

Jan Blog

Dear Friends

Happy New Year! I hope your Christmas and New Year has been a time that has been refreshing and renewing. As we begin this new year there is so much to look forward to. On Sunday, Hannah Dunne and her team from CAP will be sharing some updates and we shall be using CAP foundation verses from Isaiah 61:1-3 where it says this:

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives.

How do these verses speak to you? How might God be asking you and your congregations to respond? These words are encouraging and challenging and help us go back to some of the basics of what we believe and what we are encouraged to do, and we shall be using some of these words in the coming weeks as we look at this great question:

What is God asking of us in 2025?

A great place that we are going to explore this question is at our Benefice vision day on Saturday 25th January 10 am-3 pm at St Martin's Church where it will be an opportunity to join all our different congregations together as ask this key question:

Over the day we are asking you to bring a plate of food as we shall share in a bring-and-share lunch. In the morning, we shall have some time to worship, I will share some of what I believe God is asking of us in 2025, and then we shall have time to discuss in groups. Then after lunch, I will share a little about the proximity of a charity in Manchester that is helping the local Church connect with their local community. Check out their website:

<https://www.message.org.uk/the-power-of-proximity/>

Throughout the day we shall offer children and young people sessions, and at the end of the day, they will share some of their hopes for us as a benefice. This day is important as this is a great opportunity to hear your voice and your hopes for us as a Benefice and hear each other's stories - so please do come along and invite a friend.

Alongside that, here at St Martin's we shall be hosting the Alpha course starting on 14th Jan. These first few weeks there is still plenty of time to invite someone to Alpha or even come with them. If you have never heard of the Alpha course, it is a great 10-week course where we get to explore the big questions of faith. This will be happening from 7 pm-9 pm at St Martin's Hall and from the 21st we shall be running youth Alpha in Cellars at St Martin's for anyone from year 6 running from 7 pm-8.30 pm. So let us know if you want to book anyone in; this is a great opportunity for us to be a blessing to join and share that hope of Jesus.

As we start this year a question for you to ponder and respond to is "What does bringing good news mean to you and who and where might God be asking you to do this?"

May God bless you, equip you, and fill you this new year.

God Bless

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