



**In his New Year Message, Archbishop Justin Welby invites us to follow Jesus' example and take the risk of connecting with others.**

**The Archbishop recorded the message during a visit to Dover RNLI lifeboat station. It was first broadcast on BBC One and can be viewed on iPlayer [here](#). Read the transcript of the message below.**





*Archbishop Justin Welby recorded his New Year Message at the RNLI lifeboat station in Dover. (Picture: BBC)*

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution's station in Dover, part of the Diocese of Canterbury which I serve, faces the busy grey seas of the English Channel.

As we wonder how we are going to start healing some of the divisions that we've seen over recent years, the sort of people at this lifeboat station are signs of hope.

I've met some of the over 70 volunteers who are involved in keeping this station operational twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days a year. It's not just a group of people working together. It's a family.

The sea-going crew include a student, a train driver, a chef, an electrician.

The youngest is seventeen, the oldest is sixty-two.

When their pagers go off - day or night - they're prepared to risk everything to rescue whoever needs their help.

There are so many ways we can connect with others. It could be by joining a voluntary organisation or a charity. It may be sorting food in a food bank

Or joining a lifeboat crew.

When we hear someone described as a Good Samaritan, we think about that person taking the time to help another. But it's also a story told by Jesus about someone taking the risk of reaching out to another who was very different to them. Yes, the person needed help – but they also needed connection.

Christian faith doesn't promise us a comfortable life. Christ promises us hope, meaning, peace, purpose and joy – but not comfort! It's about following in the footsteps of Jesus, who took the risk of connecting with people who were separated from him.

We rightly think of lifeboat crews as heroic, although they may be embarrassed to hear that. Yet every time we reach out and connect with someone, it is an act of heroism. Don't underestimate it.

It could be someone you know. It could be someone you've always wanted to connect with but never have. It could be someone you really disagree with.

Let's go for a heroic New Year's Resolution. Let's resolve to reconnect. To reach out to just one person we don't know, or from whom we have



drifted apart.

Pick one person. Pick up the phone. Send them a text. Meet them for a cup of tea.

Make that connection. Let's begin cementing our unity one brick at a time.

For this new year – and this new decade – I pray that we find the hope offered in Jesus Christ.

May I wish you all a happy New Year.

3 min read

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