



Hello All,

A happy new year to you all. I hope you all had a brilliant festive season and that you are now well into and enjoying 2018. I want to take this opportunity to thank the many of you who supported the Christmas events and services which were hosted by the schools, parish councils, village organisations and churches in our communities. I hope you enjoyed the experiences and I hope you (at least) caught a glimpse of the true meaning of Christmas: the light in the darkness; peace and goodwill to all people through the gift of Jesus, given that we might live life in all its fullness and a sense of God's presence dwelling with us.

New Year often means change as this is traditionally a time of new beginnings – saying goodbye to the old and hello to the new. I wonder what changes 2018 might bring for us? Christianity is all about change and transformation: no one truly encounters the risen Jesus and remains unchanged. As we look ahead to Easter we see in the death and resurrection of Jesus, a God who is all about change: from death to life, from old to new, from captivity to freedom, from dark to light. I wonder what might change for me this year; I wonder, in hope and excitement what God will do in my life! This is what following Jesus is about, not the same old routines or a boring existence, but a vital, exciting, roller coaster ride, living life to the full and not knowing what God will do next but being expectant about what God has in store.

We will soon be approaching the season for the annual church council meetings for each of the Parishes. At these meetings, we review the past year and elect our church officers for the future. It is a chance to see the changes made and to seek where change might happen. Being the Church of England, these meetings are a legal requirement: part of the social fabric of our nation and therefore part of our identity. All residents (*whether you are regular church attender or not*) are able to be involved in these so long as you are on the Church's Electoral Roll (*this is different from the local civil electoral roll*). Being on the Church Electoral shows your support for your local parish church as well as giving you the right to vote on church matters. If you would like to join your church's Electoral Roll please do get in touch.

Belonging is important: whether that is to our families, our communities, our schools, our interest groups or even our Nation. The Church family can often be the place, in an uncertain world, where our belonging helps us to make sense of the changes in our lives and our world; and stays with us when our other belongings come and go. Another way to express our belonging to God and the Church Family is by being Confirmed. Confirmation allows us to affirm the promises made on our behalf at our Christening and is a sign that we have chosen to follow Jesus. Confirmation this year will be conducted by the Bishop of Hull on the 17th June and I will be running a short preparation course. If you would like to be confirmed, please do get in touch.

Yours in Christ,

Rev Andy Simpson