

Thought for January 2023

By Revd. Claire Claxton

Happy New Year! As we end one year and begin the next, there is often a two-way process as we review the blessings and challenges of the previous year but also look ahead and perhaps make plans or resolutions.

I don't know whether you make New Year resolutions. I have to admit that I used to but gave up when I realised that it was just another way of making myself feel guilty! Apparently the majority of new year's resolutions revolve around getting more fit. Usually this is physical fitness but I think that spiritual fitness is just as important.

My suggestion is that we use the start of this new year to gauge our spiritual fitness and to set ourselves some resolutions which will keep our faith fit and healthy! I challenge you to resolve to do something that will strengthen you spiritually. It could be to pray for someone every day; to read a Christian book; to do one daily act of kindness, to read your Bible more regularly, to write regularly in a gratitude journal etc.

And we don't have to set aside lots of time for this faith fitness programme. For example, if you are often waiting for the kettle to boil or your computer or phone to switch on, use those few moments to pray for someone. If we make spiritual fitness a priority and practise habits of prayerfulness and gratitude and trust, it is these habits that will come to us instinctively if we find ourselves in a crisis; and we are more likely to remember that we live in the hands of a God who cares for us.

I pray that in 2023 you will know the peace, joy and strength that God provides. God bless you.



CMClaxton

STE MARGUERITE DE LA FORÊT



JANUARY - 2023

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Church Flowers in January 2023

January 1st Christmas Tree Festival Final
Sunday

Please clear your Christmas displays by
January 7th

January 8th & 15th

Debbie Dorey

January 22nd & 29th

Liz Chamberlain



some events in church in 2022



Epiphany: *(a moment in which you suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way)*

In the Christian calendar the Feast of the Epiphany is a commemoration of the three Magi or kings visiting the infant Jesus, a showing of him to the Gentiles and so to the whole world not only the Jews.

At Forest as the Christmas trees are removed from homes and church, the crib under the altar remains. During the service on January 6th. the three wise men will travel from the top of the vestments chest by the organ and be added to the group of the Holy family, shepherds and animals.

While we tidy away our decorations and finish up the Christmas turkey leftovers, the church continues to remember the birth of Jesus until the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, currently celebrated on the first Sunday after 6th January. This is a short interval when we remember the childhood and growing up of Jesus and those who recognised him.



Goodbye 2022

To have a beginning there has to be an ending and many people will not be sorry to see the end of 2022. Sickness, loss, challenging temperatures, war in Europe and looming financial uncertainty - not a good year.



However, a sense of stability can be found in church, the comfort of familiar services, the timeless feel of the building, the pleasure of greeting old friends, the sharing of sorrows. In December the church Christmas Tree Festival



was decorated as an “old fashioned Christmas” with many home made displays, a reminder of times gone by. The schools once again made a lovely display of their skills into hand made things to hang on the tree, thank you boys and girls for all your efforts, they were lovely.

Marking the church year with festivals and decorations, (and some parties!) all helps us to take an overall longer view so a very Happy New Year to all!

January Dates and News

Knit and Natter

Wednesday 4th January

in church 2pm-4pm come even if you only want to natter!



Coffee Morning

Wednesday 11th January

Our next coffee morning will take place from 10.30am to 12 noon in church. Plenty of space at the back of church now! Do come and join us for a cuppa, some cake and a chat. All are welcome! Some amazing birthday cakes for church members this year!



Solace



Meetings for January on Thursday 12th and 26th.

Solace is a support group for bereaved friends.

Regular meetings are at

St Martin's Community Centre from 10.30-noon.

A prayer by John D. Rayner

When evil darkens our world, give us light.
When despair numbs our souls, give us hope.
When we stumble and fall, lift us up.
When doubts assail us, give us faith.
When nothing seems sure, give us trust.
When ideals fade, give us vision.
When we lose our way, be our guide!
That we may find serenity in Your presence,
and purpose in doing Your will. Amen.

Welcome to Forest Parish Church Services in January 2023

Sunday 1st January 11am

11am Parish Communion

Reader: Keith Bienvenu

Isaiah 63 v7- 9 Hebrews 2 v10-end

Prayers: Vivien Rees

Sunday 8th January

Family Communion for Epiphany

Reader:

Prayers: Nicky Hoyland Birch

Sunday 15th January

9am Puppets and Praise

11am Parish Communion

Reader: Susie Mowbray

Isaiah 49 v1-7 1 Corinthians 1 v 1-9

Prayers: Margaret Boden Heaume

We are invited to join our Methodist friends at 6 pm for their Covenant Service

Sunday 22nd January

11am Parish Communion

Reader: Katie Blampied

Isaiah 9 v1-4 1 Corinthians 1v 10-18

Prayers: Katie Blampied

Sunday 29th January

11am Parish Communion

Reader: Mark Freeman

I Kings 17 v8-16 1 Corinthians 1 v18-end

Prayers: Peter Gallienne