

Letter from the Vicar

Saturday 30 January 2021

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is hard to believe that we are already one twelfth of the way through this year. I know, for some, January will really have dragged on as the cold and dark, combined with lockdown, have meant there is very little we can do at the moment whilst for others their levels of busy-ness have only increased as they juggle home-working and home-schooling. Speaking for myself I'm really not sure I know where the month has gone. It seems like only yesterday was New Year's Eve and now we are on the cusp of a new month.

Tomorrow, as a Church we will celebrate Candlemas – the feast, 40 days after Christmas, when Christ was presented in the Temple and recognised as *the Light to lighten the nations*. I suspect we are all longing for light at this moment but there are signs that it is coming. One good thing that I have observed during January is that the evenings are very slowly starting to get lighter; as I journey to church at 5pm I've noticed that I'm no longer cloaked in thick darkness. Wherever there is light it will always overcome darkness.

Some of you may know that one of my favourite TV programs is *Dad's Army*. I could watch it for hours (although my family would have something to say!). I'm reminded of APR Warden Hodges and his familiar cry "Put that light out!" Many of the circumstances surrounding us today are imploring us to live in darkness and dreariness but the light of the Gospel of Christ, and the promise of a vaccine for all who want it, are beacons of light showing us there is a way forward – there is hope.

Without wanting this letter to become an outdated weather report I hope you will permit me to share my family's antics last Sunday as the snow descended. Like many other families, we waited until there was a decent accumulation on the ground and then headed out (fully wrapped up and with sledge in tow) to enjoy the wintry scene. Surprisingly there were still cars on the snow covered roads but these were outnumbered by the number of people out enjoying the snow – all distanced – as snowmen were built, snow balls hurled through the air, and slopes slid down on sledges and tea trays. It was a fabulous tonic to cabin fever and just what my girls needed. I hope you were able to enjoy last Sunday. Below is a picture of St John's in the snow sent in by a member of our congregation.

For now though, I leave you with my prayers and best wishes. Keep safe; keep positive; keep warm; and remain steadfast in faith that God loves us, cares for us, and enfolds us in his arms.

In Christ,

Mike

The Reverend Michael Macey

Vicar

01442 243258

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