Clergy Letter: Our (Christian) New Year’s Resolutions.

I wonder how many years you have made New Year’s resolutions and by Epiphany they are already a distant memory. You will not be alone in finding it difficult to make changes. But Christianity is a ‘hope-filled’ faith, so in that spirit I would like to humbly offer some suggestions for your 2020 New Year’s Resolution list.

So how about these:

**Prayer**

1. A daily time of prayer and reflection. You might find talking to God to be very easy but sometimes it can be hard, so why not try simply sitting still for five minutes and wait for God to speak instead?
2. If finding five minutes peace, with your busy lifestyle, seems challenging, you may want to consider a Prayer App. **‘Pray as you go’** has been recommended by several people in the congregation. It is free and accessible here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/pray-as-you-go/id865934048>

**Bible Reading**

1. A discipline of daily prayer becomes even more relevant if you start by reading a passage from the Bible. I am very happy to suggest some ways to choose a daily reading or you might enjoy receiving suggestions via your email account: <https://www.bibleinoneyear.org/>

**Church Attendance**

1. Coming to church regularly has plenty of advantages: getting to know members of the church family better, enjoying the social aspects of community, but most of all, setting aside just one hour a week (out of the possible 168) to worship God – it isn’t too much to ask, is it?

**Stewardship of resources**

1. After Christmas you may feel that your bank account is sadly depleted, but as a ‘Christian discipline’ how much of your finances do you want to share in 2020? Some Christians believe that the first 10% of their disposable income is not rightly theirs at all but belongs to other people. January can be a good time to think about your financial priorities and see whether you are supporting charities, including your local church, to the best of your ability.
2. You don’t only have money to share, but each of us has unique gifts and talents that can only blossom when used to serve others. January can be time to do a personal ‘gift audit’. Are you using your God-given gifts and talents appropriately? Is it time to ‘stand down’ from a particular role to give others a chance to shine; or the time to offer your gifts that are currently underused?

**Christ-shaped Lives**

1. The most precious resolution of all, is to become a ‘copy-cat’. In other words, to strive to copy Jesus Christ and his example. We will never succeed completely because we are only human but even small steps can make a real difference to our own lives and the lives of those around us.

Resolutions require self-discipline and following Christ also requires certain ‘spiritual disciplines’. Like all discipline this is not an easy path, but the rewards can be literally ‘out of this world’!

Happy Resolving!

Your Rector,

Mandy