

NEWS & CHAT Wednesday 23 December 2020

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

A short News & Chat this week, to make sure you have all the information for Christmas services and the first Sunday in January. There will be no News & Chat next week as the Minister is on annual leave. Thank you for all the feedback – News & Chat will continue in 2021, at least until we can get back to something more like ‘normal’ and after that we may see how it can continue in a shorter form, maybe combined with what was ‘What’s On’ (CC) and the weekly News sheet (BDC) as quite a few people who are more/mostly housebound have said they enjoy it and it helps them to feel connected.

It was previously agreed that the churches would close again for Sunday Worship due to us being in Tier 3. We had planned to make an exception for Christmas Eve (BDC) and Christmas Day (CC) but due to the introduction of Tier 4 measures this cannot now happen. All the planned services will still go ahead but online and text only. (and audio CDs for those who usually get them)

CHRISTMAS IS NOT CANCELLED, IT IS ONLY DIFFERENT!

The text of the services for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Sunday 27th will be sent out with this N&C. And the text for 3 January in the week beginning 28 December.

Christmas Eve:

The Minister will lead a short, more reflective **Communion service**. This will be live-streamed on the Christ Church Facebook page. (I realise now that the services are all online, this is a lot of Communion services!, but the 20th was to be the first in-person communion for the BDC, and it felt appropriate to have communion on Christmas Eve. There is no obligation to partake if you do not wish to.)

There is a URC prepared **Midnight Communion** Service. You can listen online using this link:
<https://soundcloud.com/andy-brunston/urc-daily-devotions-christmas-eve-midnight-communion-the-revd-dr-kirsty-thorpe> Or, a CD will have been delivered to you.

Christmas Day:

The Minister will lead a short service online at 10am. This will be live-streamed on the Christ Church Facebook page.

Sunday 27th December. There will be no service in either church building or online. A text only service, prepared by Ian Miller, will be sent out for use at home.

Sunday 3rd January 2021 There will be no service at Christ Church. The Minister will live-stream a service on the Christ Church Facebook page at 10am.

Other Christmas services on TV:

Sunday Worship on BBC1:

Sunday, 27 December - at 9.10am
Christmas Eve – BBC2, 5.30pm Carols from King's



The churches of Rayleigh have produced an online **9 Lessons & Carols**, featuring a children's message from Sandy. Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/JwbHsle58ng>

NO Tuesday Church, at Bridgwater Drive, or Thursday meetings at Christ Church at least while we remain in Tier 4/Tier 3.

If you would like to give a gift in memory of **Celia Elliott** (Peter, former minister's wife) – the designated charity is Guide Dogs for the Blind, but you can send it to Keith, and he will arrange the payment.

Christ Church, Rayleigh (CC) and the Bridgwater Drive Church (BDC)

CHURCH ADVENT CALENDARS

Look out for each new picture in the windows and doors of the church, and check the **Latest News** section of the website daily for the revealing of the new day, where there will also be a sentence of explanation if necessary: <https://christchurchrayleigh.org.uk/category/news/>

Bridgwater Drive: <https://bridgwaterdriveurc.org.uk/>

On Christmas Eve, a collage of all the Advent Calendar Days will miraculously appear on both websites (minister's technical skills permitting!!)

RESOURCES

The last weekly reflection for Advent from St Paul's Cathedral by The Revd Dr Carys

Walsh: <https://mailchi.mp/a19950236f4d/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-1375512?e=e30a1f608a>

#ResetTheDebt video message: https://youtu.be/F3f_npiA5Pw

Is the money we spend bringing comfort and joy to those who need it most? Or is it fuelling inequality, injustice and climate change? Inspired by Mary's Magnificat, our friends at ECCR have thought about the principles Mary might use when shopping at Christmas. <https://youtu.be/ZjmSg3Eej74>

A nice Christmas message: <https://kanaan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/In-spite-of-everything.pdf>

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.

This week's (CC) prayer theme (each week in December is from a different Gospel): **John**. John states categorically that Jesus is THE Word of God, and that word is LOVE, love that comes to do whatever it takes to reconcile us to Himself, love in person, love for you and me, love that dies for us, rescues us, sets us free to live in that love. Pray with thanksgiving for this precious, indescribable gift.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Sheila	Della - as Alan slipped away peacefully on Monday
Emma, Gill M's niece	Family and friends of Merle Carter
Malcolm, a friend of Di	
Family and friends of Ernie Lane	

The funeral service for Merle Carter will be held at Southend Crematorium on Monday 4th January at 1.20pm. Because of the current Covid restrictions a limited number of people have been invited to attend the service. However, if you have not received an invitation but would like to follow the service online, the details are as follows:

Website: <https://www.obitus.com/>
Username: Teho8313
Password: 724992

A poem from Laurie at BDC

Light and dark, light and dark,
Blackest night, brightest spark,
Deepest gloom or candle light,
Silver stars on Christmas night.

Moon reflects on winter snow,
From a window candles glow,
In the murk the travellers know,
They will soon be home.

Light and dark, light and dark
In our minds and in our heart,
But the darkness takes to flight,
In the glow of His pure light.

Doors now open welcoming all,
Weary travellers who might call,
Let Christmastime still be that door,
That welcomes you all home.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR



Help love find
a way this
Christmas

And because you can't have too many humorous pet pictures this time of year...



Christmas cookies?

