

Mike's message

Uncertain times

It's been a while since we entered a New Year with as many uncertainties as we do this time. Globally, nationally and locally there are so many balls in the air that even the most adept of jugglers would struggle to make sense of them. Can they all be safely brought in hand?



As I write this its 2nd January and hopefully still a few days before the news starts to be dominated by the things that were halted prior to the Christmas break. In all likelihood there'll be more confusion and uncertainty to come. Getting to the truth and trying to make sense of what we're told brings the old phrase "smoke and mirrors" to mind.

What are we to make of this, and how does it relate to our faith and calling as Christians?

Above all else the Christian faith is about love. God's love for us given unreservedly and unlimited. The gift of that love is called grace - Amazing Grace as the hymn proclaims. Amazing because it cannot be earned, nor does it need to be as it's already been given to us in Jesus Christ. A love, the light of which "shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it" (*John's Gospel 1 .5*) as we heard in our Christmas readings. A love that cannot be defeated, even by death.

In response to God's love, given to us without measure we are called to love one another. That is difficult at the best of times and, in times of uncertainty and division even harder. But let us seek to reflect something of God's love for us in our dealings with one another and especially with those with whom we disagree.

Back in 1939 the year came to an end in a time of danger and uncertainty. King George VI, broadcasting live on the radio on Christmas Day from Sandringham, included some words from a poem called 'God Knows' by Minnie Louise Haskins. It's believed that the poem had been given to him by his 13 year old daughter Elizabeth, the present Queen. It's words are still very appropriate as we enter 2019.

'God Knows'

*And 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 to you better than light and safer than a known way."
So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.
And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.*