

NEWS & CHAT Thursday 5 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 (with one exception, see below) and sent out in paper form weekly with News & Chat. Please note:

Sunday 8 November, Remembrance Day Service at 10.45AM will be live-streamed from Christ Church on the CC Facebook page and will include the act of Remembrance with the 2 minute silence and Last Post (**no congregation**). For the safety of all, and for better sound quality, the remaining Sunday services during the lockdown will be live from the Manse on Sundays at 10am (and then available to watch at any time after the service ends).

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

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 or one of the Elders 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:

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

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. If you would like to take part in the Bridgwater Drive Church Advent Calendar please contact Margaret.

Christmas reminder (for Christ Church):

Please send **Christmas greetings for the Church News** to Sue, John or Mark by **10th November**. Donations this year will go towards Church funds.

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER !!





Penny & Phil's coffee and cake for the Rayleigh Combined Churches Refugee Group.

On behalf of RCCRG may I take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to everyone who supported our virtual coffee morning last week. We raised a staggering £655. Your generous donations will enable us to continue with our projects over many more months. Once again thank you! Penny

DEVOTION

Ever have that feeling of déjà vu?! Here we are in 'lockdown' again! A month in which we can do little but wait in queues at supermarkets and go for walks, should provide us with plenty of time to read and contemplate the Bible and there find solace in the experience of the Israelites. Several books in the Old Testament (Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, to mention just some) tell of the cycle of disobedience, exile, and repentance that the Israelites go through for years.

You think you have it bad with repeating lockdowns and ever changing rules and restrictions – at least you weren't enslaved, wandered 40 years in the wilderness, were sent into exile, had your capital and main Temple destroyed.... and then were told by endless prophets that it was your fault because you disobeyed God! Of course one can always take either the 'woe is me' view or the grateful optimistic view of most situations, but the overriding intent of the prophets who bashed the Israelites over the head with their disobedience (or variations thereof – Jeremiah for example, has a good moan at organised religion and the priests not following the spirit of the Law, and making a mockery of Temple worship) was to flag up the faithfulness of God. There was a God who was always with them, even when they got it wrong and did the wrong thing. God kept the covenant whatever they did, over and over and over. (Frankly, I would have given up on them after the Golden Calf episode...!)

Life brings ups and downs, in individual lives, in the lives of nations, even in the life of the planet. Faith isn't the hope that nothing bad will happen to you; it is the belief that God will be with you, feeling your pain, through the good and the bad.



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

TIPS & IDEAS – Bonfire Night

Since there are no big, organised firework displays this year, perhaps you would like to make your own firework picture. There are various ways to do this. Here are two options:

- Use wax crayons to cover a piece of paper with bright colours, paint over it with black, then scrape off the paint to reveal coloured firework shapes
- Put blobs of runny paint on a piece of paper and blow the paint with a straw to make firework shapes.

Or perhaps there are things/situations you would like to metaphorically put on a bonfire and/or blow up! Here's an example from the Minister:



RESOURCES

New weekly reflections from St Paul's Cathedral: <https://mailchi.mp/8e52b9fb9ce1/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-1357500?e=e30a1f608a> 'Remembrance'

This week there are two TV programmes about disability that look good (though at least one will be before you receive this newsletter, but there is always iPlayer!):

Wed. 4 November 9pm, BBC Four – *The Disordered Eye* – good eyesight (or not) and art

Thurs. 5 November 9pm BBC Two – *The Frank Gardner Story* – the BBC correspondent explores what it is like to suddenly become disabled.

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.

The overall prayer theme for Christ Church for November is 'vision'. In particular for next week it is: **Vision for our leaders.** Our world needs leaders with a vision for the future that extends way beyond their term of office. Our world needs leaders with a vision beyond Covid and the monetary economy, to a vision for the rescue of our entire planet from environmental and social catastrophe.

From Bar'N'Bus – “Our work continues to grow in Rochford, Castle Point and Basildon as we engage and support young people in the community and through our schools. We are pleased to have Meg join us for the year as a gap year student volunteering and training in youth work. **Please pray for our ongoing developments** – for develop school relationships, new programmes, for the team and for the young people we work with.”

Please also pray for Sandy and the work of XL Mentoring, especially as we enter another month of lockdown.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Barbara and Richard
Chris, a neighbour of Judy C
David – Bill and Beth's son
Les, Sandy's dad
Sandra (BDC)
Janet (BDC), following the death of her nephew Michael



And finally, there have been a lot of new words created during the pandemic, here's one doing the rounds on social media this week. And the new 2020 emojis have been released!!

Coronacoaster

noun: the ups and downs of a pandemic. One day you're loving your bubble, doing work outs, baking banana bread and going for long walks and the next you're crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don't even like.

