

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY, 14th JANUARY, 10am–12.30: Exploring Christian Healing at St Luke's, Wolverton Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8JQ

WEDNESDAY, 1st FEBRUARY, 10am - 12noon: Memory Café in the foyer of Westbury Grange/The Limes, Westbury Lane

For dates of Lent courses and Lent lunches in March/April, see inside.

For up-to-date information on events and activities check our website regularly at

www.ctnp.org.uk

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, You make all things new
You bring hope alive in our hearts
And cause our spirits to be born again.
Thank you for this new year
For all the potential it holds.

Come and kindle in us
A mighty flame

So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God
And live forever to praise your glorious name.

Amen

(from www.lords-prayer-words.com)

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CONNECTIONS JANUARY 2017

Father, You are full of grace and complete forgiveness. Help me to walk forward from this day. Thank you that right now I can enter into a new dawn, a fresh start, and a new freedom. Amen

LETTER FROM A MINISTER

I am hopeless at keeping New Year resolutions. I find that the more rules I try to add to my life then the more I get tempted to break them! Life is difficult enough without adding more 'thou shalt nots' or 'I ought to do such and such' onto the list of how to live my life.

The key thing is to ask ourselves how we have changed or grown in our understanding of the world since last year? What can we explore in 2017 that maybe we've never really considered before?

One idea is to spend 2017 emptying your head and heart of unhelpful ideas about God and perhaps start all over again in trying to receive God's love for you and beginning a real relationship with God. This is a more exciting new start for the year than inventing lots of rules that you'll only be tempted to break!

We all break the rules from time to time but God's love for you is a constant given – like your love for your children who often break the rules but never lose your love for them. We were made to connect with God. A relationship with the God who became Jesus is more important in 2017 than taking on more New Year rules and regulations. If you do this then you can look back next year and say "wow what a fascinating year 2017 turned out to be!"

Rev Nick Evans, Rector of Newport Pagnell Benefice

Articles to the Editor, Beth MacKay

Preferably by e-mail to beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk Tel. 01908 612475

Copy Deadline - 20th of each month

EXPLORING CHRISTIAN HEALING

Since March 2016 a series of meetings have been held at St Luke's for those interested in finding out more. These meetings have been well attended, and included members from various of the CTNP churches and from further afield. During a meeting there is usually prayer and worship, a short Bible study, time for practice and a short presentation and discussion.

The next meeting (and the first of 2017) is scheduled for

**Saturday 14th January,
10am–12.30,**

**at St Luke's, Wolverton Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8JQ
ALL ARE WELCOME**

A Saturday morning meeting, especially for those who found it difficult to get to the previous evening meetings.

REQUEST FOR HELP FOR LENT LUNCHESES 2017

Lent Lunches 2017 to raise money for Christian Aid will take place at the URC Hall for six weeks from Friday 3rd March – Friday 7th April. Offers of assistance for this CTNP annual event are requested from ALL the churches in Newport Pagnell and from anyone in our community who has 2 hours to spare on a Friday, even if it is only for one Friday during the 6 weeks.

Time involved would be from 11.30am – 1.45pm. Tasks include, setting up and laying tables, stirring soup, making tea/coffee, serving tables, washing up, tidying the hall at the end of the session. This may sound like hard work, but working together as a team is enjoyable, and for such a good cause!

Please contact Jennifer Mazzone 01908 613088 to let her know if/when you are able to give your time, and/or contribute homemade soup, one or more Friday lunchtime.

Thank you!

Jennifer Mazzone

LENT COURSE FOR ALL CHURCHES TOGETHER

**Wednesday afternoons, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th March,
2.30pm – 4pm at Lovat Hall (Baptist Church) in Newport Pagnell**

**Friday evenings, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st March,
7.30pm – 9pm at the United Reformed Church in Newport Pagnell**

The purpose of the meetings is for the various CTNP congregations to meet together during Lent, to study together and learn from one another.

Come to one Wednesday afternoon or Friday evening meeting each week to take part.

Last year these meetings were based around films - this year they will be based around works of art. Each week the topic will be different.

CHRISTIAN AID – FOOD FOR CHANGE – BURKINA FASO

Let's start this with a **big thank you!** In mid-December we sent a cheque to Christian Aid for the sum of £1,224.15, which brings the total raised in the two years since we started the project to **£5,274.15**.

So we have reached our commitment target of £5,000. Gift Aid envelopes, where these were completed by donors, have been sent off to the Christian Aid processing centre. This will increase the funds raised by the Gift Aid tax relief refunded by HMRC.

We committed to raise £5,000 by 31 March 2017 so we are ahead of schedule. And remember that any funds we have raised in the committed period will be multiplied by 5 by the EU International Aid Fund. So to date, our £5,274.15 is worth **£31,650** to the Food for Change project in Burkina Faso.

We still have three months to raise even more for the project if any of you have events occurring in this quarter. So again, a big thank you to everyone who has supported this project over the last two years!

Paul Tolley, CTNP Treasurer