

# New Year - New Challenges

## Introduction

### Thanking for 2022

#### Tumultuous year

coming out of lockdown

War in Ukraine

Cost of living

Environmental Issues

#### Give thanks always

What was a blessing in 2022 for you?

What did you rejoice in / enjoy

What did you achieve

How did God help you with this

## Looking to 2023

### Challenges?

Health

Housing

Family

Finances

## Worries

The same as the issues of 2022, and new ones

## Blessings

New grand children?

Planned career changes

Studies

Other?

## Stand at the threshold

looking back and looking forward

with excitement or trepidation

## We are not alone

## Work of the Spirit

Jesus final discourse

△ John 16:1-15

Last Supper conversation

Helping the disciples to come to term with

his death

his resurrection and ascension

And that they need to transition from Disciples to Apostles

From followers to leaders

But they need help:

## Warnings

Kicked out of the Synagogues  
(Churches)

△ 16:2

Threat of being killed

△ 16:2-3

by those who believe that they worship God  
in this way

But they do not know the Father or Jesus

## The Holy Spirit or Advocate

### Paraclete

Helper, comforter, empowerer,  
companion, advocate, intercessor

all these things and more

### Work of the Spirit in this passage

#### 1. Replaces Jesus

△ v7

Needed as the Spirit can be everywhere  
and engage with everyone

Jesus in human form can only interact with  
people in his vicinity

#### 2. Prove the world wrong about sin, righteousness and judgement

Sin: not believing in Jesus!

△ v9

Righteousness: Jesus taught righteousness  
and challenged injustice. Now the Spirit will  
do that on his behalf

△ v10

Judgement: The ruler of this world (Satan) is condemned, and so are the practices he inspires

△ v11

### 3. Guides us in all Truth

△ v13

The Spirit speaks on behalf of Jesus who speaks on behalf of the Father

### 4. Glorifies Jesus

△ v14

The Spirit makes Jesus known as the Messiah the Son of God

## Apostles needed the Spirit

### Acts 2: outpouring of the Spirit

Birth of the Church

Mission of the church guided and driven by the Spirit

## We need the Spirit

New Year Prayer Focus

To invite the Spirit in our lives

And what he can do in our lives

And what he can do through us

## Mystery of God

He decides to work through human beings

Empowered by his Spirit

To do his will

That's why there is still a church after 2000 years

Even if we may despair about the state of the church in the UK / West

But maybe that is because we lost the sense of being lead by the Spirit

Spirit of power, love and self-discipline

△ 2 Tim 1:3-7

Expect to be changed

When you engage in prayer this week

Using the excellent resource that Alice W-S has written

Learning about the Spirit

Learning about people who were empowered by the Spirit

Remember that Jesus wants this for us all

Not for the Mary's, David's, Samuel's of this word

They were like us

Normal people - specially empowered

By the Spirit

He has this for you for me

## Timothy

Paul even urges Timothy

Who he thanked for

to be filled with Joy - Spirit empowered Joy

He reminds him of Timothy's faith

Rekindle the gift of Spirit

He has received the power of Spirit upon him

By laying on of Paul's hands

But Paul urges him to rekindle it - to rekindle it - to light it and to use it!

It is easy in our lives to do things in our own strengths

But we need to relight the Fire of the Spirit in us

## Spirit of Power, Love and Self-discipline

We need to discipline ourselves to be open and available to the Holy Spirit

It is an act of our will

a decision

We open the door to the Spirit  
to work in and through us

No one else - not even God

He will not invade us or over  
power us

He wants to be invited

## Methodist Covenant Prayer

That's why today I would like  
to pray the Methodist  
Covenant Prayer together

As an invitation to Jesus and  
his Spirit to use us

### Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me  
with whom you will;

put me to doing, put me to  
suffering;

let me be employed for you, or  
laid aside for you,

exalted for you, or brought low for  
you;

let me be full, let me be empty,

let me have all things, let me have  
nothing:

I freely and wholeheartedly yield  
all things

to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed  
God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

you are mine and I am yours.

And the covenant now made on  
earth, let it be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.

Are you willing to do so?

We have a worship song now

And then we say this together,

if you feel up to it!