

Bless This Mess +001 Congregational Comic, uncredited

Episode +001 Description

Welcome to the first Bless This Mess Podcast. In todays episode we introduce Bekah and Ben to the listeners. The conversation explores church related themes, psychotherapy and a lot of hilarity.

They also attempt to answer Bless This Mess first clergy 'annoy aunt' question. This weeks question is from a parishioner struggling with his clergy stealing his jokes. Although at first glance it seems a light hearted matter they go on to discover how hard this must be for both parishioner and clergy alike. With themes weaved in from boundaries, adulting and other mental health ideas this first Bless This Mess has a gentle 'have a coffee with us feel' whilst tackling serious issues.

Warning: This episode contains themes around mental health. If you find any of the content difficult or triggering, please consider reaching out for support. You can contact Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7), call NHS 111 and press 2 for the urgent mental health helpline in England, or in an emergency call 999. Clergy may also wish to contact Clergy Support Trust or their diocesan wellbeing team https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/

Episode +001 'Congregational Comic, uncredited

Dear Bless This Mess,

I am a long suffering parishioner with a small but growing grievance. I occasionally make jokes to our vicar over coffee, after services, or in passing. Nothing dramatic, just the sort of gentle humour that gets a polite laugh and moves the day along. Except, a week or two later, there it is again. Same joke. Same wording. Only now it's coming from the pulpit, delivered with confidence, and greeted with proper laughter and nodding approval.No credit. No eye contact. No "as someone wisely said to me..." Just my joke, fully ordained and wearing a collar.

I don't want applause. I don't need royalties. But I would quite like to know whether this is normal pastoral practice, or whether I should start invoicing for sermon material. At what point does sharing a joke become unpaid creative ministry, and is it unchristian to feel mildly robbed?

Yours,
Congregational comic, uncredited

Show Notes

- Introduction to Bless This Mess

- Location, All Saints Tilford, where Ben is the Vicar https://sites.google.com/view/all-saints-tilford/home

- Ben talks about the parish embracing change and the need for it, secrets of growth

- Time keeping in therapy and key therapy phrases

- Ending conversations and how to value everyones story. Where are the boundaries?

- Holding space and the masks we wear

- Differences of being a pastor and a therapist.

- How do we support not only the clergy but partners, families and others. What if you are called to this alone?

- Working with Broken Rights https://www.brokenrites.org/

- How do you walk away from things?

- Showing up as your 'adult' self or as your 'child' self

- Congregation Comic, uncredited question

- 'Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other'

- Coming up with new sermon content and how to engage with the congregation

- What is the holy spirit saying in this situation?

- Intentions of the vicar, is the vicar aware of their behaviour?

- Systemic relationships and the difficulties within the system

- Explore 'Brave' and what leadership looks like, the struggle of hierarchy

- Do you fully see me?

- What does a fully 'held' church look like?

Bless This Mess *is a Clergy Support Trust podcast, produced in association with Meraki Creative Therapies. Audio production was by La Barca Sound, and it was recorded by Nick Sowden on location at All Saints Church, Tilford. The podcast was produced by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden, with content developed by Meraki Creative Therapies and Catherine Good. It was hosted by Bekah Nelson and Ben Cahill-Nicholls, with intro scripts written by Louise Stanley. Our podcast is free of advertisements, so if you find value in these episodes please consider becoming a supporter.*

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