

## NEWS & CHAT Thursday 12 November 2020

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

Due to the government-imposed lockdown, ALL services and meetings in both church buildings are suspended until at least 2 December. Sunday services will continue as before – live on the Christ Church Facebook Page at 10am and sent out in paper form weekly with News & Chat. Please note:

**Sunday 15 November, will be a Communion service, so please have the elements ready at home.**

**NO Tuesday Church, at Bridgwater Drive, or Thursday meetings at Christ Church until further notice.**

**House Group** – next Monday, **16 Nov, 7pm on Zoom** on an Advent theme. Link will be sent out nearer the time.

**Christ Church Christmas Appeal - Please send donations marked 'Christmas Appeal' to Keith by 29 November.** Since the church is now effectively closed it will be difficult to drop off items of food, so please send money donations if you are able as soon as possible. If you already have food items you planned to donate, please contact Helen to arrange collection.

This appeal is supporting Hopeworx and Home-Start. Here are a couple of short videos about the work of Home-Start you may like to watch (repeat from last week's N&C). If you have already bought any toys as part of the Christmas Appeal, please contact Joyce to arrange collection.

<https://youtu.be/kBwWxC3hrMU> – families' (client) stories

[https://youtu.be/48\\_erEhN0-g](https://youtu.be/48_erEhN0-g) - volunteers' stories

**ADVENT CALENDAR** – if you would like to participate in the Christ Church Advent Calendar please contact Naomi. **Just a few days now left available!** If you would like to take part in the Bridgwater Drive Church Advent Calendar please contact Margaret.

Nothing really to do with the church Advent Calendars, but my very talented sister made this one for her granddaughter. Maybe the sewers and knitters among you would like to make a church one for 2021?!

Just throwing out the challenge – there's not much else to do in the long dark nights of lockdown 2 !!



**URC online event:** Earlier this year we were very fortunate to be given a live presentation from Rev Dr Munther Isaac, Pastor at the Evangelical Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. Those who joined us for the webinar found Munther's words compelling, in the way he afforded us a powerful portrayal of the difficulties of life in the occupied Palestinian territories. Not everyone was able to attend the event in July, so we are re-running Munther's presentation on **Tuesday 17 November, 7.00 – 8.00 pm**. Additionally there will be time during the hour online to pose questions to a panel drawn from the participants of the URC's educational visit to the region last year. If you would like to register for a link to attend this fascinating event, please contact [carole.sired@urc.org.uk](mailto:carole.sired@urc.org.uk)

This cool link from Bob. You can select cities from around the world to see and hear what their streets are like during lockdown: <https://driveandlisten.herokuapp.com/>

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

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This week, **8-15 November, is Interfaith Week**. The aims of the week are to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

As we are in lockdown again, there is not too much we can do, and as far as I know, there are no Mosques, Synagogues or Hindu/Sikh temples in Rayleigh, though there are Muslim and Jewish communities in Southend and Canvey Island. But since Eid (a big Muslim festival) was severely disrupted by lockdown, and some people on social media have been asking why there is no mention of the religious festivals other than Christmas, I thought I'd mention some of the other religious festivals that happen at this time of year.

**Diwali**, the Hindu festival of lights, starts this coming Saturday – 14 November and usually lasts for five days. One of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, Diwali symbolizes the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Sikhs also celebrate Diwali.



**Hannukah**, runs from 10 – 18 December. This Jewish festival commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire. It is also known as the Festival of Lights and involves lighting one candle on the *menorah* every night until all are lit and eating special foods.

30 November is the birthday of Nanak, the first Sikh Guru. **Sikhs** celebrate by gathering at the *gurdwara* (temple) to hear sermons and sing hymns about his life.

## DEVOTION

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, try again.” Was that a phrase often trotted out by parents in anyone else’s home? It certainly was in ours! I agree, up to a point – one shouldn’t give up at the first hurdle, and after a fall it is good to get back on the horse, so to speak. But perhaps where I draw the line personally, is with art. I’ve always loved painting and drawing, and I was all signed up to go to art college, until I failed my Art ‘A’ level and decided that art probably wasn’t for me – I didn’t try again, I did something different instead. And I didn’t try art again until the last few years, because I tended to think if you paint a picture it should look like what you painted, and quite often, my attempts didn’t – or at least not to my satisfaction. There have been quite a lot of studies about how being creative (in any form, writing, photography, sewing, knitting, cooking etc) is good for our well-being, and that it doesn’t matter what the end result looks like, it is the doing it that matters. Which is true, and while I am painting, I forget about anything else, so in that sense it is very relaxing, but if you are frustrated by the result....

Last week, I watched *The Disordered Eye*. The programme was about artists with very restricted eyesight and some were completely blind and yet they created amazing art. They were not bound by what the result looked like, because they couldn’t see it, but they were compelled to share their experience of the world through art. One painter, Keith Salmon, a celebrated landscape painter, goes out into nature and listens to

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it and his paintings are about the experience of being out in nature, and yet his paintings do look like landscapes. (see his art here <https://www.thebiscuitfactory.com/collections/keith-salmon> )

Monet developed his very impressionistic style and strange colour schemes when he was almost blind with cataracts, and yet few would say it wasn't good art. One visually impaired artist (in the documentary) makes sculptures that also make sounds (mostly metal that is struck) and are designed to be touched by the 'viewer'. (more here if you are interested: <https://www.aaronmcpeake.com/> ) Notice how most art exhibitions have 'do not touch' signs? They are only for those with good vision – what about everyone else?

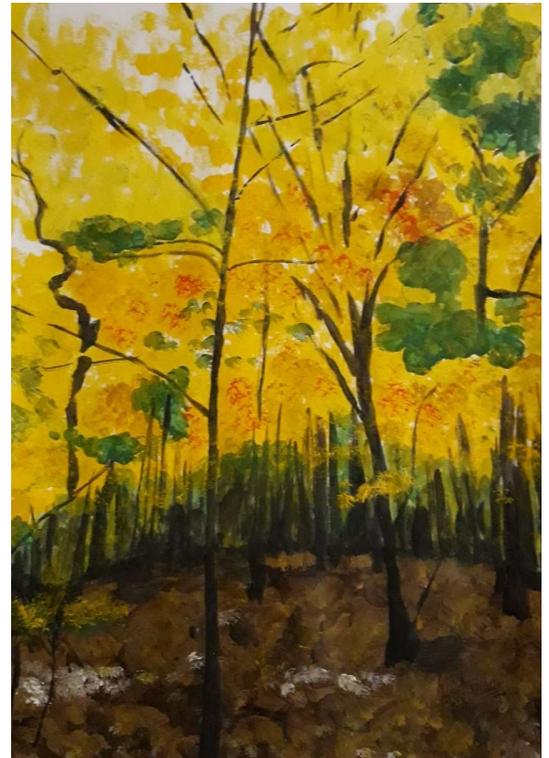
So what is my point? It is – keep trying. Even if you think you are not good at something, if you enjoy it, if it brings you or someone else pleasure, keep doing it, simply for the joy of doing it – don't worry about the outcome or the result. As we enter another lockdown that will be more inside and more in the dark than the first one, release your creativity!

## TIPS & IDEAS

I hope Della won't mind me sharing her idea – she said she's been cutting out pictures of trees from magazines and sticking them up in her kitchen, so she has the outdoors, indoors. The autumnal trees are still amazing, so why not do the same? Or, take pictures, make pictures, write poems or psalms about trees, autumn colours, nature in general. Even if they don't turn out quite how you imaged (like this), enjoy the process. →

This week's #64MillionArtists challenge is on a similar theme: The Being Human Festival (12-22 Nov) is led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy. Learn more here: <https://beinghumanfestival.org/us/>

Capture somewhere **in nature** that feels special to you. It might be somewhere that brings back memories, it might be somewhere you know really well - or it might be somewhere you've never been, but would love to go! The Being Human team is interested in what it is that attracts people to certain places or things. From an ancient tree, to a secret garden, to a mountain - how will you capture your favourite places? You could write a poem, a short story or a song, or you could draw, collage or take photographs.



Painting by the Minister from a photo of Belfairs Wood.

And we received this message from Della:

"Dear Naomi and Elders,

Thank you so much for the flowers Judy brought me when I was feeling 'under the weather'. I'm sure the golden chrysanthms will be with me to brighten my days for many days to come. It means so much to be part of such a caring church.

Della Bearman."

## RESOURCES

New weekly reflections from St Paul's Cathedral: <https://mailchi.mp/7803f0e5fd61/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-1361876?e=e30a1f608a> 'Remembrance'

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## 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. At this time of year, we pray particularly for those who have been bereaved and who mourn and this week for the Armed Forces, all those who have died in conflict, and for peace. This week we also pray for interfaith relations.

The overall prayer theme for Christ Church for November is 'vision'. In particular for next week it is: **Vision for our church.** What is the vision for our church? Where does our church fit in Jesus' healing, saving, reconciling, restoring work in our town? Please pray for our minister and elders as they lead us forward in fervent prayer and purpose to discern and fulfil God's vision for us together.

Please pray for the congregation and Elders and Tatenda the Minister at **Budiriro** that they continue to remain safe and well. We have received this message from Tatenda:

"The Corona virus situation here is not bad, cases are on the decline, maybe because we are in summer. The government is now allowing a maximum of 100 people for church services. It is sad that the Corona cases there are on a rise and the lockdown has been tightened up. We will continue to pray for you. The borehole is functioning well, but our crops are not doing good. We realised we need someone with more expertise and we were also advised to do drip irrigation, so we are planning to take that route next year. The congregation is doing well, but we lost one of our elders Lesley Magombo who died in a car accident last week. Please remember his family in your prayers. Shalom, Tatenda

### Particular prayer requests this week:

Barbara and Richard

Bill and Jenny, friends of Phil T.

Audrey

Sandra (BDC)

Please pray for Paula and Susan and all the family, following the death of Paula's grandma, Susan's mother.

Les, Sandy's dad

Michelle, Sophie and family

Janet (BDC)

### A poem sent in by Laurie at Bridgwater Drive:

#### Memories

Memories are not old,

They're young and fresh and clear.

Yesterday is far away

But memories are near.

Things around you might just fade

But your past is bright and shining.

You wander down a happy road

Toward that silver lining.

Your younger self you see ahead

and old friends stand beside you,

Your memories hold you by the hand

So let your memories guide you.



*Laurie Greenwood*