



# Link Up!

**'He has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.'**  
**2 Timothy 1:9**

## For the rest of January

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

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

## Events for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 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. I know that it's an extra event for a Sunday but, as we are the hosts, we do need a good number of our own congregation to come along and give those coming from other churches a good 'Longfleet' welcome.

Then on the following Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> 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. You can book a place (not essential but just helpful for the organisers) by seeing Janet.

Well – we have all made it through BLUE MONDAY. Did you know it was a thing?!

Monday 15th January 2024 was "Blue Monday" this year – it's the 3rd Monday in January; supposedly the most depressing day of the year.

The formula used, as reported by Sky News, is:  $[W + (D-d)] \times TQ$ . Then  $M \times NA$ . In this equation, there are seven variables: (W) weather, (D) debt, (d) monthly salary, (T) time since Christmas, (Q) time since failed quit attempt, (M) low motivational levels and (NA) the need to take action.

The formula is meant to account for the fact that the weather is much colder in January, the long slog until the next payday, New Year's resolutions you may not have managed to stick to, and the fact that the December festivities are long gone. It's only been a "thing" to note by news websites since 2004 and it probably won't surprise you to learn it was created by psychologist Dr Cliff Arnall to try and help a travel company sell more holidays!

Where I work, I don't think we need a special formula to have a good old moan about how cold it is, how expensive heating costs are and what a long month January seems to be. Anytime I make my way to the coffee machine (fancy I know!) the same conversation about ice cold hands and how pockets are feeling empty, is heard.

I think I have a little psychological advantage as my birthday is at the end of January, giving me something in the very near future to look forward too (date night coming up!), but even so, I'll admit it's very, very tempting to get swept along in all the moaning and groaning about how awful it all is.

#### Coming up in February

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> we will be holding another of our very popular Songs of Praise services. Stan and Barbara will be leading us on that Sunday. Please can you let Stan or Barbara have your choices of favourite hymns & songs, particularly those that mean a lot to you personally. They need these by Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February at the latest. Don't leave it until the last minute to get these in!!

#### Very important information

From Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January the roadworks that have been gradually moving along Wimborne Road and its side junctions will get to Marnhull Road. From that date for two weeks, you will not be able to drive into Marnhull Road from Wimborne Road.

Instead, the other end of Marnhull Road will become a two-direction access. There will be temporary traffic signals controlling that junction to allow this to take place safely. The diversion route to get to that end of Marnhull Road will be to either turn right into Garland Road, by the shops, if you are coming from the town centre direction and then left into Joliffe Road or turn left into Sandbourne Road and then right into Joliffe Road if you are coming from the New Inn direction. There may be some obstruction to the pavement on Wimborne Road if you are walking to the church from the car park and if you are concerned about walking that way, we will open the back door to the church for you to use on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January.

#### Family News

The funeral of Anne Belbin will take place at the Church on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm. This will be followed by the committal at Harbour View at 3pm. Please do remember Jonathan and David, Anne's sons, and their families in your prayers at this time.

Recognising that it's a ploy to get us into a self-centred, self-focused, self-aggrandising state is really good way to see that it is pure temptation from the enemy to shut our eyes to the wonder and beauty of the season and to focus internally on how it doesn't suit our feelings and our flesh to have to "deal" with it. It's not helpful to say "other people have it worse" either – as then we're still in the precarious business of comparing ourselves among ourselves; and shaming ourselves and others is also a potential trap to despair. To feel depressed, is to feel how we feel. The truth that we are to live not for ourselves alone, but to let Christ in us shine no matter how we feel, is far more powerful... though not "easy".

If I hear the word "grumbling" my mind goes to the children of Israel getting bored of supernaturally provided food and drink in the wilderness and rebelling against God. Though God forgave them by grace, they never got to receive the land he promised them – it passed to a future generation. Grumbling our days away is still a rebellion against God, as He alone is the gracious giver of each day – this is why we are tempted in this way.

"The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times— not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it." (Numbers 14 20-24.)

Could you imagine Jesus complaining and grumbling about the weather, or the lack of a comfortable bed, or even, that the food offered to him wasn't quite to his liking. I just can't imagine our Lord doing that – far be it from Jesus to grumble. So, if Christ in us is the hope of Glory, we need to stop comparing ourselves to each other, and look to the perfecter of our faith.

"It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky." Philippians 2:13-15.

We know we can't do it our own strength; let's give the glory to Him and ask him to continue to fulfil His good purpose in us, despite our weaknesses, in every season. As we resist the temptation to grumble or argue, look at the promise – we become blameless and pure.

*Kim Chaloner*