

# THE CALL TO BE FULLY HUMAN



*Interview: Lorraine Apps-Huggins*

**The Revd Lorraine Apps-Huggins is Chaplain at The Living Well, a place you can go whoever you are for whatever kind of healing or rest you need.**

The Living Well is a discreet ministry and it's open to anyone. The fact that we are a Christian Centre might put some people off - but everyone is welcome, regardless of whether they have any kind of faith.

I have known brokenness in my life - and I know Christ's healing in those areas. I also know there is always more healing that could happen - both for me and for others.

I became a Christian when I was in my early thirties. I had been 'spiritually seeking' through most of my adult life, but was surprised to find out that it was Christianity I was after. It had been in my childhood but I hadn't, for whatever reason, grabbed hold of it then.

Almost immediately after becoming a Christian, within 18 months probably, I felt like I wanted to work for the Church but I really didn't even know what that meant. I didn't know the language of the Church - words like 'ordination' didn't mean much to me - but I just knew "This is it, this is what I want to do."

For all of us, there are inevitably parts of ourselves that remain

broken and vulnerable. But it's crucial to our understanding of 'healing ministry,' that perhaps actually we're not ever going to be fully whole, fully well, fully kitted out for this life - or at least, not in the way we might dream of - until we meet Christ at the end of our lives. And in a way that's a good thing, because if we were all 'sorted' and each of us was absolutely brilliant, had it all figured out, wouldn't that actually be awful? We'd have no reason to put an arm around each other, no reason to help one another - so there is something about still being not fully whole that is actually quite good for us.

One of the things it is important for someone who ministers here at The Living Well to have is a solid 'theology of suffering' - an understanding of God and the suffering that we see around that enables us to walk through this life, with all its trials and tribulations, still trusting in God, even when we're suffering or people around us are suffering.

One idea that helps us with this is the sense that God's Kingdom is only partially realised here on earth - the best is yet to come! So, when we witness good things and we see God at work, we

celebrate and say "The Kingdom of God is here! Look at that, it's amazing!" And, when things don't quite turn out like we hoped or prayed they would, we can hold that, all that disappointment and pain and possibility before God in recognition that his Kingdom is not yet fully realised. And, sometimes, a different kind of healing is found in that place of honesty.

I have absolutely known Christ's healing in my life - and in a way that is what's made me so keen to offer that possibility to others. I have also experienced times when the healing that is longed for has not appeared - and that's something each of us has to wrestle with.

One of the most important things is our call to remain 'fully human'. There is nothing worse than an unapproachable religious 'saint,' somebody that I can't ever possibly connect with or be like. Each of us needs to steer clear of the pretence that "Everything is wonderful," and "God hears me all the time," and "I hear God all the time." Because, if we're all really honest, it's not like that. And, when we're honest, God honours that.