:12)**
- 4. Pray that the Church will worship God in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24)**
- 5. Pray that our leaders will serve humbly as Godly examples to all (1 Peter 5:2-3)**
- 6. Pray that the Church will labour to proclaim Christ, teaching everyone with all wisdom, to present them mature in Jesus Christ our Lord (Colossians 1:28-29)**
- 7. Pray that the Lord sends out more workers into the Harvest field (Matthew 9:37-38)**
- 8. Pray that the Church prepares and equips God's people for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12)**
- 9. Pray that the Church does not lose its first love (Revelation 2:4-5)**
- 10. Pray that we will trust Jesus to build his Church (Matthew 16:18)**

Hopeful futures for little, local and ordinary churches

The Revd Meg Heywood is a newly appointed ReSource Minister, and was House for Duty minister for St Peter's church in the DAMASCUS Parish in Oxfordshire for five years. She and her husband David led the church through a process to develop lay leaders in preparation for a future with less clergy provision.

It all began when a friend and I were praying together before I started at St Peter's, a small semi-rural, middle-of-the-road, medieval church. Susie sensed that the Lord was saying that the church would be at the place where He wanted it to be when I left. I had little idea what that would entail, and maybe that was a good job!

St Peter's already had some lay development put in place by a previous incumbent, as well as having had several recent vacancies. As one of the church wardens said, they were used to doing their own thing! Since I believed there was only a slim chance of my being replaced, my aim was to build on these experiences to enable the church to flourish after I had gone.

The first thing was to develop the congregation's confidence in their own relationship with God. We started by offering discipleship courses such as 'Your SHAPE for God's service', speaking naturally about faith, a Pilgrim course on Holy Communion, and a course on prayer, which resulted in a regular prayer meeting. The last course I led was a Saints Alive course, as there was a desire to know more about the Holy Spirit for themselves and for St Peter's. Good food, and

time to develop friendships was an important part of all these events!

During the pandemic, we learned together about different ways of being church. Zoom services with congregational participation in the liturgy and interactive sermons with breakout rooms continued to sustain us spiritually as well as building confidence in talking about our faith to one another.

"It was so heartwarming to see members of the congregation grow in their faith and in different roles and responsibilities in taking the church forward."

In my penultimate year, it became clear there was a need to develop a course for the leaders and potential leaders to take the church forward. David devised and led the course (which he is currently adapting for ReSource). I purposely was not part of the group so they would be learning together and gaining confidence in leading without a minister in charge.

The congregation also nominated those they wanted to lead services of



Communion by extension. This was important so that the congregation felt included in the transitional process. We provided training in choosing hymns and songs, leading services, and giving homilies. Prayers of commissioning were said for all those who were taking up new roles. It was so heartwarming to see members of the congregation grow in their faith and in different roles and responsibilities in taking the church forward. This was the place that the Lord wanted St Peter's to be when I left. He also told me that He would bring people to the church after I had gone (and to everyone's encouragement the numbers joining the congregation have increased slightly).

As I reflect on this aspect of my time at St Peter's, it has become clear that the change of emphasis from a clergy-led to a lay-led church is a process that needs the consent of the whole congregation. Not all churches, or all clergy, are ready for this (and within the DAMASCUS team we had to negotiate some misunderstandings). But God has started something new, and the change has brought a hopeful future for St Peter's.



Revd Meg Heywood

ReSource Minister

Meet three new ReSource Trustees



Rob Saner-Haigh

The Rt Revd Rob Saner-Haigh is the Bishop of Penrith, and acting Bishop of Carlisle. He was previously Director of Mission and Ministry in Newcastle Diocese and a Residentiary Canon at Newcastle Cathedral, having also served for many years as a vicar in the Carlisle Diocese. He loves to encourage the church in mission and help people grow as followers of Jesus in their everyday life. He is married to Emma and has three teenage children.

Colleen Riley

Colleen's experience of working professionally in challenging and demanding environments in both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (now FCDO) and the City has taught her to have total reliance on the Lord Jesus and His grace. Married to Alan, she is an accredited spiritual director with a heart for journeying alongside fellow believers. She serves within ReSource as an Alongside Companion, and now also on our Finance Committee.



Mones Farah

The Ven Mones Farah is Archdeacon for New Church Communities within the St Davids diocese of the Church in Wales. Raised in Nazareth, he first came to Wales as a student in the early 1980s and experienced a renewal in faith which ultimately led to him training for ordination at Trinity College Bristol. He later served as vicar of St Michael's Aberystwyth, and has long been involved with renewal within Wales.



Upcoming Events

Charismatic History 'Witness Seminars'

Following three fascinating meetings last year, the online Seminars are continuing (and will return again after Easter considering some theological themes from the period 1960-2000). [Thursdays at 2pm](#).

18th January – The Toronto Blessing and its influence

22nd February – the ministry of David Pytches and the birth of New Wine

21st March – the impact of the Alpha Course and HTB

Music and Worship in Smaller Churches

Led by Roger Jones and Christopher Landau on [Tuesdays at 2pm](#), this series of online seminars supports church musicians, clergy and lay leaders who are keen to see the Spirit at work where 'small is beautiful' and musical resources are limited.

30th January - Effective praise and worship with limited resources

6th February - "Ancient and Modern" - integrating different styles

20th February - Nurturing creative, prophetic worship

ReSource Regional Gatherings

We are continuing a rolling programme of day meetings with a focus on renewing hope in 'little, local, ordinary' churches and their leaders.

Saturday 27th January - Taunton

Monday 5th February - Leeds

Wednesday 17th April - Blackburn



[Book at resourcingrenewal.org/events](http://resourcingrenewal.org/events)



RESOURCE

**ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT
ACTIVE IN MISSION**

Retreats & Events

including Sanctuary Days at your church,
led by ReSource Ministers

Courses & Resources

Saints Alive! and more, enabling renewal
in ordinary local churches

Alongside Scheme

Prayerful, one-to-one personal support
for anyone in church leadership

Please contact the office if you would like to explore
how ReSource can support you in ministry

Who's Who in the ReSource family

Bishop Mark Tanner
Patron

Lydia Farnham
Administrator

Katie Nessler
Alongside Project Officer

Christopher Landau
Director

Clare Olliver
Bookings Coordinator

Kathy Smith
Finance Officer

David Heywood
Courses & Resources Editor

Bishop John Holbrook
Chair of Trustees

Jolyon Trickey
Alongside Manager

Mutsa James
Media Manager

Details of our ReSource Ministers, Alongside Companions
and Trustees can be found on the website

Giving to ReSource

We are so thankful for all those whose giving makes ReSource's ministry possible.

Regular monthly giving is particularly helpful for us, even in small amounts;
direct debits can be set up via the Donate button on our website.

Donations can also be made directly to our CAF Bank account number 00032578,
sort code 40-52-40, in the name of ReSource for Anglican Renewal Ministries.

Gift Aid forms are available on the website, where you can also find
information about remembering ReSource in your will.

www.resourcingrenewal.org

Charity no. 1180394