

Thought for January 2025

By Revd. Claire Claxton

Did you give someone a gift this Christmas which you had spent ages choosing or making? How did the recipient react? Sometimes we get the response we were hoping for but sometimes the response is lacking in some way and we are disappointed. Occasionally we give a gift and we don't receive any thanks at all. I'm sure I am sometimes guilty of forgetting to show appreciation. It is always lovely to receive thanks even though we are meant to give without expecting anything in return,

I heard a story of a gift that Billy Joel, the pop musician, gave his daughter. On her 12th birthday she was in New York City, and her father was in Los Angeles. He phoned her that morning, apologizing for his absence, but told her to expect the delivery of a large package before the end of the day. The daughter answered the doorbell that evening to find a seven-foot-tall, brightly wrapped box. She tore it open, and out stepped her father, fresh off the plane from the West Coast!

Our gift came in the flesh too. We have been celebrating the gift that God gave us that first Christmas, the birth of Jesus. Jesus himself explained that this is because 'God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)

Many people fail to give thanks for this most amazing gift and, even worse, some don't even unwrap the present. They never find out the value of unwrapping the gift that keeps on giving through our life and right into eternity.

As we begin a new year, I pray that God will bless you and that you will know his strength and peace in all that 2025 brings.



Ste Marguerite

de la Foret



January 2025

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Church flowers in January

5th January Christmas Tree

Festival

12th January

Brenda Tostevin

19th January

Brenda Tostevin

26th January

Fatima Freitas

Greeting

5th January Dorothy

12th January Debbie

19th January Brenda

26th January Sara

Remembering Covid

Looking back and seeing what was in the newsletter only two or three years ago we were being reminded we didn't need to wear masks anymore and the peace greeting became a non contact wave from the pew. The communion sharing became the wafer only and then slowly became the dipped wafer and finally now we have the full sharing of the cup of wine if preferred.

As a church we are grateful for having survived this dreadful sickness and are mindful that there are many who did not.

Life is full of dangers and joys and sorrows, but we can have gratitude for the time we have together with family and friends and especially the fellowship found in church. It has been noticed how the members all look out for each other especially those with difficulties or dementia.

I have no plans for this day

No destination in mind

No stops planned along the way

I am stepping out in faith

With you as my guide

I shall walk where you lead

Follow where you tread

Rest where you lay me down

Drink from the water

That you will supply

And arriving

Know that I am refreshed.



A bright and welcoming church over the Christmas weeks and following into January. There is still time to visit, the decorations don't come down until January 6th, Twelfth night.

Christmas in church

In the church's calendar we are still in the Christmas season until January 6th when we come to Epiphany and the baptism of Christ. Sometimes the different services seem to bring a new focus on our worship and moments in the life of Jesus.

Epiphany means the showing or revealing and recalls the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12).

It can also be a moment of sudden and great revelation or realization.

The church has looked beautiful over December and in spite of the poor weather has been well visited. How fortunate we are to have many people who make such efforts to decorate it.



Dates and Church News

Wednesday 8th January

Knit and Natter in church 2-4pm

Wednesday 8th January 10.30-12.00

Coffee morning in church. All welcome.

Thursday 9th & 23rd Solace meetings

10.30-12noon. At St Martins Community Centre.

A friendly support group after bereavement.

ACC meeting on Wednesday 15th January

The electoral roll

The electoral roll is due for a full update. Please could you fill out an enrolment form and give it to Linda Archard if you wish to be on our electoral roll. This will allow you to vote at our annual AGM and is used by the Deanery to calculate our 'Share' payments. Forms will be by the door in the church or available from Linda. Thank you

Fun for today:

A young boy learning to be an altar boy was always very attentive to everything the priest said at Mass. "Lord wash away my iniquities, save me from sin". In the sacristy afterwards he asked the priest where he should pour the water from the ablutions bowl:- "Please Father, where shall I put your iniquities?"

Seen in a parish bulletin:

There will be a procession in the grounds of the Monastery next Sunday afternoon. If it rains in the afternoon the procession will take place in the morning.

Welcome to Forest Parish Church

January 2025

Sunday January 5th 11am. Family service

Reader: TBA

Isaiah 60 v1-6

Ephesians 3v 1-12

Prayers. Nicola Hoyland Birch

Sunday January 12th 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Dorothy Freeman

Isaiah 43 v1-7

Acts 8 v14-17

Prayers: Vivian Rees

Sunday January 19th 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Mark Freeman

Isaiah 62 v1-5

1 Corinthians 12 v1-11

Prayers: Keith Bienvenu

Sunday January 26th 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Tim Peet

Nehemiah 8 v1-3,5-6,8-10

1 Corinthians 12 v12-31a

Prayers: Katie Blampied