

DI CASTIGLIONE FAMILY

SABBATICAL

2019



We are writing to share with our wider family and friends and Chanctonbury family, our plans for this summer whilst on sabbatical. We are so thankful to God for this opportunity, and would love to ask you for your prayers for us, even as we pray for you all. If you would like to keep up to speed a bit more closely with what we are up to and how we are getting on, please do drop us an email, and we'll link you into a closed Facebook group we've created, for whilst we are away.

With much love to you all

James & Lou, Fin, Sam, Livvie & Eva di Castiglione

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HOW DO SABBATICALS WORK?

When I (James) had my two-yearly ministerial review with the Bishop in 2016, he shared that the Chichester Diocese had a rhythm for sabbaticals whereby a member of the clergy could apply for one every ten years of ordained service. At my most recent review in May 2018, I applied to take a sabbatical during the summer of 2019, and we are blessed to have received the Bishop's 'thumbs up'!

I was ordained at Chichester Cathedral in 2008, which means this summer I will have served in this Diocese for eleven years, and in Chanctonbury for six years. We were both in full time ministry before ordination, pastoring together in Northwest London, and before then we were at school!

Here in Chichester, a sabbatical means a combination of reflection and prayer, study of a specific subject, and rest and holiday. We are really excited to have the chance to step back and reflect with thanksgiving and joy on all that God has done in our lives, all He has done here in Chanctonbury, and throughout the past eighteen years of ministry. We are extremely thankful to have the space to make some memories as a family. And we feel inspired and stimulated about the subject we have chosen to engage with, and the contexts in which we are planning to experience and learn from.



**Q: WHAT ARE THE HEART
CHARACTERISTICS NECESSARY IN
LEADERS TO SUSTAIN A LONG TERM,
EXTRAORDINARY MOVE OF GOD?**

When it came to considering the subject we might look at during the sabbatical, we went back to the roots of our calling, the first things Jesus did in our lives and the vision He burnt in our hearts. We have been passionate about the Kingdom of Heaven, revival and transformational moves of God ever since Jesus first saved us. Our understanding of church history has taught us that when God powerfully moves, it tends to come to an end tragically as a result of human brokenness rather than divine design.

How can we as the Church, and those of us privileged to exercise leadership, set deep personal foundations of spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical health in order to play our part in releasing all that God purposes in the growth of His Kingdom?

We see and feel the potency and pregnancy of all Father God wants to do here and in the world. And we aspire to learn how to finish well and release the generations to come with a platform to go further and higher than we could ever dream! We want to see our communities blessed and impacted, and long-term transformation embedded for the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven in our villages, region, and nation.

We are so thrilled to be living in Ashington, West Sussex and serving in Chanctonbury Churches. We are deeply excited to see what God is doing growing from strength to strength and glory to glory. We live and serve with incredible people, and by choosing the title that we have for our sabbatical, we are passionate to build the soundest possible foundations in the ministry here to enable us all to step into the deepest long-term reality of God's Kingdom here.

CANADA 2019

THE ARCTIC • TORONTO • VANCOUVER • FAMILY

In order to ground our reflection and expand our understanding we will be spending time in two locations within Canada this summer: Baffin Island in the Arctic circle, and Toronto. We start our trip in Vancouver with some family time.

Baffin Island

Around the year 2000, nearly twenty years ago when we were living in London, we heard of a tiny Inuit community on Baffin Island who experienced a visitation of the Holy Spirit in February 1999. In St Timothy Anglican church, Pond Inlet, Baffin Island, at a youth meeting one Sunday afternoon the wind of the Spirit blew into the building and was captured on audio cassette. A revival broke out which impacted the whole community leading to profound, transformational change. We are going to spend time with several of the church leaders who were there that day, hearing their stories and learning from what God has done over the past two decades since.

In preparation for this visit, we have been building a relationship with the Bishop of the Arctic (what a job title!). Rt. Rev. David Parsons shared with us that one of the long-term fruits from this move of God on Baffin Island has resulted today in fifty percent of his diocesan clergy coming out of this one church, in a settlement of only around fourteen hundred people. St Timothy has become known for them as a 'birthing place'.

You can see two short and slightly dated films about what happened at:

chanctonbury.org.uk/sabbatical2019

Toronto Airport church

From Baffin Island, we are flying into Toronto for two weeks where we are going to spend some time in and around one of the churches there, and meeting some of the leaders. In January 1994, the Spirit was outpoured in the Toronto Airport church in what became known as the 'Father's blessing' in such a significant way that touched hundreds of thousands of people from many nations. They have navigated the growth, the opposition from some, and all the variables of church leadership to continue to sustain and release what God is doing. Hundreds of churches have been planted, thousands of lives transformed, ministries birthed through which God has literally brought millions to Christ – and they are just celebrating their twenty-fifth year!

We are excited to learn from and to experience these two different contexts as we reflect on how to build the strongest possible heart foundations for the long-term.

Vancouver

We start our trip to Canada in Vancouver, where following a meeting with the Bishop of the Arctic who is there for Canadian General Synod, we are going to take some holiday and family time travelling around the Sunshine Coast and Vancouver Island.

Family

One of the joys with this opportunity is the chance to have time and adventure together as a family, and experience the ways God has been powerfully moving. When we travel, Fin will be 15, Sam 13, Livvie will have her 12th birthday in Toronto, and Eva will be 7. We are excited to enjoy all God has for all six of us, and to give our children a deeper glimpse of revival and outpouring in a different context.

DATES & MOVEMENTS

OUR LAST SUNDAY BEFORE THE SABBATICAL BEGINS IS 2 JUNE 2019

During the first four weeks we will rest and do some prayerful reflection whilst our children are at school. James is going to prayer walk the South Downs Way, a year in advance of South Downs Awakening 2020. We will lead and participate in the Kingdom Come conference. We may well all be around at church as none of us like missing God amongst us! But we will be off rotas, chilling and enjoying the presence of God.

We fly to Canada early July, first into Vancouver, then east to Baffin Island, down to Toronto, before arriving home at the end of August.

When our children return to school, we will use September to pray, prepare, and write up our learnings before returning for our first Sunday back on 29 September.

From a Chanctonbury perspective, we have a Church Weekend 4 – 6 October where we would love to share some of the adventure, learnings and journey of our time away.

We are so thankful to Father God for this opportunity to change rhythm, to learn, to grow, and to make memories as a family. We are deeply inspired at all the Lord is doing in Chanctonbury and in our county,, and are impassioned to see His Kingdom embedded in a transformative and long lasting way. It is the greatest privilege to serve amongst you all, and we thank God for each of you.

With much love to you all

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A message from the Church Wardens

AN OPPORTUNITY TO BLESS JAMES AND LOU AND THEIR FAMILY

You will have read about the Sabbatical that James is undertaking this summer, as offered by the Chichester Diocese.

James and Lou have been able to obtain some external funding already, and our church funds will cover some of the specific work-related aspects. But as you will see from their explanation of the Sabbatical, they are keen to involve their family in their trip to Canada, and add some special holiday time together. The Church Wardens and Associate Vicars think this would be a wonderful opportunity for us all to bless James and Lou by supporting them financially.

On Sunday 17 February, we will be holding a special gift day in all of our services across the Benefice for this purpose. This is personal giving, and so will not go through our Church accounts, and there cannot be subject to Gift Aid. Jim Wadell and Anthony Ray have kindly agreed to co-ordinate this process, so pass any monies or cheques made payable to Anthony Ray, who will ensure the funds get to James and Lou.

For transparency, Jim will collate the cheques and cash before passing onto Anthony. If you are not able to give at one of the services on 17 February, please pass your gift to Jim (or leave in the Church Office).

James and Lou give so much of themselves to us and our church life, so do pray for God's guidance as you respond to this.

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