



**Go Deeper, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024: Rainbows and Repentance**

Dear Miners,

I don't believe I had previously thought about the Rainbow Covenant passage in Genesis as God repenting. I love it when I have a new thought about a familiar passage, and this is repentance, the renewing of one's mind. Growth, if you will. That's not to say it's the only message here, but what a delight to find new connections between familiar passages.

- Can you think of a time you found or learned a new way of thinking about some aspect of faith, a time when you changed your mind? How did it that happen? How often do you think we might experience that?
- We spoke on Sunday about faith and connection growing in a place of safety. People described a safe church as one without judgement, friendly and welcoming, a place where people leave happier and yet are free to be unhappy, a place where confidences are kept and gossip is absent, a diverse place, a place for doubt and questions, and an inclusive place. What do you think a 'safe' church would be like? Is there anything we can do to be and to seem safer? (Do let me know!)
- The first comment we had this week was about safe people being those with whom bonds of trust had grown over a long time, those who had been there for us and continued to love us. Do you have those long and deep connections here, or elsewhere in your faith? How can we help people to grow them? (Let's me add with no agenda – are you in a small group?)
- I love that the rainbow is now a symbol of identity and pride for the LGBTQ+ community. A recent survey showed that only 1/3 of LGBTQ+ Christians felt safe to be out and themselves in the wider Christian community. Are we a church that would feel safe? How would we know? How can we improve at that?
- Who else do we need to ensure feels safe here?

I hope you feel safe – both here and elsewhere. If not, do please get in touch, we'd love to help.

Every Blessing

Rob

**Deeper Stuff**

- Book: *Space at the Table* by Brad and Drew Harper. I'm still reading this recommendation from Marcus Green. A conversation between an American Evangelical theologian and his gay son, it is a wonderful exploration of safety within a family, within a church and within society.
- An article summarising that survey on LGBTQ+ safety in churches is [here](#).