

Westminster College

# IMAGINE

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30

IMAGINE

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

NEIL

## Giving an “A”

It will be risky to even think of subverting all our examining, assessing and marking. I know full well just how hard people have worked, are working and will work to offer of their best both as students and as teachers. That’s a powerful and glorious witness to faithfulness, vocation and honouring much Westminster rightly stands for.

Maybe less to subvert and more to frame this exam and deadline season in a wider context, let me introduce Rosamund and Benjamin Zander. She is a therapist. He conducts the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. Together they’ve written *The Art of Possibility* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2000). Our

chaplain, Liz, marvelously introduced me to it some years ago. I return often to the exercise they call: Giving an “A”. Describing how students of musical interpretation were being stifled by their anxiety about their final grades, Ben shifted the paradigm thus:

*“Each student in this class will get an A for the course,’ I announce [at the first class in September]. ‘However, there is one requirement that you must fulfill to earn this grade: Sometime during the next two weeks, you must write me a letter dated next May, which begins with the words, ‘Dear Mr. Zander, I got my A because...,’ and in this letter you are to tell, in as much detail as you can, the story of what will have happened to you by next May that is in line with this extraordinary grade.”* (p. 27).

God has already given us an A. That’s the Easter story. In



Christ’s life, death and resurrection all that could downgrade and degrade us is wiped out. My response? What letter am I writing, with every second of my life, that tells the story of what is happening to me in line with that extraordinary grade? How do I respond to what God has already done? My letter, my life, isn’t an effort to win the award of God’s A. It’s a response of joy, a love letter, shared with the world.

## Endings and Beginnings

June sees term ending and our latest group of leavers depart to the next chapters of life and ministering. I thank you for sharing so much with us as you have, and wish you God’s speed and blessings for your futures. In particular we will be celebrating and honouring Yak-hwee’s time

with us as she moves on to new ministry, and Liz Caswell’s as her time as chaplain concludes.

That also means we’re entering a time to reflect and reimagine. The coming months will be busy with talking together and planning for new chapters for

Westminster. What sort of prayer life fits our increasingly diverse and fluid communities? Which RCL events and courses do we build upon or invent? What is God about to reveal to us?

