



Link Up!

**“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”
Revelation 22 v12-13**

Coming up in January

On Sunday 7th January Stephen Chaloner will be leading our first service of 2024. This will be a prayer focused service giving thanks for the past year and looking forward to the New Year.

Then on Sunday 14th we will be returning to our series in Luke's gospel looking at chapter 14: 1 – 24 with Stephen Ashby.

On Sunday 21st, Andrew Chadwick from Wimborne Baptist will be preaching from Luke 16: 1 – 15.

And on Sunday 28th our Moderator, Colin Pavitt, will be preaching from Luke 16: 19 – 31.

Dear LBC,

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all a fabulous and blessed new year.

At this time of the year, we often look backwards to the events of the past 12 months and then try to imagine what the next year has in store for us personally and as a church community.

Well, 2023 is not going to go down as a practically good year. Rather we have seen so much sadness and suffering, the Wars in Gaza and Ukraine have dominated the TV screens and nearer to home there has been the “Cost of Living Crisis”. Prices rising, energy cost spiralling and we are still coping with the effects of the covid pandemic.

Perhaps the only political highlight of the year was the Coronation of King Charles III, who I believe is going to be a better King than many had predicted. Turning to the church, we have to conclude that it has also been a challenging time for the Christian faith. Church attendance has still not reached pre-pandemic numbers and the secular world continues to belittle and ignore our genuine doctrines and beliefs.

HOWEVER, I am very optimistic about the future.

Events for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

January brings the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with two events for us to take part in.

On Sunday 21st January from 4pm – 5pm, we will be hosting the Unity Service bringing together congregations from St George's C of E in Oakdale, St Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Wimborne Road and ourselves. As we are the hosts, I will need helpers to act as Stewards welcoming people, Serving refreshments, and some readers. We will also need offers of cake maybe three large cakes to cut into 12 slices each. If you can help with any of these tasks, then please let Janet know.

Then on the following Tuesday, 23rd January, between 7 – 9pm there will be a unity event at St Edwards RC/C of E School in Dale Valley Road, organised by Churches Together in Poole, where Christians from churches across Poole will gather to hear about among other things the work of PACE the schools work charity and Routes to Roots, working among the homeless. The main speaker will be Alistair Doxat Purser from Faithworks. This is an event well worth attending if you are able to.

Firstly, the appointment of Ken as new minister is wonderful news. I believe that Ken and Nicki will bring a down to earth, practical style of "Church" that will be challenging and relevant to the Longfleet community. And the fact that the congregation is calling Ken to focus on those outside of the Church is so exciting.

Secondly, my experience has always been that when people are facing crisis (many at the moment), so often they do turn to us, as Christians, asking for prayer and help. So let us always be ready to share our testimony and be prepared to pray for those seeking assistance.

Thirdly, I do love to read the Book of Revelation, because it is about communities that are suffering, being persecuted. However, (and this is the good part), after the struggles, God will bring about the fulness, the completeness of his Kingdom. Which is why the Bible ends with the words in Revelation 22:

'He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.'

Rev Colin Pavitt

