

December 2016

Most of my commitments in December have been at my own church at Friars Green and I'm not going to list all of those. It has been good to share with the brothers and sisters that



so diligently support me in prayer and it was also good to lead the Coffee and Carols at our regular Saturday Coffee Morning (Second Saturday – *pictured left*). This is becoming a popular event and gives opportunity to share the Gospel with those who may have not heard.

December's Admin meeting is also something of an event as the meeting is conducted over food and a good time of fellowship is shared. My thanks to Sheila Heron who provided a worth spread of food and to all who serve on this Committee.

All that remains is for me to wish you a blessed and happy Christmas and an anointed 2017. I do so by sharing below my Christmas message from the recent Connexional Magazine:

Hope for a troubled World

Israel, some two thousand years ago, was a country under Roman occupation. They suffered the imposition of heavy taxes, of foreign soldiers on their streets and the humiliation of very limited self rule. For a proud country these must have been troubled times indeed. But yet, there, in a village called Bethlehem, in a lowly stable, a child was born. A child who would offer hope in a troubled world, His name was Jesus. He was, and is, and forever shall be, the Son of God.

This baby Jesus is the one whom we celebrate at Christmas. Amidst all the tinsel, good food and greetings cards, it is the celebration of His birthday that gives real reason to the season. Some three decades later this same Jesus was sentenced to a criminal's death and He was crucified, died, and was buried. Yet, on the third day He rose from the grave, the chains of death could not hold Him, appearing to many, including those whom He loved and then, some time later, rose into heaven to sit at the right hand side of the Father. In this selfless sacrifice He illustrates to us what love, real love, looks like.

In this day and generation the world seems in turmoil. The old stabilities that we took for granted have so often given way to uncertainty and insecurity. Atrocities are seen on our

television screens that cause us to lament and even fear – Yet Jesus has not changed... He encourages us in the Bible to come to Him when we are weary and heavy with the burdens and worries we carry. He promises to give us rest and to refresh our spirit. If we don't already know Him, He promises us a new relationship and a new start. How do we come to Him? By prayer: that's just talking to Him, asking for His help, giving Him our thanks – you know His name – Jesus. Call on Him this Christmas time and you too will find that there is hope in a troubled World and light in the midst of the darkness.

As we move from Christmas, into a New Year, take courage – may we commit ourselves to truly “learning to love as God loves us”... Loving Him first with our whole being and daring to allow His love to flow through us that we might love one another, and those who are lost, with that same sacrificial love. .

May you know the blessing of God's peace this Christmas time and His provision in 2017.

Ken McDermott

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