

The Watford Word

www.watfordchurchofchrist.org

What's on

Today 04 January: 10:30 AM. Malcolm speaking. *Abraham - living by faith.*

Sunday 11 January: 10:30 AM. 10th anniversary service

Sunday 18 January: 10:30 AM. 18th: David -- living in hope. Malcolm speaking.

Sunday 25 January: 10:30 AM. Malcolm speaking. *Jesus - living a life of love.*

Sunday 01 February: 10:30 AM. Church service.

Sunday 08 February: Annual church meeting



Faith, Hope and Love in 2026

2026 has started! A new year and a fresh beginning are ours. But what kind of year do you want to have? How about living by faith, hope and love? Those three spiritual qualities are found in four places in the New Testament. It appears to be important.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." "...the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel." "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." "But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. (1 Corinthians 13:13; Colossians 1:5; 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8)

Therefore, our January theme is "faith, hope and love". We will learn about faith from Abraham, hope from David and love from Jesus. We start today with Abraham.

Living by faith with Abraham

Jewish theologian, Abraham Heschel, said,

"Faith is not clinging to a shrine but an endless pilgrimage of the heart."

Life teaches us this truth over and over again. We crave certainty, familiarity and predictability, but they get in the way of spiritual growth. We need our world to be disturbed, disrupted and dismantled. Abraham shows us how to respond to God's interventions.

Abraham was on a pilgrimage of faith. As we enter 2026, let us keep him in mind as we prepare for the next phase of our pilgrimage, personally, as families and as a church. Today, let's review two main ways Abraham sets us an example of faith.

1. Abraham sets off in faith

"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you." (Genesis 12.1)

"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going." (Hebrews 11:8)

Do you know where you are going this year? Perhaps so, but you will soon find God diverting you. It's important to hold onto him as he reprograms your life satnav. He knows the better way, even if it's longer, and the scenery is less pleasant. When you find his plans for you confusing or frightening, look to Abraham for an example of faith.

2. Abraham's faith is tested

"Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. Then God said,

"Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you...Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." (Genesis 22.1-2; 12).

"Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death." (Hebrews 11:19)

Abraham saw a miracle because he trusted God with the thing that was most precious to him in the whole world. In 2026, you and I will be tempted to hold things back from God. That's the way to spiritual dullness and drudgery. Instead, let's take inspiration from Abraham, give God our best and see what he does. Maybe we will see a miracle!

Abraham leaves a legacy

"I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me." (Genesis 22.16-18)

Abraham learned to cling to his God, and not his son. Our trials will inspire us to cling to our heavenly Father if we see them as opportunities to grow in faith. Abraham learned that God had his own better way of fulfilling his promises. Because of his faith, Isaac was miraculously born and became a blessing. The ultimate fruit of that event, many centuries later, is another miraculous birth - that of Jesus. An even greater promise for the blessing of all nations.

Let's encourage one another and pray for one another to live a life of faith in 2026.

Your brother, Malcolm

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