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## PRESIDENT'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

**Lindsey and I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year for 2024!** We pray that we will all see God move in the most extraordinary, transformative and powerful ways in each of our lives and in our fellowships.

**New Year always brings a new hope and a freshness of spirit, we are reminded that God is making all things new through Christ Jesus.**

That should always make us feel grateful and thankful. Whenever we come out of hard times, it can be helpful to focus on the newness of the day, month, season or even New Year. So let us look to God's Word as we soak in the newness of this New Year.

Isaiah 43:19 says ***"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert"***.

This Scripture tells us that we are not forging ahead blindly, but that God has already ordered our steps and He knows everything that we go through, and what we have to do is to trust in Him in **ALL** things. But what about our fellowships? Are we giving God the glory for everything we do? Are we living out God-honouring lives? Is the Church really edifying one another first and impacting the communities in which we serve?



In the book of Acts, we see how the Church was and is meant to function. The Church was born in power of the Holy Spirit, and from there the disciples **DEVOTED** themselves to the Apostles teaching, breaking of bread and prayer. They committed themselves to edifying, encouraging and empowering one another. The power of God was a hallmark of the Church because they devoted themselves to seeking God in Word, Prayer, Worship and Holy Communion. And in this we see how the Church was meant to operate, **in the power of God.**

Agreement is a very powerful issue. **When we agree and believe that God is Sovereign this is where we see the Church operating in God's power.** We need to move into a new season of believing in God for all things, meeting together in unity and love, and praying like never before.



# PRESIDENT'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE (continued)

Prayer has been our focus and will continue to be in everything we write, record or speak about in the coming months. Why? Because God wants us to operate in His power, so that His Church can be that extraordinary, edifying, encouraging, empowering transformative body that functions on His behalf on earth, transforming our fellowships and communities, tearing down strongholds.

So let this year, **2024**, be a year of **a call to unifying agreeing prayer** across all of our communities, let us pray *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* like never before and watch God work His power through us.

Lots of Love in Christ,  
*Rev Michael & Lindsey Hedley*

## ZEAL CONFERENCE 24

Hough Lane (Together Church)



It is fast approaching, and we would love for you to join us!

Zeal Conference is our annual youth conference for young people aged 11-21, with the aim of stirring faith, building relationships and supporting youth leaders in our region. This is a 2 day event running on **22nd & 23rd March 2024**. We have Together Worship leading our conference worship and guest speakers joining us as well.

**Ticket Prices:** (Early-bird Discount; 7th Nov 23 - 7th Jan 24)  
Friday - £3.00  
Saturday - £8.00  
Full Delegate: £10.00

*\*free for pastors/leaders to attend, lunch & dinner included as well as activities.*

### What's does this cost cover?

- Conference Access
- Guest Speakers
- Activities
- Lunch/Dinner

*\*there will be an increase in price from the 8th Jan 24 - 22nd March 24, with our PreConference discount.*

Book your place now: <https://form.jotform.com/232136065294353>

Our Conference schedule will be available soon.

Any questions? Don't hesitate to ask.

We hope to see you there!

Many blessings,

### Fusion Youth Team

#### Together Church

210 Hough Lane  
Wombwell, Barnsley  
S73 0EX

Website:

[www.togetherchurch.online](http://www.togetherchurch.online)



# WRU CONFESSION OF FAITH

(to be continued)

- 1. We believe that there is one true and living God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Him alone we worship and adore.**

If you were to look on Facebook, (or Face ache as some people call it), you will find all sorts of questions being asked, for example, "Does anyone know of a reliable builder". There may be deeper questions asked but for most people that is the type of requests they make.

The other day I saw a question about a Church of England school, the person was asking for recommendations and got a very wide range of answers, most stating that they were not religious but...!

**If you were asked about our Statement of faith in Wesleyan Reform Union, specifically the first one what would your answer be?** And where in the Bible would you look to back up your answer? It is important that we are always "ready to make a defence to anyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you" 1Peter 3:15

**So, for us it is important to know the fundamentals of our faith, and what we base those fundamentals on.**

**It is generally accepted that there was a beginning to life on earth.** Science talks of the Big Bang, then there are the thoughts of Evolution, Natural selection and other theories that have brought us to where we are today.

Well, the Bible talks of the beginning like this, Genesis 1:1 ***"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."***

In John 1:1 We see these words, ***"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God."*** Jesus described as the living word.

In just two verses we have something of the scriptural background for our belief in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**For the first Disciples it was more than a theory,** it was a personal experience as we see in Acts 2 where they experienced the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

It could be seen as just a historical report, but we who call ourselves Christians today need to know the theory and the experience. The proof is seen in us as we reflect the love of God to the world in which we live. **If we have received Jesus as our Saviour then we are children of God which is a work of the Holy Spirit, God three in one.**

*Rev. Peter Norton*



# WHAT'S ON



## ALDERMANS GREEN CHURCH

At a time when a lot of churches are closing and congregations declining, at **Aldermans Green** we have been excited to receive three new people into church membership. Katherine, Wendy and Joanne all attended the 6-week membership course, along with a few existing members who wished to refresh and provide support. We continue to pray for these ladies as they integrate into church life and we wait to see how God's plan unfolds for them.



Our **Friday morning café** has now been running for approx. 18 months providing free tea, coffee and simple food. The café has been a 'slow-burner' but a main stay of about six people have remained faithful throughout and perseverance is now showing some result. **Each week we have no idea who, or how many, will walk through the door but we are seeing the arrival of different faces now turning up regularly**, including

some old friends, as well as representatives from Tesco with whom we have forged a link. **The café runs alongside the Craft Group** which has also seen the return of a number of ladies, and who have **recently completed two new embroidered wall hangings for the main church building**.

On **Remembrance Sunday** our church service was conducted by John Vale, from the Salvation Army, whilst



Stuart Porter led the two-minute silence outside around the memorial. This was attended by the local uniformed organisations who placed wreaths and poppies and it was great to see the church full of children, and their parents, as they paraded in, proudly bearing their respective flags.

**We ask for God's blessing as we continue to reach out further into the community in 2024.**

## DIARY DATES

### Presidential & NSC Visits:

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> February - Jump

### DOC Visits:

28<sup>th</sup> January - Winster

17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> February - Beaconsfield

### General Meetings 2024

2<sup>nd</sup> March (Rushden Mission Church)

19<sup>th</sup> October (Jump Church)

### Conference 2024

17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> June (Swanwick)

## The King Is Coming (PART 2)

When we restarted our Knit and Natter group back in January there was no story as we were out of Advent. After our prayer time one of the ladies asked where our story was and asked why we couldn't have all the stories from the book we had been reading through before Christmas. As everyone was happy with this each week from then on, we read through 'the King is Coming'. I asked others in the group who are Christians to read a story. Some were not confident to say a prayer so either myself or someone else prayed. Others in the group then offered to read a story and were assured someone would say a prayer. Some of the stories are quite funny and have complicated names which caused laughter.

As we came up to Easter we had an Easter afternoon tea. We invited Andy. He showed a short Lego figure animation of the Easter story which went down well and then did a little think spot for us.

Since completing 'the King is Coming' book we are now reading through 'A Pilgrims Progress'. It is a children's version retold by Geraldine McCaughrean and illustrated by Jason Cockcroft. The chapters are quite lengthy so we split them into 2 or 3 parts. Whoever is reading the story tries to leave it on a cliff hanger and encourages us to come back for the next instalment.

We all take it in turn to make the tea and coffee and there is never a lack of volunteers. At the end of the session, we leave the room set up for the Wednesday afternoon meeting. I am always asked how the room needs to be and within minutes those who are able have it set up ready to go.

There is always a wonderful peace on Wednesday mornings. Everyone talks to everyone else. No one is left out. Some of the women ask us to pray for certain situations which is lovely. It never ceases to amaze me that the Lord sends and continues to send answers to our prayer through different people.

*Elaine Tuckett*

## BLOW BLOW THOU WINTER WIND...

Over the early months of the new year we expect to see and experience the unkindness of a winter wind, and yet the Bard considered it a small thing compared to the ingratitude of people.

Paul wrote to the young church in Ephesus with these words "For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, have not stopped

*giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."* (Ephesians 1:15-16).

I wonder which side of the isobar we find ourselves on?

Are we an area of low pressure during the wintry gales – physical and spiritual, so concerned about our own well-being that we forget the (sometimes un-noticed) blessings we received from those around us, and the daily

*... Thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen, because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.*

*Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky, that dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot: though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp as friend remembered not.*

(William Shakespeare)

mercies of a loving God - or are we on the high-pressure side, where we can see all the way to the horizon, a horizon which constantly gives us a view of the memories of kindnesses we have received from those around us, and of the riches that a gracious God bestows upon us even when we are 'remembering not' friends?

*Cliff Darby*  
(Griffydham Church)



# THE WINDOWSILL OF HEAVEN

*Every morning, lean thine arms awhile  
Upon the windowsill of heaven,  
And gaze upon thy Lord.  
Then, with the vision in thy heart,  
Turn strong to meet thy day.*

*by Thomas Blake*

A New Year has dawned. Ahead of us are new opportunities to grasp. New places to visit, new people to meet, new conversations to be had.

We will still visit the old places, see the old people (and the not so old) and have old conversations and the same old things, like we always do. There is something comforting in the familiar. Familiar places and people.

**The familiar is good, but the adventure is good also. It is not to be feared.**

The poem by Blake (although some sources say author is unknown) is one of my favourites. It is an old poem that speaks to a new day. Every new day. To start each new day gazing in the right direction, with the right heart, seeking the right direction so we can turn with strength to meet all each day will hold for us. I have committed this poem to memory and find it really helpful.

I use it as a **promise**, as a **prayer** and as a **powerful reminder** that **each day** is a **new opportunity** to do His will in His strength.

I leave you with this old prayer, another one that I have committed to memory – I hope you find it helpful this coming year too.

*As the rain hides the stars, as the autumn mist hides the hills,  
as the clouds veil the blue of the sky,  
so the dark happenings of my lot hide the shining of thy face from me.  
Yet, if I may hold thy hand in the darkness, it is enough.  
Since I know that, though I may stumble in my going,  
thou dost not fall.*

*Anonymous, Celtic Prayer*

Joanne A Siddall  
(Hampden View Church)

## A PRAYER FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

God, rich in mercy and love, we pray for the people of Israel and Gaza.  
For the Innocents, broken, scared, frightened, confused.  
God who weeps with the weeping, have mercy.

We think of those who have lost their lives and those who grieve.  
God, who meets us in the darkness of the valley and in the stillness of the night.  
O God, meet with the bereaved.

For families shattered and children torn, Oh God, have mercy.

To the injured, bring healing. To the bereaved, bring comfort.  
To the frightened, bring love. To the weary, bring hope.

God of grace, we pray for an end to bloodshed. May peace come quickly.  
We pray that peacemakers may find a voice and offer a way forward.  
Father, have mercy. Lord Jesus, have mercy. Holy Spirit, bring hope.

Amen.

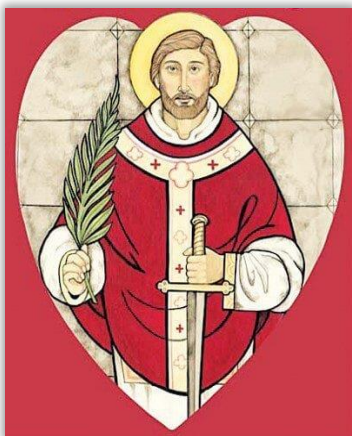
*Prayer by Fred Drummond*

# THE SAINTS OF LOVE



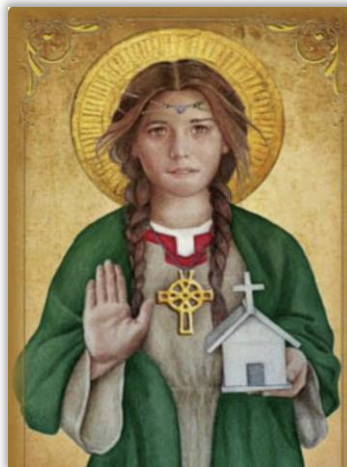
As soon as you mention “14th February” many people will immediately say, “Ah yes, St. Valentines Day.”

My brother was unlucky enough to have been born on this special day and accepted some teasing throughout his teenage years receiving cards from unknown “girlfriends” ... often my mum, grandma and once or twice me.



**St Valentine is known as the patron saint of lovers,** epileptics and beekeepers and he became a martyr for upholding the importance of love and marriage. According to

legend, St. Valentine signed a letter “from your Valentine” to his jailer’s daughter, whom he had befriended and healed from blindness. Another common legend says that he defied the emperor’s orders and secretly married couples to spare the husbands from war, only single men were chosen to become soldiers.



**In contrast,** maybe people don’t know of, or celebrate another Saint of love and lovers. **Saint Dwynwen, whose day is celebrated throughout Wales on the 25th of January.**

Dwynwen lived in the fifth century, the daughter of a Welsh king, Brychan. Dwynwen fell in love with and wanted to marry Maelon, the son of another king. Her father had already arranged for her to marry someone else. So Dwynwen ran to the forest, distraught, praying to God to release her from love. Legend has it that an angel gave her a potion to make her forget about

Maelon and to turn him to ice. After this, God appeared to her and gave her three wishes.

- **First,** Dwynwen wished that Maelon was thawed.
- **Secondly,** she wished that God would help all true lovers.
- **Finally,** she wished that she would never be married.

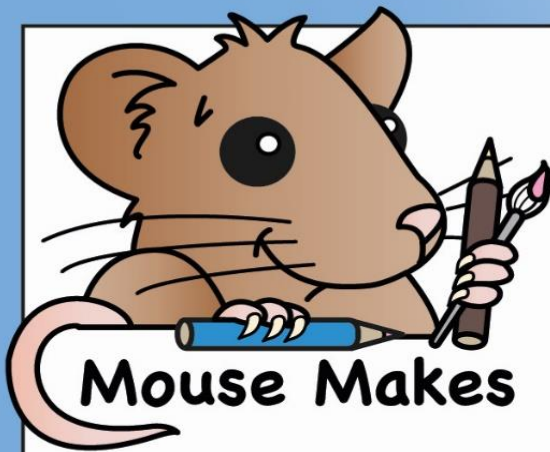
Dwynwen became a nun and established a convent on an island just off the coast of Anglesey. St. Dwynwen’s day is celebrated by exchanging cards and gifts, spending time together, going for a meal or taking long walks. It’s also a day when traditionally, lovers could give the typical Welsh lovespoon as a gift.

**As Christians we know that true love can accomplish many things, we acknowledge that God so loved the world that he gave...**

**1 John 3 v 16.**



**Marie Nichols**  
(Staincross Church)



**EPIPHANY** is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down, worshipped him and left *three* special gifts.



Where was Jesus born?

\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:1



What three gifts did the wise men give Jesus?

\_\_\_\_\_



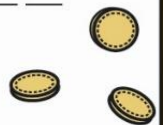
Who was the king?

\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:1

and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:11



Where did the wise men come from?  
the \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:1

How were the wise men warned not to return to Herod?  
In a \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:12

What had the wise men seen?  
a \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 2:2



**Look up** the Bible verses, fill in the blanks, find them in the word search then look for the words opposite.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | H | I | L | D | S | T | A | R | J | D | K |
| J | E | S | U | S | W | A | E | B | O | B | I |
| E | S | R | E | J | O | I | C | E | Y | O | N |
| W | H | A | C | H | R | I | S | T | H | R | G |
| S | E | E | E | O | S | J | C | H | U | N | O |
| Y | P | L | A | U | H | R | U | L | E | R | L |
| G | H | I | S | S | I | T | H | E | R | O | D |
| I | E | M | T | E | P | I | P | H | A | N | Y |
| F | R | A | N | K | I | N | C | E | N | S | E |
| T | D | R | S | W | I | S | E | M | E | N | E |
| S | M | Y | R | R | H | D | R | E | A | M | I |

JESUS  
WISEMEN  
WORSHIP  
SHEPHERD  
KING • JEWS  
CHRIST • CHILD  
BORN • RULER  
ISRAEL • REJOICE  
JOY • HOUSE • MARY  
GIFTS • EPIPHANY

How many other words can you make from the letters in EPIPHANY?