

## NEWS & CHAT Thursday 29 April 2021

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

**There will be no activities in either church building as we continue in national lockdown, including Sunday Worship which will continue online, live-streamed on the CC Facebook page, and text circulated with the weekly News & Chat.**

**Pending a revised Risk Assessment and government announcements, we are hoping to re-open for Sunday Worship at Christ Church on 23 May, but we cannot confirm this until nearer the time. Bridgwater Drive would re-open at the same time.**

The same rules as last time the church was open will apply:

- Social distancing, which means a capacity of around 30 people (CC) and 12 (BDC) so you will need to 'book' a place with Pat Botfield or Margaret
- Face coverings need to be worn inside
- No congregational singing
- No socialising inside the building or in the area outside the door

The Minister will be on annual leave 26 April to 9 May and attending the Synod Minister's Spring School (online) 17-19 May, so here is a summary of worship details:

**Sunday 2 May – All Age**, pre-recorded service led by Sandy, on Facebook at 10am

**Sunday 9 May – Christian Aid Week** live service led by Robert, on Facebook at 10am

**Sunday 16 May** live service led by Robert, on Facebook at 10am (due to Naomi being busy 3 days the following week).

**Sunday 23 May – Pentecost, Communion, Ordination and Induction of Elders** led by the Minister, at Christ Church and live-streamed on Facebook.

Next week (Thursday 6 May) Phil Gendall will guest edit N&C. If you would like anything included that week, **please email Phil – [phil.gendall@talktalk.net](mailto:phil.gendall@talktalk.net) by Monday 3 May.**

### NEWS:

**Christian Aid Week 2021 starts on 9th May** and will focus on the impact of climate change on communities in Kenya.

#### **Christian Aid Week Frugal Lunch - Sunday 9th May**

To mark the start of Christian Aid Week you are invited to join together for a frugal lunch (soup and a roll etc) on Sunday 9th May from 12.30 to 1.30 which will take place on Zoom. The joining instructions will be circulated next week. This will be a chance to find out a bit more about Christian Aid and for you to donate to support their work if you would like to. If you think you may like to join the lunch, please can you let Robert know on [robert.dart@talktalk.net](mailto:robert.dart@talktalk.net) or 01268 781258.

**This event is for anyone from BOTH churches.**

**Needles and Natter** - We are coming back! Unfortunately, we can't meet indoors but we will meet, weather permitting, at **10.00 on Thursday May 13th in King George's Park**. We will natter near, or at, the picnic tables. I look forward to seeing you there and hearing about articles you have made during lockdown. Joyce

**Tools With A Mission** - As lots of people have been clearing out during the pandemic perhaps you have garden tools, sewing machines etc for this excellent organisation. If you have an item you would like to donate please contact **Wendy Norris** in the first instance and we will work out when and how items can be collected.

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

**How Change Happens 'house group' sessions will start on Thursday 13 May for 6 weeks, at 7.30pm on Zoom - link and more details to follow, but please hold the dates.**

"Have you ever wanted to make change but don't feel like you know enough to try? Perhaps you've recognised the biblical call to social justice but aren't sure how to put it into action? Or maybe you've been involved in campaigns in the past and are keen to be more effective going forward? Then we hope this resource will prove useful to you."

Session one will explore some of the theology around faith and politics, but the main thrust of the series will be practical – exploring how we can create change within our political structures and be more effective in campaigning about the things we care about – the environment, poverty, social justice...

I mentioned awhile ago, that for our next 'house group' series we will be using this JPIT resource. It is very interactive with group activities and has been specially designed for use via Zoom. **We really hope more people than the usual house group members will attend.**

**This event is for anyone from BOTH churches.**

### **Some items from - The newsletter of Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT)**

- In March, the UK government announced its intention to increase the number of nuclear warheads in the UK's stockpile. Many of our Church Leaders spoke out collectively to say that this policy 'takes us in a worrying and wholly wrong direction.' You can read a statement from church leaders here: <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/statement-from-church-leaders-on-the-uk-government-announcement-on-warhead-numbers/>
- Remember next Thursday, 6 May, is election day (local). You can look at the JPIT election resources here. <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/elections/>
- A reminder of the Reset the Debt campaign – if you haven't yet signed the petition or written to you MP, please consider doing so - <https://resetthedebt.uk/>

Pray with the JPIT:

Gracious God,  
In an economic system which has winners and losers,  
give to our leaders the grace to work together for good:  
especially the good of the poorest and most marginalised,  
the hungry and the homeless,  
the vulnerable and oppressed,  
the hurting and the exploited.  
We pray for encouragement for those who are worried for the future,  
and for compassion amongst those who can transform the present.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **TIPS & IDEAS**

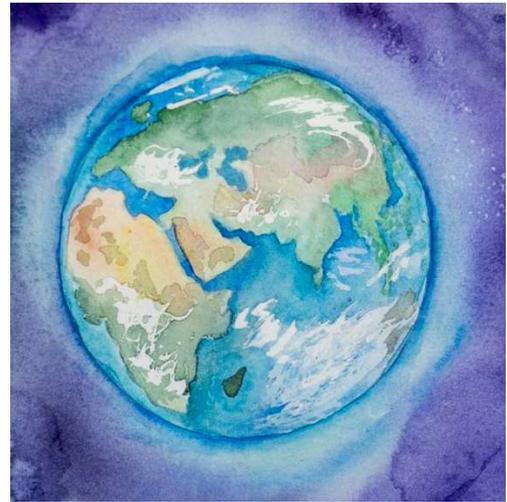
The Faith in Action Group (CC) hope to bring you some personal activities for environmental/ecological support in the coming weeks. There are lots of practical 'how to' guides for the garden here - <https://www.essexwt.org.uk/actions> I'm sure you haven't exhausted the ideas yet, so am including the link again!

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## DEVOTION

Following on from Earth Day last week another prayer for creation from <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet>

Father of creation, we thank you for all that you have made;  
For the joy and glimpses of you we find in nature's beauty,  
For the variety of all you have provided through its resources.  
Help us to tread lightly and use wisely, Valuing the needs of others, and of creation, above our own desires. Challenge us where we need to change our lifestyles,  
Convict us when we need to speak out on behalf of a voiceless people, or community  
And soften us where we have stood in judgement of others.  
Father in your mercy, change us and use us  
For the restoration of your world, and the protection of all your children. Amen



## 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. **There will be no daily prayer 26 April – 9 May.**

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Onwards** – As we near the time we are able to meet 'in person' again, we read the Lord's words in Isaiah 43: 18, 'Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past'. In the past our church has ministered to many people in myriad ways the love of God. And now we are looking forward, seeking in our prayers and meditations to discern and enact the path God has for us NOW, from this time forward. Lot's wife looked back and missed the blessings of God, let us not do likewise in either our thoughts, prayers, or ideas.

### Particular prayer requests this week:

Barbara, Richard and family

Della

Irene

Brian, Jenny C's brother

We pray for Gerald, following the death of his sister Molly

New elders elected at last week's AGM.



Congratulations and Happy Birthday to Irene Church who will turn 95 on 1<sup>st</sup> May

