

Westminster College

IMAGINE

Babel, Belonging and Brexit

A Church of England Prayer

God of truth,
give us grace to de-
bate the issues in
this referendum
with honesty and
openness.
Give generosity to
those who seek to
form opinion
and discernment to
those who vote,
that our nation may
prosper
and that with all the
peoples of Europe
we may work for
peace and the com-
mon good;
for the sake of Jesus
Christ our Lord.

IMAGINE

... a regular
reflection from
me as I journey
with you in this
adventure that
is our life
together at
Westminster.

NEIL

You might be sick and tired of the debate about the vote those of us who have a vote will cast this month. The EU referendum on June 23rd has generated an awful lot of words. They haven't all been helpful. They haven't all been true - depending on whose voice you trust. Staying in or leaving invoke all sorts of pictures of an unknown and unknowable future.

You'll be making up your own mind about your vote of course. My own thinking is being framed by the sense I have of my own personal address, and informed by preaching on Pentecost Sunday.

Along with many others I preached on the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9) and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-12). One of the things striking me in these familiar texts is belonging amidst

Term's Ending

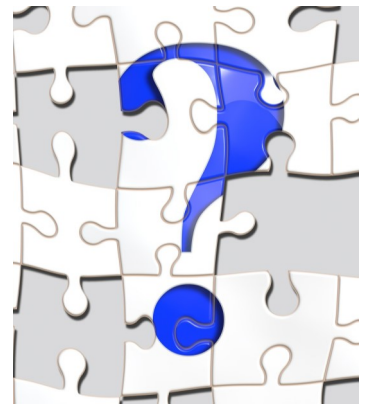
Another academic year brings us towards endings. Time seems to speed up when it's signaled by the ticking of the terms. Some of you will head on into new opportunities and challenges as God unfolds ministries with you, and you with others. Some will return after space and rest. Some

diversity. Pentecost doesn't undo the confusion of voices arising at Babel; God doesn't become the imperial power dictating one common tongue. Pentecost is a beautiful and evocative picture of diversity as each hears the good news in her or his own native tongue. What unites is a new sense of belonging to each other through what Christ has accomplished and the Spirit is confirming. Unity in diversity seems a powerful biblical pointer.

Which reminds me of my address. Every time I pray the Lord's Prayer I'm saying something fundamental about where I live. I live in the Kingdom of God, begun and becoming, present reality and future fulfillment. That's, for me, the starting point of describing where I live and who I am.

will be here next term and some will be here across the summer as Westminster's life beats on.

Wherever the coming months take you, whatever God is showing you, thank you for sharing this time with us. Peace and blessing be with you as you trav-



Being part of Pentecost's people, cherishing diversity but hearing how God draws people together, with God's realm the primary stamp in my passport. These pointers don't automatically demand an "In" or an "Out." The thinking, praying and discerning linger amidst such hints.

But my conclusion is that, for all its many weaknesses and mistakes, a community that brings nations together in cooperation out of the ashes of devastating wars is a community worth belonging to. I vote "In."

el on. Keep us in your prayers as we keep you in ours.

