

The Churchwardens Write



Time to change...

With January comes the welcoming of a new year, with its resolutions and fresh starts. We celebrate Jesus coming to His people and experience a new beginning, where the slate feels wiped clean for each of us and we are offered the chance to become one with God. So many new beginnings, so many New Year's resolutions, but how many survive beyond January?

The reality is that we, ourselves, travel through Advent and Christmas and on into a new year, but we are the same at the end as we were at the beginning. It is as if we expected God to change us without us even really noticing it, so that the regrets of last year will painlessly be transformed into the gifts of the coming year. Of course, God doesn't work like that. The only way that there will be change in ourselves is if we bring about that change by being determined to be a different person. Only we can change our habits, our behaviour, our opinions and the way we interact with people around us.

As we face a world that seems less and less able to show the values of Jesus, so we as Christians are challenged to show those values more and more in our daily lives. Just as Jesus was a light to the world some 2000 years ago, we are the light in the world today – the light that people meet in their ordinary lives. If we can't change and show the values of Jesus, if all we do is mirror the bad-tempered and abusive behaviour we see in our politics and media, then we will have no light to give out.

Changing ourselves is not easy, which is why New Year's resolutions are so tough to keep. But, by being part of the church at worship, by reading the Scriptures and meditating on them, by building a prayer relationship with God, we *will* be able to change, if we truly want to. Change is driven by love, which is why God gives us that magnificent gift of love at Christmas in the baby Jesus.

Let all of our New Year's resolutions be to change ourselves, for the love of Jesus, so that we can be a light to everyone around us and we can play our small part in transforming the world from a place of hatred, jealousy and fear to one of love and mutual respect.

Wishing you and all those you love a peaceful New Year and God's blessing on all that is to come in 2020.

*David and Dejan
Churchwardens*