



January 2004

# The Recorder

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*An edited version of this magazine is now available on the Church Web-site.  
(Personal details are NOT included.)  
Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>*

**Trinity - A Family Church**

**Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others**

## 'A New Year call to review your sense of stewardship'

**Revd. Michael Shrubsole**

**Minister of Trinity United Reformed Church**

Jesus sometimes compares his followers to Stewards, left in care of the Master's household while the Master is away on business. (See Luke 12:42-48.) The question he raises in our minds is: what has Jesus asked us to be responsible for on his behalf? For each one of us the specific answers we give will be quite different, and the answer we give will also change through our life as our circumstances change. For some of us the most urgent and compelling task we are called to might be very humble – caring for a housebound loved one, remembering to phone a lonely friend every couple of days, opening and closing the curtains for a disabled neighbour. For others of us, Jesus calls us to be his faithful Stewards in the way we run our business, or the way we conduct ourselves when dealing with wealthy and influential clients. The thing Jesus asks us to be good stewards of are many and varied.

In the New Testament almost every one of the different letters to the churches and individuals contains a section towards the end giving instruction and encouragement on how to live. Why not try finding the relevant sections? In Paul's letter to the Romans the relevant section is Romans 12:1-8, which is then followed by two sections on the power of love (12:9-21; 13:8-14), it is encouraging reading.

So in my New Year letter to you, following New Testament guidelines, I suggest that Stewardship has three dimensions to it. All that God has given you, out of his love for you, can be summed up by the three categories: Time, Talents and Wealth. Please prayerfully conduct a review of your Stewardship of these gifts at this time.

Time – how do you use your time? Do you use it to share God's gift of love with others? Do you use it to nurture and develop God's other gifts to you? What's the point of having a talent if you don't practice it? Are you giving enough of your time back to God in worship, both in private prayer, and in public celebration of worship with other Christians?

Talents – what are you good at, comfortable with, capable of? What kind of a person has God made you to be? What has God given you to share with others? Are you honestly living out the life God wants for you, or are you a square peg in a round hole? It may be that work or family pressure forces you in directions that feel uncomfortable to you, but how you serve in church should be a free expression of your talents in ways that best equip you to share your God-given gifts with others.

Wealth – we all have at least some wealth. And we live in a society where 'money makes the world go around'. Even in ancient times God's Hebrew people were instructed to give away a tithe (one tenth) of all their wealth, (which for them was mostly crops and livestock). Two years out of three it went to the Levites and Priests to support the worship of God in the Temple. Every third year it was distributed locally to help the poor in the community. (Deut 14:22-29) Today the United Reformed Church encourages you to give 5% of your take-home income to the church, and to give or use another 5% of your income on charitable and hospitable activities. Have you reviewed your giving in the last 12 months? Please keep your giving up to date. Money makes the church go around too.

*Mike*

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# January Services

## **Morning Worship at 10.30 a.m.**

Children of all ages meet for part of morning worship using the SALT material from Scripture Union. Adult worship usually follows the texts of the Revised Common Lectionary.

4<sup>th</sup> January - Morning Worship with Communion. John 1:1-18; Jeremiah 31:7-14;  
Ephesians 1:3-14

11<sup>th</sup> January - Morning Worship. Luke 3:15-22; Isaiah 43:1-7; Acts 8:14-17

18<sup>th</sup> January - Morning All-age Worship. John 2:1-11; Isaiah 62:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

25<sup>th</sup> January - Morning Worship. With Revd Alasdair Pratt, Moderator of the URC.  
Luke 4:14-21; Nehemiah 8:1-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

## **Evening Worship at 6.30pm.**

A quiet monthly communion service. We meet as a small gathering to share bread and wine in a reflective and liturgical atmosphere.

18<sup>th</sup> January - Evening Communion

25<sup>th</sup> January - Ecumenical Worship "My peace I give to you." John 14:23-31. Hosted by Wesley Methodist Church. We share with the High Wycombe churches in praying for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. All welcome.

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# What's on in January



- Monday 12th Jan - New Year Celebrations  
(8pm. Hostess - Pat W)
- Monday 26th Jan - Wait and see!!  
(8pm. Hostess - José B)

## WOMEN'S MEETING

- Tuesday 6th Jan Rev Mike Shrubsole - Epiphany
- Tuesday 13th Jan Favourite prayers
- Tuesday 20th Jan Olive Shepherd -  
Whitby and its surroundings
- Tuesday 27th Jan AGM. Bring & Buy



*All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom*

## 9th and 23rd January

at 2pm -

Scrabble

So far, the Scrabblers have put over £700 into the Restoration Fund. Thank you for your support. Let's raise more in 2004. Happy Scrabbling!



## Church Walk

No church walk arranged this month but if you would like a walk on Saturday January 31st why not join the Ramblers Association easy-paced 3 mile walk from Bradenham Manor N.T. car park at 2.00pm? They would be pleased to see you and I may be there.

OS

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**Needed**

For several years now Andrew L has given lifts to some members of the Women's Meeting, hardly missing a Tuesday. We are most grateful to him. Unfortunately because of changes at his work he will be unable to continue this service after the end of February. This means some of our members will find it difficult to join us.

Being prepared to get people to the meeting for 2.30pm and picking them up again at 4.00pm every week is a big commitment so in the past we have worked a rota system. This means the same person is not involved every week and is not necessarily responsible for both bringing members and taking them home on the same day.

Anyone who can help with this from March onwards please let any member of the Women's Meeting know and I will start to work out a rota. Any help however occasional will be appreciated.

OS

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**Advance Notice.**

Women's World Day of Prayer, Friday, March 5th.

The following services have been arranged:

10.30am Trinity URC, Speaker- Julia Cartwright  
1.30pm St Anne's , Wycombe Marsh  
7.30 pm The Pastures, Downley

There is a choir practice at 10.30 am on Monday 1st March at Wesley Methodist Church. You will see that we are hosting the morning service so we shall need volunteers to help with stewarding, coffee etc. More details in the next Recorder.

OS & SS

# Vision

We reproduce below the script of the URC's 'Catch the Vision' Steering Group, led by the General Secretary. We will be discussing this at the January Church Meeting of our Church.

## **Catching the vision of God's tomorrow Unpacking the vision statement**

*"It is our goal to become a vibrant and sustainable Christian community in the next ten years.*

*We are called by God to be a church which is centred upon the gospel and the proclamation of its message of freedom and justice. In communities throughout our nations we are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible, as we strive to share the gospel in ways which are relevant to to-day's world. We will seek, visibly and recognizably, to make a difference to our communities and our society, in the name of Jesus Christ.*

*Achieving that goal will require sacrifices and pruning. We have considerable resources - but we must use them in a more focussed way. We can still attempt great things for God but we cannot do all things. Hard choices will have to be made at every level of the church's life.*

*Our choices will ensure that power is released to the places where the work of mission is done. We will become less bureaucratic, more ecumenically focussed, and develop the potential of lay leadership.*

*Working together we can, by the grace of God, be a church that is excited by the gospel and equipped for mission in the name of Jesus Christ."*

A vision statement is necessarily short and to the point. It does not waste words. In the statement we have tried to re-present to the church what we think we have heard the church saying to us through conversation, letter and e-mail. We think we have heard a remarkable convergence about the need for change and a renewed commitment to live the Christian life in a way that makes a difference in the world for God's sake. The transforming message of God's love and longing as recorded in Scripture and made flesh in Mary's child is at loose amongst us. This paper is offered to the round of Church Meetings in January as a guide to some of the critical issues that underlie the vision statement.

### **Called by God...centred on the proclamation of freedom and justice**

The church is not like a chain of supermarkets, and it cannot be managed like one. That is because the church derives from its relationship with Christ. It is the company of those called to be 'in Christ'. That is to say, it is inextricably caught up in the very life of the Trinity, and in the purposes of God which precede creation and will continue after time has concluded its work. Its primary task is therefore to be focussed on God, to praise and worship God, to hear God's Word and to let that Word loose in the world.

To speak of 'the gospel' is to invite a theological debate about the nature of God's love and purposes, and also to encounter the wide variety of theological interpretations that exist within our fellowship. However, we believe passionately that life with God-in-Christ makes a difference. We see that difference as people and communities are set free to become what God wants them to be, and in witness to God's alternative kingdom, known and proclaimed in Jesus Christ. To proclaim the gospel is to promote God's 'different' way of life, and to try and live those priorities rather than acquiesce to a consumerist agenda. What are those priorities in your community, and in your church?

### **Diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible.**

The URC is a broad church. It holds together very different styles of worship, theology and discipleship. This is a cause for celebration, for God has given us a wonderfully diverse world to enjoy. We wish to be inclusive, for Jesus welcomes all who confess that he is Lord into his kingdom, and there is an open door for seekers after truth. That means rejoicing in the rich mix of ethnic cultures that is such a notable part of British life, particularly in our larger towns and cities, and seeking to ensure that that richness is reflected in our own life as a church.

We believe we must be flexible. We live in a rapidly changing culture. New forms of being church and being Christian are emerging in some contexts as Christians grapple with the meaning of 'mission' in their context, some free from the chains of a building and the confines of Sunday.

We are living in a time of varied experiment in church life. Many ways are being explored to reconnect churches with their communities. Listening to communities results in all kinds of experiment in service, and sometimes in the form of 'organised' church life. Café churches, pub churches, network churches, cell churches, and other different forms of church and being Christian are coming into being. Some will survive, others will not. That is not to say that traditional church is dead. There are many examples of vibrant traditional churches. However, the need for a 'mixed economy' is apparent. The question for the URC is how to encourage and keep accountable new forms of mission engagement.

### **Visibly and recognisably making a difference**

The gospel is about an encounter with Jesus that leads to transformation. Lives can be turned upside down. Social and economic structures can also be altered - Commitment for Life is a good example from our own discipleship. When we work together we can make a difference. One question before the URC is whether we wish to be more focused and disciplined about that. We welcome comments.

### **Sacrifices and pruning**

Mission Council's sanctioned this process because it believed that God still has work for us to do. Part of the response to that feeling of call was realism. The Churches Information for Mission Church Life profile shows that the age structure of our congregations means that we shall be half the size we are now in about 20 years thanks to simple demography. It is not that we are not making new members – we are. It is simply that our age profile means that we are

*[cont on page 8]*

losing more members through natural causes than we are making. That is why our membership is declining steadily at roughly 3% per annum. Equally, balancing our M & M budget becomes more difficult every year as rising costs have to be met by fewer and older people. We cannot continue as we are.

We have commissioned a great deal of research into the amount it costs to run the United Reformed Church at every level. We have not finished that work yet, but it will (we hope) be ready for Assembly. That means that we will know for the first time precisely where we are investing resources. That information will then allow us to make judgements about how we want to use our resources in the future. We have no pre-determined plans about that. We simply wish to say that we cannot go on doing all that we do now because (unless giving increases considerably) we cannot afford it. Some things which we hold precious and dear will have to be sacrificed. We therefore:

### **Cannot do all things**

But, we can still attempt great things for God. We do now. There are remarkable stories that could be told of churches and programmes making real differences to the community, of Jesus being celebrated and known. The question that we will have to face is how we use our resources of people, buildings, money, ideas and time. Do we spread them thinly like jam, or do we concentrate them? Once again, we have no pre-determined answers. We simply remind the church that there are:

### **Hard choices**

We have a bad record about making hard decisions. Sentiment encourages us to maintain the status quo at all costs. Shutting down things that we no longer need (whether buildings, communities or programmes), or re-deploying much cherished resources (e.g.. selling a little used building to finance a piece of mission ten miles away), is not our forte. We place the church on notice that these choices will have to be made in the next few years. There will be no evading them. And we emphasise that we do not have a hit-list (despite the rumours!). It will be for the whole church to decide.

### **Power released to places where mission is done**

All our correspondents agree that we are top-heavy with councils and administration. Needless to say there is no agreement about what should be done about it! We are convinced that power needs to be released to places where mission is done. That raises the question of what 'mission' is, and how we identify places where it is happening, and how we create mechanisms to release resources to those places. In many cases (but by no means all) they will be local churches. In other instances, the mission of the church is best advanced by regional or national focuses - for example, trade justice campaigns, or the support of refugees. We are a connexional church, made up of councils and we are church in all of those ways, not just in the local church meeting.

### **Less bureaucratic**

Those who created the URC offered us a remarkably flexible structure. They did not intend it to be set in concrete. In almost every Synod plans are afoot to change the number and nature of our councils. In the course of the next year we will be pursuing the question of governance, with a view to bringing proposals to the 2005 Assembly. A leaner and more efficient structure is essential if we are to have sufficient fleetness of foot in the future.

*[cont on page 9]*



### **More ecumenically focussed**

We do not waver in our commitment to unity both locally and in the church catholic. It is our defining characteristic. We are putting in place ways of working ever more closely with our partners, particularly with our friends in the Methodist Church with whom we already share so much.

### **Develop the potential of lay leadership**

Future patterns of church life will need to rely more heavily than they already do on various forms of partnership between the ordained or commissioned and lay leaders. We are well aware how well we are served by our elders, lay preachers, church secretaries and others. We need to think carefully together about how lay leadership can be developed across the church.

May God be with you in your thinking and praying. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Steering Group

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As a "non-doer" at Trinity, I should like to express my sincere appreciation of all the hard work the do-ers do, week in, week out, mainly in the background.

No-one makes a loud noise, but all sorts of things quietly happen in so many ways, and I am grateful to be a member of Trinity's caring congregation.

**Margaret E**

### **Payment of Reform Magazines for 2004**

I am now collecting monies from people who will be receiving the Reform Magazine during 2004. The total for the year is £11.25. If you are paying by cheque please make it payable to Trinity URC.

If anyone who hasn't ordered a copy wishes to do so, please talk to me, the magazines can be ordered at any time and payment made accordingly.

Thank you

**K E**

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*The next edition of the Recorder will be published on 25th January  
Closing date for contributions is Friday 16th January.*

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Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

## **Did you struggle to find the perfect present this Christmas?**

### **Christian Aid gave a drum.**

Your Christmas giving through Trinity Church and Christian Aid has helped provide many people with small practical gifts that changed their lives. Here is a story of one person who has been helped by your generosity.

Think of Africa and think of drums! Tanzania, the largest East Africa nation, is no exception to drum mania! Rhythmic, mesmerising, vibrant and alive, drums are an integral part of Tanzanian life. Traditionally, drums were used to herald leaders, and encourage bravery in warriors. But now through Christian Aid's partner the 'Youth Cultural Information Centre' (YCIC) drums are being used in a very different way. YCIC is using drums to build self-esteem amongst disadvantaged young people living on the streets of Dar es Salaam.

There are an estimated 3,000 children living on the streets of the capital. Poverty, compounded by the AIDS epidemic, has put a strain on family relationships. Facing conflict and abuse at home, children as young as four are being drawn to the bright lights of the big cities. They hope they will be able to find work and send money back to their families. Like the homeless all over the world, they soon find the streets are not paved with gold. Once there, children have to find the basics for survival. At night, many sleep in abandoned houses, derelict vehicles, or under street culverts. By day many turn to washing cars, begging, thieving or even prostitution to obtain food. Since Tanzanian law forbids loitering, some children sleep standing up for fear of being picked up by the police. Life on the streets creates hatred towards the society that has rejected them. Street children need to be reunited with their families, and reintegrated into society itself. YCIC is working to build their self-esteem through drumming and acrobatic programmes run at their two drop-in centres in Dar es Salaam. They also provide funds for training and education. 'Drums are used to refresh the minds of street children and to help integrate them into the community,' says Franco one of the co founders of YCIC.

Aidani Komba is one of Tanzania's street children. At 16 he ran away from home when his father began drinking and became violent. He soon found himself sleeping outside the Post Office in Dar es Salaam. Earning a mere 300 Tanzanian shillings (20 pence) for washing a car he was only able to buy a plate of chips, a coke or a bottle of water each day. One night Aidani was taken to the police station and kept there for four days. Fortunately, his uncle found him and took him home. There he found out about YCIC. He was counselled by their social workers, and then taught how to play the drum and perform acrobatics. YCIC also paid for driving lessons so he could earn himself a living. Today Aidani is himself a volunteer teacher with YCIC. Every afternoon he works with children from a squatter settlement, teaching acrobatics and drumming. To YCIC he says: 'Thank you for your help. I hope you will continue to help children like me.' To Christian Aid he says: 'Do not stop raising money for us. Your money is used to help change lives.'

Your giving this Christmas helped put a smile on the face of one of Tanzania's street children and gave new hope. Thank you.

### **New Year's Days**

by Celia Standish

The New Year's days are white with snow,  
The winds are laughing as they blow.  
Across the ponds and lakes we glide,  
And o'er the drifting snow we ride,  
And down the hills we gaily slide,  
For it is winter weather.

Each rushing stream is warmly dress'd,  
An icy coat upon its breast,  
And on each branch of every tree,  
Packed in as close as close can be,  
The next year's leaflets we can see,  
All nestled close together.

## **Safe Driving in 2004!**

Don't drive while holding a mobile phone - it's against the law!

Experts have found that driving concentration reduces 30% if we are distracted by a conversation. Apparently this applies even with a hands-free phone. Clearly we must avoid all distractions when at the wheel. So, in the coming years, will we see a ban on car radios and music systems? Politicians pontificating on news programmes are stressful, and music played at 100 decibels is a distraction to other road users, pedestrians and dogs. Next to go would be back seat drivers, mothers-in-law and restless children, all of whom, as passengers, are significant distractions. Currently passengers are therefore a road safety hazard! Two options for legislation are available. First, relegate all passengers to the rear seats and place a soundproof glass barrier between them and the driver. Unfortunately, the driver may still be distracted by viewing the activities of hyperactive children in the rear-view mirror. So mirrors, including those on the wings, will have to go, allowing the driver to concentrate on the way ahead. Regretfully, without mirrors the driver cannot safely pull out or overtake and would be unable to drive anywhere. We must conclude, therefore, that, unless we ban overtaking, mirrors are in and passengers are out. All passengers are a risk under any circumstances. This leads to the second and only viable option, namely that cars must not be able to carry passengers! We would no longer need passenger seats. Single seater cars become the only safe option with the driver in a silent cocoon, free to concentrate on the task in hand. Those observing traffic jams will already have noticed that most cars are single occupancy anyway, so this is not a radical step. It would clearly help if cars were smaller. Half-width, half-length cars would allow us to have twice as many traffic lanes on existing roads, thus relieving jams. Car parks could be reduced in size, giving up more land for parks, playgrounds and much needed landfill sites. Furthermore, the school-run would become an impossibility, solving the obesity problem in young children as they rediscover their legs. Family outings in the car would disappear, eliminating congestion on rural roads, freeing them for the healthier pursuits of cycling, walking, fox-hunting or pilgrimages to Canterbury with lots of time to tell stories along the way. So, phoneless, radioless, CD-less single seater cars are the safe, healthy option for all. Because they are of little or no use to anyone, travel, fuel consumption and pollution will all be reduced to social benefit. Community life would be rediscovered and life enhanced. Make them top of your wish list for 2004, or better still get a bike, and a happy and healthier new year will be had by all!

*["Pinched" from the December magazine of Coke Memorial Methodist Church]*

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## **Kitchens!**

1. A messy kitchen is a happy kitchen and this kitchen is delirious.
2. No husband has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
3. A husband is someone who takes out the trash and gives the impression he just cleaned the whole house.
4. If we are what we eat, then I'm easy, fast, and cheap.
5. A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
6. Thou shalt not weigh more than thy refrigerator.
7. Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves for they shall never cease to be amused.
8. A clean house is a sign of a misspent life.
9. Help keep the kitchen clean - eat out.
10. Housework done properly can kill you.
11. Countless number of people have eaten in this kitchen and gone on to lead normal lives.
12. My next house will have no kitchen - just vending machines.

**AN INVITATION TO ALL**

**an opportunity to invite your friends**

**NEW YEAR PARTY**

**Saturday 31st January 2004**

**5.00 – 7.00 p.m.**

**A chance for all of us to get together and have fun. A party for all ages, young and old with plenty of games and activities for all different ages.**

**This has always been a great fun event.**

**Please bring some 'finger food' for a shared buffet supper.**

**Tea, coffee and cold drinks provided.**

**Organised by Junior Church. See Louise for further details or offer of help.**

**CHURCH DIARY DATES**

**Elders Meeting** - Tuesday **6<sup>th</sup> January**, 7.30pm. in the Schoolroom

**Church Meeting** - Tuesday **20<sup>th</sup> January**, 8.00pm. in the Schoolroom

The major item on the agenda this month is the new Vision of the URC, see this Recorder (pages 6 to 9) or Reform for further information which we will discuss together at this meeting.

**Party** - Saturday **31<sup>st</sup> January**, (see above)

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Roy S is pleased to report that he has handed over the sum of £220 to the Restoration Fund, and thanks all those who contributed to his efforts in raising this sum.

We are grateful to Roy for the work he has put in over the year to achieve this.

## Left out in the cold

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services each week, stopped going. After a few weeks, the minister decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The minister found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his minister's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited.

The minister made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the minister took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead and dark. Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The two men sat on in reflective silence. A little while later, just before the minister was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the minister reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

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## "Helpful" signs and notices

*In a laundromat:* Automatic washing machines. Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.

*In a London department store:* Bargain Basement Upstairs.

*In an office:* Would the person who took the stepladder yesterday kindly bring it back or further steps will be taken.

*In another office:* After the tea break, staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board.

*On a church door:* This is the gate of Heaven. Enter ye all by this door. (This door is kept locked because of the draught. Please use side entrance.)

*Outside a secondhand shop:* We exchange anything — bicycles, washing machines, etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain.

*Quicksand warning:* Quicksand. Any person passing this point will be drowned. By order of the District Council.

*Notice in a dry cleaner's window:* Anyone leaving their garments here for more than 30 days will be disposed of.

*In a health food shop window:* Closed due to illness.

*Spotted in a safari park:* Elephants; Please Stay In Your Car.

*Seen during a conference:* For anyone who has children and doesn't know it, there is a day care on the first floor.

*Notice in a field:* The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free, but the bull charges.

*Message on a leaflet:* If you cannot read, this leaflet will tell you how to get lessons.

*On a repair shop door:* We can repair anything. (Please knock hard on the door - the bell doesn't work.)

*Spotted in a toilet in a London office block:* Toilet out of order. Please use floor below.

# Prayer Page

(Prepared by the elders)

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2004

Lord of the years,  
We ask your blessings on the year to come.  
Give us the resilience to bear its disappointments,  
energy to seize its opportunities  
and openness to accept the more abundant life  
which you have promised to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We pray for those who fear the new year ahead  
Those with debts or illness that they must live with every day.  
Help them to open their eyes and ears so that they might know you  
and recognise your help when it comes.

18<sup>th</sup> January 2004 WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY.

God our Father, Creator of the world,  
Please help us to love one another.  
Make nations friendly with other nations;  
Make all of us love one another like brother and sisters.  
Help us to do our part to bring peace in the world  
And happiness to all people

Christ is the bridge  
that reaches past today and destiny  
to join the things of heaven  
with those of earth.  
He links  
creations dawning  
with infinity's vast shore.  
His cross of love is raised  
above a world where love and sin  
have torn God  
and his children far apart.  
It spans the centuries  
to give safe passage to his peace.  
Christ is the Bridge,  
the way to Gods own heart.

Father, we praise you for joy of expectancy, for waking in the morning to a sense of adventure, for expecting to achieve our targets of the day, for expecting to meet new people, for discovering new strength in ourselves, learning new skills.

Father, we praise you for breaking through into our lives when we least expect you.

We praise you for the season of Advent when our expectancy grew into excitement as Christmas enabled us to rejoice in the birth of our Saviour.



During the month of January you might like to include Psalm 121 in your prayers.

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come?...