

## **A few words from the Vicar ....**

*Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God." (Revelation 19:9)*

So, it's January again. A new year, 2019.

A time for New Year's resolutions? Not for me. I have never seen the point of them. Why rashly promise to do something, knowing full well that you are unlikely to keep said promise in the cold light of day?

Having said that, early January, after the hustle and bustle of Christmas is over (although, technically, we are still in Christmas) is a good time to take stock, to review objectives, and pray for guidance about how to move things forward.

That's what I hope to do, and that's the nearest to a New Year's resolution you'll get from me!

I say 'hope' because I am writing at the end of November, and experience teaches me that a post-Christmas breather is not always possible for clergy. Anything can happen between now and when you come to read this!

But I am determined to do this so and, whatever crops up, I will devote some more time for prayer and reflection in early January. The paperwork can wait!

Prayer is an important part of my ministry. Therefore, before the busyness of Christmas kicked in, I deliberately carved out some time for a short retreat at Shepherds Dene (near Hexham). I did this to help me prepare for Advent and Christmas. And, I am glad I did.

Whilst on retreat, one of the things I began to ponder upon was the success of our new service, Mid-Week Praise. It only started in mid-October yet, already, more attend this service

than either our 8.00am or 6.30pm Sunday services (sometimes, more than both combined).

This is something to be thankful for. Revd Debra, who mostly leads it, has pulled together an excellent service. Clearly it pushes all the right buttons. Doubtless, in the months to come, your clergy will be reflecting upon the reasons for M-WP's success.

One of the drivers for M-WP's success is obvious though; news of the service is spreading by word of mouth. Others are being invited to come and experience it for themselves.

This leads me onto a question that is forming in my mind; a million-dollar question. Would attendance at our more established services grow if those who attend regularly invited others to come along? Well, I already know the answer to that question; yes, attendance would grow. Of course, it would!

So, get inviting.

But don't bother making a New Year's resolution to do so; don't make rash promises. Just do it!

Every Blessing

*Dave*