

The Good Shepherd Church
Park Road Loughborough
January Focus 2016

Please see the reverse for Services, meetings and other events.

Come!

Happy New Year! Of course I'm expected to say that. But what does it mean? A fixed grin on our faces for a *year*? Not an appetising thought. A trouble-free year? Not realistic. Fun and games all year? Not real life. So what *does* it mean?

I'm writing this in a year when immigrants drowned in the Mediterranean, planes were blown out the sky, and people were murdered in Paris.

My mind turns back to what I wrote for December's Focus and Isaiah 26:3 in particular: "*You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, whose thoughts are fixed on You.*" As I meditated on this I was reminded of a very powerful story in Matthew's Gospel (14:22-32). The disciples were caught out on the Sea of Galilee in pretty rough weather. Jesus approached them in the storm, walking on the sea. They were afraid (hardly surprising!). Jesus identified Himself to them. In response Peter said '*If it is really You, Lord, tell me to come to You by walking on the water*'. Note, he didn't just jump over the side but waited for Jesus to tell him to. Jesus said '*Come*' (a plain, uncomplicated invitation!).

Peter left the boat and walked on the water towards Jesus! All was going well until what? '*Peter looked around at the high waves. He was terrified and began to sink.*' His problems began when he looked at his surroundings. So where was he looking before that, when he was able to walk on the water? I can only conclude that he was looking at Jesus. As long as he looked at Jesus he was able to do what Jesus had invited him to do - even if it was extraordinary. Doesn't that tie in perfectly with Isaiah 26:3? As long as Peter's thoughts were fixed on Jesus he was safe and secure - one might say he was at peace (regardless of the circumstances). As we look peer into 2016, and what it might contain, it seems to me we have two fundamental choices:

- we can be like Robert Burns: '*forward tho' I canna see, I guess and fear*'. Based on what 2015 has contained, that could be understandable. But that is like Peter, looking at *his* circumstances. OR
- we can hear the voice of God saying '*Come*'. He who stands outside time and who therefore knows the future invites us to walk into the new year with Him. Like Peter we can hear the call to '*come*' and then step out with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

As I meditated, the words of an old hymn came to mind:

*In heavenly love abiding, no change my heart shall fear.
And safe is such confiding, for nothing changes here.
The storm may rage about me, my heart may low be laid,
But **God** is round about me, and can I be dismayed?*

If you don't mind, I won't wish you a 'Happy New Year', I'll wish you a year where you, and I, increasingly walk with our thoughts fixed on God.

Brvan Johnston

Contacts For Further Information

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For Contacts please phone.

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January 2016 News, Views and Calendar

Church Services in January.

Every Sunday Morning

8am

Holy Communion Traditional Prayer Book (BCP)

10am Services

Jan 3rd Holy Communion & Sunday Club
Jan 10th Morning Worship
Jan 17th Holy Communion & Sunday Club
Jan 24th Morning Worship
Jan 31st Holy Communion & Sunday Club

Sunday Prayer Meeting

Jan 10th 4pm.

Every Wednesday Morning

9.30am

Holy Communion (said)

Tuesday Prayer Meeting

9.30am



Parish Breakfast.

January 3rd

8.45am.

Please do try to come along.



Home Groups

Thursday Ladies' study group

2-3.30pm Please contact Jackie for details 01509 212207. New members welcome.

Tuesday Group

8pm

8 Freesia Close.



PCC Meeting

January 12th 7.30pm

Messy Church

30th January

4.30pm

Monday Club 6pm

Restart January 11th

Stage Group

Rehearsals commence Wed Jan 6th 7.30pm

Toddler Group

Meets every Friday Morning 10am – 11.30am.

Wednesday Friendly

Commences Jan 6th. Please note our new starting time of 2.30pm. Meets every Wednesday apart from the 3rd Wednesday of the month (20/1/16)

Appointment of new Vicar.

We are pleased to announce that following the interview process for the vacancy of Vicar at The Good Shepherd, the Acting Bishop of Leicester The Rt. Revd. John Holbrook has announced the following.

I am pleased to announce that the Rev Susan Willetts, Team Vicar in the Uttoxeter area of Parishes in the Diocese of Litchfield, has been offered and has accepted the position of Vicar at the Good Shepherd Loughborough.

Susan will be licensed at a special service led by the Acting Bishop of Leicester at The Good Shepherd, on Tuesday 26th April 2016 at 7.30pm. The arrangements for the service have still to be made and more information will be announced over the next couple of months.

We look forward to welcoming Susan and her Husband Andrew to the Church.

Announcement of new Bishop of Leicester.

It has been announced by the office of number 10 Downing Street that The Rt. Revd. Martyn Snow, currently Bishop of Tewkesbury, has been appointed as the new Bishop of Leicester. He will be installed in the spring of 2016.

Dean of Leicester Cathedral to visit The Good Shepherd.

The Dean of Leicester Cathedral, Dean David Monteith will be visiting The Good Shepherd to lead the worship at 8am and 10am on Sunday 17th January. Many of you will recognise the Dean from the TV as he was regularly interviewed about the reinterment of the remains of King Richard III the organisation of which he played a key role. Let us give the Dean a warm welcome on this day.

Christmas Market

Thank you to everyone who came along to the Christmas Market. As a result of the day a total of £678 was raised for the work of the Church.