

Going from Strength to Strength – even in January!

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. (Psalm 84: 5-7)

January can be a grim month! Back to work after Christmas, dark days and early nights. Colds, sniffles and bugs, then the bills, renewals and invoices come in. There is not much going on in church, as Candlemas is not until February.

I like the psalms, as they are written from personal experience. This one is a belter and has been called one of the sweetest psalms. I suppose January could be a type of 'valley of Baca' or veil of tears, meaning a difficult time to get through. The psalmist encourages us to look for wells and pools of water even in the driest desert.

Many people have debt or other problems. Perhaps the church could set up a group to support members or look for local sources of advice, foodbanks or help.

January may be cold, costly and dark but there are things to look forward to: snowdrops, bulbs and days beginning to lengthen and at least the stress of Christmas is past!