

## Report of the Chairman of the Governing Body

Another year has passed by so quickly, or perhaps it really is an age thing? Having a bus pass that gives me a 'Seniors' ticket - means I am almost an o.a.p.!

Readers and other forms of lay ministry are being looked at with a view to possible changes in the way that we engage with church and community. Two major reports have been published under the banner of the Renewal and Reform agenda.

**'Setting God's People Free'** - A Report from the Archbishops' Council has on the front cover:

*"He is the one we proclaim,  
admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom,  
so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.  
To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ  
so powerfully works in me."*

Paul of Tarsus, Colossians 1:28-29

The report identifies the need for two shifts in culture and practice that are seen as critical to the flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation:

*1. Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.*

*2. Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.*

The second document is entitled - **'The Report of the Lay Ministries Working Group'**. The group's task was to review and make recommendations about how to develop lay ministry both in terms of quantity and quality, having first gathered a more detailed understanding of the current situation. Both reports are downloadable from [www.lincolnreaders.org](http://www.lincolnreaders.org)

At the same time, the future of the Central Readers' council or CRC is also under discussion; as to how it will continue to assist and represent Readers in England, Wales and the Diocese of Europe and the relationship with other forms of lay ministry. (CRC is currently a registered charity within the C. of E. Ministry Division).

There will be consultation with Dioceses as initiatives are taken forward. I believe as Readers, we are well placed to be at the forefront of any changes. The phrase 'watch and wait' comes to mind, along with much prayer for the discernment of God's will, as we strive to meet that challenge from Colossians 1.

On 23rd May 2017, my wife Heather and I were privileged to attend a Buckingham Palace Garden Party on behalf of the CRC, where we were presented to HRH Duke of Edinburgh (retiring patron). It was a most memorable day!

I hope you have had an opportunity to meet in fellowship at some of our Lincoln Readers events during the year. Thank you to members of the Governing Body for their support. We have also seen changes and welcomed Shirley Keyes as our new Secretary General along with other members of the Standing Committee - Nigel Bacon and Marion Hewis. Particular thanks to our Warden Sally Buck, Linda Wass at Church House and our former Secretary General Sara Edwardes.

**John Marshall - Chairman**