

Thought for January 2024

By Revd. Claire Claxton

Happy New Year! is the customary greeting as we begin a new year and that is my prayer for you at the start of 2024. But new beginnings can occur in all sorts of ways such as a new relationship, a move to a new home, a new job, a new child, or another life event.

The stories in scripture show time and time again that God offers people a new beginning, another chance for better things. God frees the oppressed, Jesus heals and restores, and the Holy Spirit imbues new life.

When we're in a new situation perhaps we make resolutions. There is nothing wrong in making new year resolutions as long as we aren't setting ourselves up for failure. Apparently the majority of new year's resolutions revolve around getting more fit! But in our resolutions are we staying true to ourselves or trying to be someone different? When Jesus offers someone a new beginning, he's simply calling them to be themselves, their best selves. I suggest we use the start of the new year to gauge our spiritual fitness, to set ourselves some resolutions which will keep our faith fit and healthy! It could be to pray for someone every day; to read a Christian book; to read your Bible more regularly.

And you 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 to switch on, use that minute or two to pray for someone. Identify the times when you can slip a faith fitness exercise into your day. Let us start our new beginning with a prayer attributed to St Teresa of Avila and St Thérèse of Lisieux:

May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us. Amen.

Ste Marguerite De la foret



January 2024

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Church flowers in January

Please clear the Christmas decorations by January 6th



Welcoming

January 7th Viv Rees

January 7th. Debbie

January 14th. Viv Rees

January 14th. Nancy

January 21st. Nancy Smith

January 21st. Brenda

January 28th. Nancy Smith

January 28th Dorothy

Have you got a memory box?

Many people keep a box of memories, perhaps a shoebox of old photos or a little old box of discarded jewellery.

A great favourite is a box of buttons, children find this a treasure trove, just the variety and colours for little fingers to handle seem to give such joy.

If you have ever made or mended a garment It can be a sudden and vivid reminder of something in the past. How frugal we all were, buttons from a tweed jacket, blue ones from an outgrown dress, little white or glass ones from baby clothes. The things that were saved most were little shirt buttons, I suppose they came off easily or the shirts were outgrown. Nothing went in the bin before having its buttons removed.

Recently I have been trying to find a home for a very old carpenters chest, heavy and solid with layers of internal drawers for different sizes of tools. Not very sought after I am afraid, modern tools are mostly electric and much lighter to use. Happily it is going to the Guernsey National Trust. It is very hard to consign such an article to the recycling at Bulwer Avenue, it seems full of someone's memories and echoes of hard work.



Happy New Year!

What a beautiful Christmas we had in Forest Parish Church. The church was well attended for all its Christmas services with many visitors joining in and enjoying the singing. The decorations were amazing with great ingenuity to reflect re-use, reduce and re-cycle. The school children once again covered the tree by the altar with clever hand made items and elsewhere in the church were paper chains, reindeer made from corks and many other old and re-cycled previous decorations.



One set which appears every year and never fails to be very memorable are the old figures made by the German soldiers during the war. Most of them have now been carefully recovered, the clothing rotted away but they must have been a sad reminder to the soldiers far from their home.

Thank you to the Carol Singers

A small but melodious group gathered to sing Christmas Carols outside Forest Stores on Saturday 17th December and raised just over £170 for the local charity MIND. Thank you and well done!



Extended Leave

It's with a sad heart that I announce my decision to take extended leave from Sunday 14th January. As Chris, my husband, becomes more unwell I want to make him the focus of my time. The Dean has agreed that I can take extended leave and Sunday 7th January will be the last service I take for a while. Forest Church will go on the rota of churches needing cover and the Sunday morning service will be taken by different priests.

I will continue to be Rector of Forest Church and I would be pleased if people still keep in touch with me. I will keep everyone in my prayers and I ask you to keep Chris, me and our family in your prayers. Claire Claxton



January Dates and News

Knit & Natter

Wednesday January 3rd 2pm-4pm in church.
Come and enjoy the company even if you only want to natter!

Coffee Morning

Wednesday January 10th 10.30am-12noon. Coffee and company in church.

Margaret

How lovely it was to see Margaret our Lay Minister in church for the Carol Service. It has been a very long and stressful time for her and the family as she spent four months in Southampton Hospital recovering from surgery. We continue to pray for her and all the sick people we know and who have asked for our prayers. When the names are read out in church it doesn't matter if we know them, we leave them in God's care.

Cake

A big thank you to the coffee and cake makers who make our time for chat such a joy. They are well appreciated and several infirm members love taking a slice home with them. However good the catering is in nursing homes there is nothing like home made cake!

Solace a support group for bereaved friends

Meetings on January 11th and 25th at St Martins Community Centre 10.30 - noon.

A la perchoine Suzie!

We bade a fond farewell to one of our church members, Suzie Pentecost, who left the island to move back to England. She was delighted with her leaving gift and also made a donation to the church fund for improving the social area at the back of the church. We will miss Suzie very much and will keep her in our prayers.

Welcome to Forest Parish Church Services January 2024

Sunday January 7th 11am. Family Service

Reader:

Prayers: Nicky Hoyland Birch

Sunday January 14th. 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Syd Bowsher 1 Samuel 3 v1-10,11-20.
Revelation 5 v 1-10

Prayers: Viv Rees

Sunday January. 21st. 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Keith Wallace Genesis 14 v17-20
Revelation 19 v6-10

Prayers: Keith Bienvenu

Sunday January 28th. 11am Parish Communion

Reader: Viv Rees. Deuteronomy 18 v15-20
Revelation 12 v 1-5a

Prayers: Katie Blampied

Sunday 4th February 11am. Family Service Candlemas

Reader. ?

Prayers. Nicola Hoyland Birch