ST CHAD'S CHURCH, BAGNALL —NEWSLETTER 31.12.23

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

I'm beginning to get my house back to normal. For two months it's been full of things for the Christmas Fayre and Christmas presents waiting for delivery. Now, my knitted toys have been packed away for next year (???), everything left over from the pound stall has gone to the charity shop and all the presents have been delivered. We've even put away all our own presents, there's just the decorations now that stop me from dusting!

It's been a good Christmas, although the weather and sickness kept me from some of my favourite services. Snow with the Christingle service, and Brian being off colour with the carols by candlelight. Luckily the snow has melted and Brian is back to normal (or as normal as he usually is!!!)

I must admit to craving a little normality. I really can't see me waiting until twelfth night to take my decorations down. We'll probably manage until after New Year, but the odds are in favour of them coming down straight after!

Flowers and a Clean Church! Can you help?



New rotas for 2024 are now in the church tower If you would like to arrange flowers or donate money towards their provision, then please complete your chosen week on the rota on the noticeboard.

If you are able to help with the cleaning to keep our church nice and tidy, please add your name to the rota on the table at the back.



Thank you for your help.

Barbara

New Year resolution

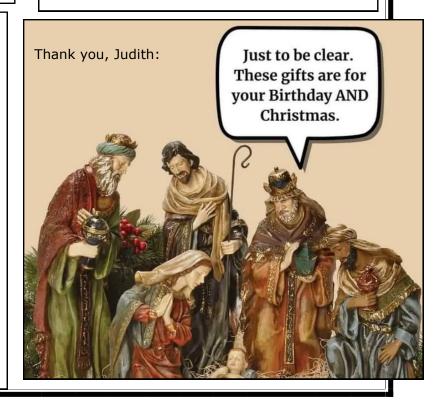
A lot of resolutions in the past Ran to January 2, then faded fast This made me start to wonder why So many good intentions go awry.

Is it impossible to keep our word Made to ourselves? - that seems absurd, Some further thought made me decide The gap from year to year is far too wide.

Could monthly resolutions fill the bill? Weekly, perhaps, be better still? Well, if a resolution's good A case for daily could be understood.

So, daily, let's resolve to do or say Some kindly act or word, and pray For help—God's always there to aid And Every day's a day the Lord has made! Bernard Evans

Courtesy of the January 1995 magazine



Today's service is all about our favourite carols and poems or prose. Many years ago my uncle Frank's very special friend, Joyce Rowley gave me a book of poems and prose entitled "Words for all Seasons". It has been looked at and read so many time s that the pages are all brown and falling out, but it is one of my most favourite books and offers joy and comfort and pleasure.

Here's a couple of entries that I have chosen to share with you:

Keeping Christmas

Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you:

to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world;

to put your rights in the background and your duties in the middle distance and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground;

to see that your fellow men are just as real as you are, and to try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy;

to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are doing to get out of life, but what you are doing to give to life;

to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe and to look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness—

are you willing to do these things even for a day?

Then you can keep Christmas.

Henry Van Dyke

Christmas-Tide

We approached our last house high up on the hill, the place of Joseph the farmer. For him we had chosen a special carol. which was about the other Joseph, so that we always felt that singing it added a spicy cheek to the night. The last stretch of country to reach his farm was perhaps the most difficult of all. In these rough bare lanes, open to all winds, sheep were buried and wagons lost. Huddled together, we tramped in one another's footsteps, powdered snow blew into our screwed-up eyes, the candles burnt low, some blew out altogether, and we talked loudly above the gale.

Crossing, at last, the frozen mill-stream - whose wheel in summer still turned a barren mechanism - we climbed up to Joseph's farm. Sheltered by trees, warm on its bed of snow, it seemed always to be like this. As always it was late; as always this was our final call. The snow had a fine crust upon it, and the old trees sparkled like tinsel.

We grouped ourselves round the farmhouse porch. The sky cleared, and broad streams of stars ran down over the valley and away to Wales. On Slad's white slopes, seen through the black sticks of its woods, some red lamps still burned in the windows.

Everything was quiet; everywhere there was the faint crackling silence of the winter night. We started singing, and we were all moved by the words and the sudden trueness of our voices. Pure, very dear, and breathless we sang:

As Joseph was a walking He heard an angel sing; 'This night shall be the birth-time Of Christ the Heavenly King.

> He neither shall be bornèd In Housen nor in hall, Nor in a place of paradise But in an ox's stall ...'

And two thousand Christmases became real to us then; the houses, the halls, the places of paradise had all been visited; the stars were bright to guide the Kings through the snow; and across the farmyard we could hear the beasts in their stalls. We were given roast apples and hot mince-pies, in our nostrils were spices like myrrh, and in our wooden box, as we headed back for the village, there were golden gifts for all.

Laurie Lee from Cider With Rosie

December Services:

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★ January Services:

↑ 7th—Family Service KH/JP/CHB

★ 14th - Praise and Prayer KH/MF

28th - Morning Prayer KH/MF

Leek Food Bank:

Let's try and beat last year's total food contribution! Now's the time to

bag a bargain in fancy food, so get shopping!



At the turn of the old year to the new, we turn to

As the angels return to heaven, the shepherds to their everyday life and the world around us all too austere resolutions of a New Year, may we, like Mary, reflect on all that we have experienced this past year. ★ • and treasure all that we have seen and heard.

★ All that has been good, and what has been difficult, painful, or hard to accept we offer to you.

especially for children and young people in fear, at risk or under pressure, in faith and trust we cry out • 'ABBA! Father!' - not as slaves to an unknown and unknowable deity but as children of God, who has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts and walks with us always.

Amen.

 Prayer from the Children's Society , based on Galatians 4:4-7 and Luke 2:15-21

Muriel

Smiles:

☆

New Year's Day Prayer for One and All

Dear Lord, so far this year I've done well. I haven't gossiped, I haven't lost my temper, I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes, Lord, I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm probably going to need a lot more help. Amen

As in many homes on New Year's Day, Janet and Nigel, a happily married couple, faced the annual conflict of which was more important: the football match on television, or the lunch itself. Hoping to keep the peace Nigel ate lunch with the rest of the family, and even lingered for some pleasant after-lunch chat before retiring to the lounge to turn on the television. Some minutes later, Janet looked in to see how he was and graciously even bought a cold beer for Nigel. She smiled, kissed him on the cheek and asked what the score was. Nigel told her it was half time and that the score was still 0-0. 'See?' Janet said happily, 'You didn't miss a thing.'

On New Year's Eve, Daniel was in no shape to drive, so he sensibly left his van in the car park and walked home. As he was wobbling along, he was stopped by a policeman. 'What are you doing out here at four o'clock in the morning?' asked the police officer.

'I'm on my way to a lecture,' answered Roger.

'And who on earth, in their right mind, is going to give a lecture at this time on New Year's Eve?' enquired the constable sarcastically.

'My wife,' slurred Daniel grimly.

Jemima was taking an afternoon nap on New Year's Eve before the festivities. After she woke up, she confided to Max, her husband, 'I just dreamed that you gave me a diamond ring for a New Year's present. What do you think it all means?'

'Aha, you'll know tonight,' answered Max smiling broadly.

At midnight, as the New Year was chiming, Max approached Jemima and handed her small package. Delighted and excited she opened it quickly. There in her hand rested a book entitled: 'The meaning of dreams'.