

# REFLECTION - 2



*"We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another." (1 John 3:16)*

In 1 John, the author writes, "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another." It's a well-known passage of scripture and on the surface sounds like John is asking us to be willing to die for one another. After all, that's what Jesus did. But I'm wondering what it might look like to view this passage more expansively.

In his book, *Silence and Honey Cakes*, Rowan Williams talks about our need to die to ourselves so that the other person might live. Laying aside our own wants needs and desires for the benefit of the other. We lay down our lives when we put someone else's needs above our own. When we stay up late to look after a sick child, or cook a meal for the family, even if we're not that hungry. We lay down our lives when we say "yes" to service in some way, giving our time and talents for the purpose of something beyond ourselves.

Rowan Williams points out that laying down our lives is hard because it challenges our sense of ego. Ultimately, we lay down our lives, when we give up control in shaping something as we would desire to shaping something for the greater good of the community we are in. In many ways to be part of society is to live out this discipleship principle. As a person who does not have children, I am happy for the taxes I pay to go towards our education system so that everyone has equal access, and the philosophy behind the NHS lives out this aspect of generosity in the way that we have access to health care at the point of need. As ministry areas the challenge can be around how, with equity, we support each other's differing styles of worship and scriptural views so that the whole church can flourish, and all of our neighbourhoods are surround and held by a praying community.



Diolch yn fawr Archdeacon Stella Bailey!