

Dear Friends

Well here we are – 2016, another New Year, with all it's hopes, expectations and resolutions laid out in front of us. Many of us already have a large number of entries in our diaries – others few if any. Among those entries may well be some very important family occasions, the expected birth of a new baby, a wedding or an important anniversary, or perhaps more personal milestones and achievements such as starting a new job or direction in life or leaving home for university or work for retirement. All things which, with the strike of the clock at midnight on 31 December, change from being distant dreams to much closer realities. And with that change comes the need for full out preparation to take the place of the more laid back planning.

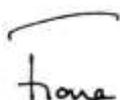
Of course there will be other things that happen throughout the year which we don't see coming and which we therefore cannot plan or prepare for. Some will be good and we will happily take them in our stride, others not so good and we may struggle to deal and come to terms with them. As I look back over past years I can think of many such occasions which have happened to me or others I know and in each and every case, the good times have been even better when shared with others while the support of those around us makes the bad times far more bearable.

None of us really knows what the New Year holds – either for ourselves individually or for our churches corporately. There are many things that I hope for:- that our churches will continue to be a beacon of God's presence within our communities, reaching out to all and touching all. I hope that we will be able to run more activities and special events that the community at large will be able to engage with. I hope to be able to run an enquirers course and I hope it will be well attended. I hope that Messy Church, in its new regular bi monthly slot, will continue to grow and I hope that more people of all ages will be moved to start attending church more regularly. I also hope that we will be able to balance our finances and also raise the required funds to get the organ fixed and have it working properly by the summer.

However, as I have already said, these are hopes – just some of my many hopes, they may or may not be achieved, they may even be exceeded, I don't know as this time of looking forward is a time of looking into the unknown. However, there is one thing that I hope we can all be certain of. No matter what happens during the next twelve months, there will always be help and support readily available for all who need and want it. Support from those of us within your own village church and also, more importantly, from the God in whose name we serve you all. This is help and support that is freely offered and comes with no strings attached so please do feel free to contact any me or any other member of the ministry team at any time.

Finally, as I look back over the past year, I feel that I should also make an apology, there are quite a few people within our villages who I know I should have visited but, because of the many other activities I was involved in during this busy year, did not. I can only apologise and promise to try and do better next year. However, please do bear in mind that I will always pop round in response to a request or invitation and am happy to drop everything in case of emergency.

With every blessing for 2016.



Fiona