

February 2022: Messages

Before Christmas last year (2021), the parish churches in Bradwell and Hope invited people to write their Christmas messages in playground chalk on the church paths. A huge 'Thank You' to everyone who took part. We were a bit washed out by the rain, but we had some lovely messages, and some beautiful drawings from Hope Pre-school. Even if you didn't take part last year, I really hope that you will join in at the end of this year.

Messages play an important part in our lives. We can probably all remember momentous, life-changing messages such as receiving news of the birth of a new family member, or the time when we heard of the death of a loved one. But there are countless, more 'ordinary' messages that are important too, such as the unexpected, hand-written letter or note from an old friend, that drops on the doormat and lifts our spirits. Or even simply the smile and 'Good morning,' from a neighbour or stranger, when we're feeling lonely.

The Bible is full of messages; from the world-changing messages of angels and visions (the word angel simply means 'messenger') for Mary, Joseph, shepherds and wise men, in the Christmas story we celebrated not all that long ago, to the simple invitation, 'Come and see,' given repeatedly in response to questions about who Jesus was or what he was doing. Jesus' last message to his followers, his so-called 'great commission,' was an instruction to them to be messengers too, to join in God's work of making his love for all known to all.

This month, I am going to try more to notice all the messages around me, and to give thanks for all the messages that help bind us together as communities. I will be trying too, to notice ways in which I can use messages, maybe just a note or a phone call, or a smile or a kind word, to brighten the lives of others around me. And my prayer is that you will want to do so too.

Yours in Christ,
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