

An unexpected Café Explore!



I hope you all had a peaceful Christmas and now perhaps looking forward to 2021!

Have a break, make a coffee or tea perhaps accompanied with yet another mince pie or slice of Christmas cake and imagine we are together in the Church Rooms on today the last Thursday of the month, the last day of the year!

Opening Prayer (from Lesley)

O God, we are worried and distracted by many things.
In the course of our busy lives, give us times of refreshment and peace.
Grant that we may use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds,
that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation;
through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Introduction This is the time when we share our news, our delights and our disappointments since we last met, do this later – ring a friend and have a chat!

Scripture Read the following scriptures as though for the first time, make notes or highlight words that stand out to you, we can't share these thoughts with each other but they may help with the rest of this offering today.

Isaiah 43:18-19 New International Version

¹⁸ “Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
¹⁹ See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.

Isaiah 41:10

¹⁰ So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Jeremiah 29:11

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

As you read the verses did you notice that none of them looked back! They focussed on now and on the time ahead.

We are leaving 2020 behind. Some of us we will say ‘Good Riddance, a dreadful year!’ For others change was embraced and it helped them. None of us know what the New Year will bring but we may want to help ourselves and others knowing our God is with us.

Epiphany is celebrated on Sunday where we recall the gifts given to Jesus, gifts that told us of his kingship, his priesthood and foretold his sacrifice for us.



They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshipped him. (Matthew 2:11)

The wise men travelled a long way to find Jesus; when they found him, they knelt down, worshipped him and offered him special gifts.

What could we resolve to do during this New Year to show Jesus how much he means to us?

We could try to read our Bible more often

We could resolve to tell someone else the good news about Jesus.

We could pray regularly for five people.

WE COULD?

HOW ABOUT WE WILL OR I WILL

Taking the last suggestion as an example, replace ~~we could~~ with **I WILL!**

I will pray regularly for these five people, -----, -----, -----, ----- and -----.

Piece of string

Take a piece of string, wool or cord, and tie five knots in it to represent each of the five people you have committed to pray for.

You could carry the knotted string in your pocket, tie it round your wrist or place it somewhere where you'll see it regularly.

Use the knots to remind you to pray for each person on your list of five.

Prayer

I will give you a new heart and a new mind. (Ezekiel 36:26)

Father God, as we look forward to the coming year, we ask that you will bless us and be close to us.

Lord, in the year that's about to start, help me to love you with all my heart.

Help us all to make the most of all the opportunities that you give us in the next twelve months.

Lord, in the year that's about to start; help me to love you with all my heart.

Give us the strength and courage to bear the difficulties and disappointments of the coming year.

Lord, in the year that's about to start; help me to love you with all my heart.

In everything we do this year, may we turn to you for help and guidance.

Lord, in the year that's about to start; help me to love you with all my heart. Amen.

Looking forward to fellowship together again later in the year.

God Bless

Marie