

NEWS & CHAT Thursday 3 June 2021

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

Both churches are now open for Sunday Worship, with restrictions. While the online service will remain 'joint' each church will have its own service as pre-pandemic. For the foreseeable future, the online service will be live-streamed from the church where the minister is leading, but always on the Christ Church Facebook page as it has been from March 2020.

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

- Social distancing, which means a capacity of around 30 people (CC) and 12 (BDC). Please 'book' a place with Pat Botfield (01245 320212, pat.botfield@btinternet.com) or Margaret.
- Face coverings need to be worn inside
- No congregational singing
- No socialising in groups of more than 6 inside the building or in the area outside the door

We continue to wait for announcements from the government about further relaxing of rules which may allow more church activities to resume. The Elders will make a decision when the time is right based on government guidelines and advice from the URC Moderators. Please continue to be patient and act with caution. (My sister-in-law, despite having had both vaccinations, has been very ill with Covid19. Please remember that the vaccines do not make us 100% invincible!)

Sunday 6 June (Environment Day) the Minister will lead the service at Christ Church and the service will be live-streamed from there at 10am on Facebook. Margaret will lead the service at Bridgwater Drive at 10.30am.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY is celebrated every year on June 5th.

The day is observed by United Nations to encourage worldwide awareness and work towards improving the environment. Every year responsibility is given to a different country to host the event. This year Pakistan is hosting it and the theme will be ecosystem restoration, with a special focus on creating a good relationship with nature. In the Global Climate Risk Index annual report 2020 Pakistan was placed in 5th spot of countries most affected by climate change between 1999 to 2018. Climate change and the melting glaciers of the Himalayas pose a huge risk of extreme weather events like droughts, rainfall and flooding in Pakistan.

In 2014, the government of Pakistan began a massive afforestation drive through a 'Billion Tree Tsunami'. The ambitious project included restoring mangroves, increasing forest cover, and planting trees in urban settings.



Tearfund Day of Prayer for the Environment:

To mark World Environment Day Tearfund are inviting people to join in a national day of prayer.



You can take part in Prayer in the Park by going out into nature to pray in a local green space, beach, or park on Saturday, June 5. Do whatever works for you – whether that's sitting in your garden or going on an adventurous hike, praying alone or with others (making sure to follow coronavirus restrictions). If you would like to use their resources for the day, you can download them here:

<https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/reboot-campaign/prayer-for-the-climate/prayer-in-the-park>

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

Please contact Sandy (07511 950633 or email) if you would like to help out with the **Baby and Toddler Group** which has started on Monday mornings.

TIPS & IDEAS

This week's idea from #64MillionArtists is provided again by the mental health charity CALM:

Familiar/Unfamiliar: Think about the things that bring you comfort or feel familiar. Maybe it's your daily routine, visiting a particular place in your local area, or it could be an object - the cup you always choose to drink from, t-shirt you like to wear, or food you like to eat.

How can you capture the familiar in an unfamiliar way?

If you always eat fruit you could create a drawing but mix the colours up, so the bananas are blue and the oranges are green! Or you could write a poem about a regular place you visit, but from the perspective of a bird that might fly overhead, or take a photo from a different angle of your usual line of vision.

Maybe reflect on the aspects of Sunday Worship that bring you comfort – well-known hymns, chatting with friends, sitting in the same place...

How could you see things from a different perspective?

Maybe from the point of view of someone younger (or older), or who is newer to church, someone who can't get to the church building...

Shouldn't the top priority be praising God? If so, how can we do that in a way that includes as many people as possible?

Maybe worship shouldn't be comfortable and familiar? Jesus came to shake things up, to bring in the kingdom of God, and that meant changing the status quo!



How Change Happens 'house group' sessions continue on Thursdays at 7.30pm on Zoom. All sessions will be led by Naomi.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8334513513?pwd=OTN1UjFhZiNwQlF3OTZheUlwbDRUQT09>

Meeting ID: 833 451 3513

Passcode: 112886

This event is for anyone from BOTH churches

Session 4 (tonight) Where does change happen?

Discussion questions:

A selection of the questions (not all of them work here if you are not attending the course!):

1. Read **Acts 17:16-21**. We see Paul engaging in the market place as well as the Areopagus, the council in the city of Athens. How do these locations interact? How does Paul move between them and how does he act in each of them?
2. A key observation in the case studies [Climate Coalition, Christian Aid and the World Bank] is that campaigners often spend years collaborating with stakeholders. How can this be sustained? How could you start to build relationships with key individuals in these arenas?
3. Think of a change that you want to see happen, which arenas would you need to be engaging with as you work towards influencing change?

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RESOURCES

Reflections for May from St Paul's Cathedral by Corin Pilling, who is the UK Director of Sanctuary, equipping the Church to support mental health and wellbeing.

<https://mailchi.mp/65ccb1778901/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-8251012?e=e30a1f608a>

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 we pray especially for Barbara's family

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Children.** As lockdown eases, we pray for parents of very young children anxious about the social development of their little ones as they begin to mix with lots of people, maybe for the first time. Please also pray for the healing of those youngsters you know who have mental health/behavioural issues resulting from lockdown.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Della
Brian, Jenny C's brother
Tim, Bob W's nephew
Beth
Joy

Audrey
Peter C
Irene
Eve
Rachel S & family

Donations in memory of Barbara - for HARP. (<https://barbaraburrell.muchloved.com/>)

HOLD THE DATE – Sat. 17 July 2-4pm at Christ Church, Revd Nigel Uden (former Moderator of General Assembly) will lead a session on prayer, incl. how to lead prayers of intercession.

A beach with rubbish, made from rubbish, for Environment Day

