

## JANUARY 2022 MWI ARTICLE

### ***GOD MATTERS FOR THE NEW YEAR***

The Christmas festivities are over, the Christmas Tree and the Decorations are now back up in the roof space awaiting Christmas 2022. The New Year has commenced with all the opportunities and challenges that it will bring.

There is a Christmas song that my church choir learnt called '**Christmas All Year Long**'. He braced the old ladder with all of his might/And shouted, 'Dad have no fear'./As I stretched high to store the stockings and trim/In the attic for another year./We were busily packing our Christmas away/While singing a carol we knew./When I heard my son in innocence inquire,/Do we store away Jesus too?/All year long -we must worship day by day/All year long – 'tis the season to obey/May the Christmas tree lights/And the sleigh rides at night/Remind us all to stay in God's presence/All year long./I smile at my boy as again I explain/God's longing to reconcile/How He gave to the world the gift of new life/When His yearning became Mary's child./Though surrounded by all of man's goods we embrace/The hope of that Bethlehem night/We will never store this blessed gift away/With the tinsel and coloured lights./All year long .....(author unknown).

Thankfully, we don't store Jesus away, but He goes with us into the New Year.

Some of you may know we have had our share of family bereavements in 2021 and at the end of October my twin brother died suddenly. Family bereavement shakes us to the core of our being and leave us with a great sense of loss and grieving. I am immensely grateful and humbled to know that God understands all our pain and loss and promises to heal the broken hearted. **The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in Spirit. Psalm 34 v 18.**

The Good News is that though I may feel discouraged, God is closer than I realise. He is always with me and can heal my heart. You may have gone through situations in 2021 too which have left you feeling crushed and broken hearted. May I encourage you to rest in the knowledge that we have a loving Heavenly Father who understands our pain and promises to be with us through these difficult times. I am reminded of the verse in **Revelation 21 v 4 "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or**

**crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”** We may feel alone during our time of heartbreak, but God’s loving hand is always near. We can rely on God, and he will help to bring healing to our broken hearts.

## A COVENANT WITH GOD

I personally am looking forward to a New Year being a time of renewal for me spiritually as I continue to live and witness to the good news of the gospel and the sustaining power that God provides for us his children. The Methodist Church Covenant Service is a great opportunity to renew our faith in God. The Covenant Prayer is not an easy read but it focuses us to stay in a relationship with God and to recognise that we are in a covenant with each other.

“We look back and thank God. We look forward and trust God.” (Anon)

Remember, we don’t store Jesus away, but He goes with us into the New Year.

***“Happy New Year”***

Joan Strong

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