

## NEWS & CHAT

### Thursday 15 October 2020

Welcome to the joint weekly newsletter of Christ Church and the Bridgwater Drive Church.

**Sunday 18 Oct, 10am** service will be a **pre-recorded Communion** Service put out on the Christ Church FB page (and paper). The preacher will be Ruth Wilde, National Coordinator of Inclusive Church. **BDC** people – if you are planning to watch at the church (11am), please contact Margaret as usual.

**25<sup>th</sup> Oct**, will be on **ZOOM** – a short service, followed by a Q&A and discussion with Ruth about Inclusive Church. The Zoom link and password will be in N&C and emailed out by Sue and Margaret the day before. **If you are not able to Zoom, please contact Pat or Margaret, to arrange to watch the service and discussion at CC or BDC at 10am in the church building.** If you do not do Zoom, and want to ask a question, please send it to me or one of the Church Secretaries and one of us will ask it. This is a one-off special Zoom service, so please try to participate.

The Action on Climate Change Letter to the Rayleigh MP Mark Francois was signed by a number of people at church last Sunday. **If you would like your name added, please contact Sue** who will add it on your behalf before it is sent.

#### News

**Tuesday Church, 10.30am EVERY Tuesday** at the Bridgwater Drive Church, for a time of prayer and reflection, led by the Minister.

**Thursday Church, 10.30am EVERY Thursday** at Christ Church. Next week, **22 October, Bible Study** led by the minister. **29 October is a 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday, to avoid messing up our four-weekly system, I propose having a week off with no group meeting that day** (it's also Half Term).

**HOUSE GROUPS:** Next at the Church (**CC**), Monday **19 Oct. 1.30pm** Next **Zoom – Mon. 19 Oct. 7pm**  
See final page for the discussion question

#### Appeal for help from Penny – Christ Church Garden

Please can I have a couple of volunteers to help in the church **garden next Saturday, 17th, from 11am**. Richard S has kindly agreed to cut the car park hedge and Bob has kindly offered to bring his shredder, but, we need a couple more people. You would need to wear a face covering and you might be asked to take some of the 'rubbish' to the tip. You may need to bring your own drink, as none will be available at the church. **Please DO NOT just turn up. Contact Penny by phone 01268 750324 before Friday.**

The Moderator for the Eastern Synod of the URC, Revd Paul Whittle, will be leaving that post at the end of the year. He has been nominated to become Moderator of the United Reformed Church (URC) National Synod of Scotland for a three-year term.

CC People – if you would like a copy of the new **URC Prayer Handbook**, please contact Lionel - lpyror98@talktalk.net or phone 01702 540100, or 07904919952

Price incl p&p £5.49

Lionel can deliver if necessary.

Remember you can still get a copy of Naomi's Corona Poems – £5, raising money for church funds

**The food collected at Christ Church was delivered to the Todman Centre (Hopeworx) by Helen and Liz sends her thanks – it is very much appreciated.**

**CHILDREN'S SPACE – see attached Children's & Families News**

## DEVOTION

Extracts from Ecclesiastes 3:

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;



I don't know about you, but I'm getting pretty tired of the pandemic and the constantly changing restrictions. At the time of writing the Prime Minister has announced the new 'tier' system and by the time you read this, things will have probably changed again! (There is talk of the need for another full lockdown).

It seems that gradually, over the last four weeks, people have got more used to the idea of being back in the church building and I think some people think that we are now back to 'normal' or at least as normal as things are likely to be for months.

As I have said throughout the pandemic and lockdown, it will be a very long time before we get back to anything resembling normal. In fact, I'm not convinced we will ever fully get back to the way things used to be in pre-pandemic days. And maybe we shouldn't. Maybe we should take this opportunity to find new ways to do things. The ancients tell us there is a time for everything and that includes change. Change is uncomfortable; most people, including myself, don't like it much, and yet it is a fact of life. We cope better with change if we accept it and embrace it and thereby have some control over it than if it is thrust upon us. The pandemic and its accompanying restrictions have been thrust upon us, how we respond to it has not – we can shape it. We can choose to do new and exciting things, rather than just try to work out how we can do the things we used to do.

Do not be surprised if the government brings in new restrictions.

Do not be surprised if we have to go back to online services only.

Do not be surprised if Christmas services are very different this year and some things are cancelled.

Do not be surprised if your Christmas Day and who you spend it with is different and maybe not how you ideally want it to be.

Embrace the new things we will do this year.

Give thanks for what we do still have.

Be generous to those who are suffering the effects of the pandemic more than us.

There is a time to keep and a time to throw away – now is the time to throw away the idea that the rest of this year will be anything like any other Remembering, Advent and Christmas seasons you have ever lived through before!

## TIPS & IDEAS - From 64 Million Artists

You are invited to find, collect and get creative with 100 fallen Autumn leaves. You could take inspiration from the picture below - using different shapes, sizes, colours and textures to build a pattern. Or you could simply take inspiration from the colours and patterns of the season. What can you see from your window? What are the sights, sounds and smells that remind you of Autumn? Can you capture this in a sketch or poem? Can you capture this in food or drink?



## RESOURCES

New weekly reflections from St Paul's Cathedral: <https://mailchi.mp/7bf0faf5fa12/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-1352284?e=e30a1f608a> 'Clearing a path and letting go'

From the URC October News Update:

How does religious practice continue when people are apart? What is the long-term impact of coronavirus on religion and belief? Ed Kessler, Founder of the Woolf Institute, interviewed the Revd Neil Thorogood (outgoing Principal of Westminster College) and other religious and community leaders around the UK and posed these and other questions in *The Tablet*. Read the article here:  
<https://www.thetablet.co.uk/blogs/1/1583/connecting-in-a-time-of-covid>



## PRAYER CORNER

I invite all of you to set aside time daily to pray for our churches and members but also for the whole nation and world. I am praying 'live' with a short devotion every day, Monday – Friday, on the Rev Naomi Facebook Page, then shared with both church FB pages. Due to increasing other commitments, this may not now happen every day, but I will endeavour to do it most days.

This week, during Challenge Poverty Week, please pray especially for those living in poverty in the UK.

### Particular prayer requests this week:

Barbara and Richard

Michelle, Sophie and family

Bill and Jenny, friends of Phil T.

Audrey

Ernie H.

Gerry, Margaret and family

### A note on the Remembering Service:

This will be held as usual, at **3pm on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October at Christ Church**. A letter of invitation has been sent to those who have been bereaved in the last year. If you were not included in that letter but would like to attend the service, **please contact Jean** to ensure we do not exceed (Covid) capacity. People from Bridgwater Drive are welcome to attend also. The service will not be live-streamed or recorded, but the paper text will be sent out with the following week's N&C for anyone who may care to read/use it at home or pass it on to friends they know who might appreciate it.

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I include the House Group discussion question again, as the group that meets in the church was postponed to **next Monday (19<sup>th</sup>)**, when the Zoom group will also meet. The link will be sent out nearer the time.

### House Group Discussion – Rule 7 from Rutger Bregman's *Humankind* :

7. Avoid the news.

This needs unpacking a bit. I'm, a bit of a news junkie (though less than before) and I go along with the misquote of Bonhoeffer that we should have the Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other – in other words our faith should be relevant to what is going on around us, and if we don't keep up with the news how else will we know about topics like climate change that we need to do something about. BUT,

many people get their news from unreliable sources – social media, 'red-tops' (Daily Mail etc) which skew their view of the world. It also tends to generalise and stereotype people into groups and pit them against each other (particularly social media, which garners more interest and thereby more advertising income by promoting contentious content that people will argue about). Our appetite for news and media has been proven to be addictive and the people at places like Facebook and Google know that and take advantage.

Rutger suggests avoiding TV news (I'd make an exception for Channel 4 which does go in depth) and social media and read more nuanced Sunday papers with in-depth features. Think carefully about how you feed your mind. Find out if your usual paper is independent or who it is owned by; know its political bias.

What does this have to do with the Bible and faith you might ask? Well, you tell me! What do you think Jesus would do? There weren't newspapers, radio or TV in 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestine, but Jesus did speak out against the authorities – religious and the Roman Empire. And there are Bible verses about seeking the truth and it setting you free.... Discuss – as Christians how informed do we need to be?