

Dear Friends,

I have been doing some de-cluttering lately.

I have reduced the number of books on the shelves in my study which I have collected over the years in the belief that they may be helpful to refer to one day. In the meantime they have simply gathered dust and provoked feelings of guilt that I haven't got around to reading them.

I have thrown out the piles of papers on the floor which contain interesting ideas and things to read but which have never reached the top of my priority list and have deleted the "ought to do sometime" list which will probably never be realized and simply adds to the burden of things not accomplished.

More generally, I have taken heed of William Morris' advice to "have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful", although this is still a work-in-progress.

The same advice could well apply to our churches, where the stuff of many years accumulates in corners and cupboards, although the task of clearance is made harder by the fact that we often cannot remember where it came from in the first place or who might be upset if we dispose of it.

Our lives these days are filled with so much "stuff" that we don't really need and often don't want but have accumulated over the years. And this applies not only to material possessions but to tasks and responsibilities. We are weighed down by it, our energy is sapped and our joy is gone.

It is one of the legacies of my sabbatical last year that I now desire a life of greater simplicity, not only in terms of physical possessions but in my spiritual life too. Hence my focus during Lent has been to clear out the clutter and make more space for God; to get rid of the guilt at things not done and clear the way for the important things.

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## Minister's Letter

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The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the moment when the burden of guilt and sin was removed and new life in God was set free and burst into the world. The coming of Spring so perfectly illustrates the joy of new life and new beginnings and as we move into the Easter season I pray that, in our home lives and in our churches, we may have the courage to let go of those things of the past which weigh us down, so that we enjoy the freedom and blessings of the abundant life which God has bought for us in Christ our Lord.

*The Lord of Life is risen for aye;  
Bring flowers of song to strew his way;  
Let all the world rejoice and say:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

C A Alington

The peace of the Risen Lord be with you,

Caroline