



The Lion

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's, Basford

www.stmarksbasford.co.uk



January 2026

The month of January is named after the Roman God Janus who is traditionally the God of beginnings, endings, doorways, gates and passages. So you can understand why at the beginning of the year, it's almost embedded into our psyches that we want to make new year resolutions, to have a fresh start, to live in hope of better things to come. Because despite our tendency to moan among some of us, (myself included) we are essentially hopeful creatures. As Alexander Pope said 'hope springs eternal in the human breast'.

Janus is often depicted as having two (and sometimes four faces), one looking forward, the other back. Often the ending of one year and start of a new one is the chance to look back, hence the popularity of programmes looking back at the previous year. Essential watching for myself and John was the Clive James review of the year which went on for decades sadly finishing in 2016.

Sometimes in order to make sense of the present we need to look at the past and hopefully learn from what we've experienced. So here's a brief backward look over 2025 at least in the life of St Mark's

Without a doubt the biggest bombshell was Father Tommy's announcement at the beginning of the year that he was leaving us after a comparatively short time with us.

tough on the church wardens, for Julie our reader and administrator and Pat Dunn who has served us valiantly in her priestly role for many years. But the Lord does provide, and through prayer and faithfulness of the people of St Mark's we have grown, if not numerically, in fellowship. The commitment of the church was shown in the large proportion of the congregation who came to Bishop Matthew and archdeacon Megan's visitation in September to share how they would like to see the future at St Mark's. And I'm sure I'm representing all of us in our gratitude for the visiting priests both on Sundays and Wednesdays, who have inspired and encouraged us on the present stage of our journey. I feel that through the help of those who pass through our doors and each other that we are creating a good base for when the right priest comes when we can continue our journey together.

So, we are standing at the beginning of 2026. What does this hold for us? I suppose the truth is that we don't really know but it's essential to stand firm together. At times it feels like the world is reeling around us including the C/E. But at the centre is the stability of our belief that God created the world and us in love; that he gave his only son in the most dramatic and awe-inspiring way taking on our human flesh with all its uncertainties and vulnerability. As the writer to the Hebrews says 'let us hold firmly to the

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faith that we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet is without sin (Hebrews 4:14,15). And finally, we have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit who instructs and guides us into all truth. I suspect each one of us will have a particular person of the Trinity to whom we pray be it Father, Son or Holy Spirit, but the important aspect is that it's to do with relationship. The relationship of the three persons and our relationship with each other through the Trinity.

So maybe 2026 could be the year when we back in God's love for us through the reading of Scripture, prayer and the joy of meeting with each other week by week

Blessings for the year ahead.

Janet

Worship Services during January

4 th	Epiphany	10.00am	Holy Communion
7 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
11 th	Baptism of Christ	10.00am	Holy Communion
14 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
18 th	2 nd of Epiphany	10.00am	Christingle Service
21 st	Christmas Eve	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
25 th	Conversion of Paul	10.00am	Holy Communion
28 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)

Crib Service Gifts:

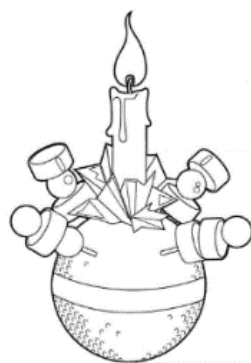
On behalf of 'Open Door' we would like to say a huge thank you to all those who attended the crib service and left a gift under the tree. Your generous donations of toiletries and gifts and chocolates will make a massive difference to so many people this Christmas time and New Year. Thank you.

Diary Dates for January

7 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group
17 th	Saturday	10.30am	Christingle Prep
13 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group
20 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group
27 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group

Early February Dates

3 rd	Tuesday	7.00pm	PCC meeting
4 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group
11 th	Wednesday	7:15pm	House group
15 th	Sunday	12.00pm	Parish Meal



Christingle Prep:

If you are free on **Saturday January 17th**, we will be preparing our Christingle oranges at St Mark's Church, in the vestry at 10.30am for our service the following day and would love some help.

House Group:

The House group will reconvene on **Wednesday 7th January at 7:15pm**. When we will be looking at 'The Great Prayers of the Bible'. For more information, please speak to Janet.



On behalf of myself, Rev'd Pat and Janet, thank you all for your many cards and best wishes.

We wish you all a blessed New Year. May the light which Christ brings into the world be our guide as we enter 2026. Julie