



RBC Newsletter

January 2025

Dear Church Family,

Happy New Year to you all!

Firstly, Ian and I would like to say a huge thank you for the lovely Christmas gift you gave us. We were again overwhelmed at your generosity – thank you so very much!

A New Year always brings mixed emotions – excitement or maybe trepidation at what lies ahead; sadness or regret for things that have finished; relief at the start of something new; a fresh start perhaps; or the time for resolutions to do things differently this year. Certainly the uncertainties and national concerns about energy bills, the cost of living, the wars in Gaza and the Ukraine, and so on are not likely to disappear overnight as 2025 begins. But we have a God who knows the end from the beginning, who has our future in His hands, who has blessed us and carried us through all the difficulties and uncertainties of the past, and who promises never to leave us or forsake us in the future. If we hold tight to Him, and step forward into 2025 with our little hands firmly held in His big hand, we can trust that He will watch over us and guide us through. I love the words of the Minnie Haskins poem that George VI quoted in 1939, which are great advice for us all:-

“I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year,

‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.’

And he replied, ‘Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be better than light, and safer than a known way.’”

At our last worship service of 2024, a number of testimonies were shared about God’s faithfulness, guidance and provision that church members have experienced during the last year. A couple of people also mentioned how seeing a rainbow at a particular time had uplifted them and reminded them of God’s love and faithfulness. God’s provision of a rainbow was described in Genesis 9 as a sign of His covenant with Noah and with all generations. As we come to renew our covenant with the Lord and with each other this month, let’s be encouraged by this lovely sign that the Lord is always faithful to His promises - He is with us, and will continue to watch over us forever.

After the Christmas/ New Year break, most of the RBC regular activities will be returning to normal, although the Coffee Plus team will take their usual winter break until Easter. Here are some particular dates for your diary:-

The monthly **Saturday Prayers Zoom meeting** will take place at **9am on Saturday 4th**. Zoom details will be sent out in the usual way.

Our Annual **Covenant Communion service** will be on **Sunday 5th** – with an opportunity to renew our vows of service and commitment to the Lord and to each other.

The first **Encountering God** evening of 2024 will be on **Tuesday 7th at 7.30pm**. All are welcome to this lovely informal time of praise and prayer, and as usual, we will have no house-groups that week. House-groups will re-start the following week.

On **Sunday 19th** there will be a **United morning service at RBC**. Please come along and enjoy worship and fellowship with our brothers and sisters from the other congregations in Rye.

On **Sunday 26th, straight after the morning worship service**, is our first **Church Members' Meeting** of the year. Church members, please do book the date and make every effort to attend and play your part in discerning the mind of Christ as we discuss and pray together regarding decisions and plans for the coming year. Remember that well-known passage (1 Corinthians 12) about us all being different parts of the Body of Christ – if some are missing, then the Body doesn't function as effectively as when all are present and working together!!

Please note, there will be no Engage/Connect this month.

Looking forward to seeing what the Lord will do in and through RBC in this New Year.

May He continue to bless each and every one of you
as you serve Him both in church, and out in the world.

Your Pastor & sister in Christ,

Fiona