

NEWS & CHAT Thursday 17 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

The government has announced that the current restrictions will continue for at least another 4 weeks until 19 July, please be patient and continue to observe the rules. We hope that after that, the remaining restrictions can be lifted, but it is not up to us!

Sunday 20 June Gwyneth will lead worship (Communion) at Christ Church at 10am and the online service on Facebook will be live-streamed from there.

Margaret will read the CC service at Bridgwater Drive at 10.30am (in person, not on the screen)

The Minister will be leading an 'away day' with her former placement church in Northwood Hills.

NEWS:

"Needles and Natter" next week, on Thursday 24 June, will meet in King George V park, by the picnic tables from 10a.m. weather permitting.

This week is Refugee Week. Please pray for refugees.

The theme of Refugee Week 2021, 'We Cannot Walk Alone', is an invitation to extend your hand to someone new. Someone who is outside your current circle, has had an experience you haven't, or is fighting for a cause you aren't yet involved in.

Whoever and wherever you are, we hope you'll join us in making Refugee Week 2021 a bold, collective act of reaching out; a space for us all to listen, to exchange and connect. To find out what we can learn from each other, and what we can build together. **This is something we can do any time and all the time. As we start coming out of 'lockdown' and holding more events at church, please reflect on how we can welcome new and existing people back and build a better future together.**

It's a bit short notice (sorry), but you may like to take part in the **Great Walk Together on Sunday 20 June.** I think it can be as simple as going for a walk with family and friends and maybe reflecting on the plight of refugees and how far some of them have to walk. More information can be found here:

<https://refugeeweek.org.uk/join-us-great-walk-together/>



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And, **Simple Acts** are everyday actions we can all do to stand with refugees and make new connections in our communities. It won't cost you a penny! <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts/>

- Sing a song
- Watch a film
- Have a chat
- Read a book
- Play a Game
- Walk together



Coincidentally, Pat and I are playing Scrabble this week, so we can tick off one thing on this list!

The Prayer Life Group would like to know how your prayer life has changed during the pandemic and lockdowns (if it has). If you would like to share your experience via News & Chat, please send your comment to Naomi – noemi68_us@yahoo.com (or minister@christchurchrayleigh.org.uk), or phone. If you would like to share your experience, but not publicly, please contact Gwyneth.

Bible Library – The Prayer Life Group thought it would be nice to have a selection of different versions of the Bible available at the church for house groups, Bible Study and for people to borrow if they would like to look at a different version. This will happen after we hear the government announcement on the next stage of relaxing restrictions. **Please be thinking if you have a spare Bible you could donate to this endeavour.**

Book Swap – in a similar vein, at the same time as the Bible Library, we would like to set up a Book Swap – bring a book you no longer want, borrow a book you'd like to read. Maybe start a conversation about a book you've read with someone else in the church! **Save your books for the Church Book Swap!**

TIPS & IDEAS

This week's 64 Million Artists is brought to us by Element- an organisation that runs creative arts projects with children in care, care leavers, and school students, encouraging participants to build up a positive sense of their own identity, strengths and future ambitions.

Design your own book cover!

Think about what story you want to tell. What colours, style of text and images might you use? Your design could be based on a story of your own, or you could redesign the cover of your favourite book.

OTHER DIARY DATES:

Remember, **SCRABBLE** will recommence in July or before. We play one game each month with a different opponent, either in your house or theirs, or in the garden! We each pay £2 towards church funds, which can be given to Pat Botfield along with your scores. There will be a small prize at the end of the year! **PLEASE CONTACT PAT asap IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART.**

QUIZ SHEETS will resume in July at a cost of £1, available in the church or from Pat.

9-12 July the URC General Assembly will meet online. The business part of the proceedings is only for members of General Assembly, but the **Sunday Worship on 11 July at 11am will be available on:** The URC website - <https://urc.org.uk/>, URC YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/user/URCUK>

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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.

Nearer the time, there will be a sign-up sheet at the church. **Please let Jean know if you are planning to attend.**

How Change Happens 'house group' sessions continue on Thursdays at 7.30pm on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8334513513?pwd=OTN1UjFhZiNwQlF3OTZheUlwbnDRUQT09>

Meeting ID: 833 451 3513

Passcode: 112886

This event is for anyone from BOTH churches

Final session, 6 (tonight) Who makes change?

Opening Activity: How can the church affect change?

Those attending, please bring your idea with you. Everyone else – why not do this exercise anyway and bring your post-it note or piece of paper to church so we can see what people would like to change (e.g. if a lot of people favour one suggestion, we could start a petition or write to our MP as a church, like we did last year on Climate Change).

Everybody in the group write down on a post-it note **one important thing they think the church would need to do in order to affect political change.** For example: identifying an issue people are passionate about, or researching where the relevant politicians stand on an issue.

Decide which three suggestions are the most important. Once everyone has done this, have a look at which suggestions received the most votes, and discuss why the group thought they were the most important.

This is the last session in this HG series, so please come with the answers to these questions:

What have you learnt?

What has inspired you?

Think of one word to answer the question "What Happens Next?"

And... come with thoughts on what you would like to do in the next House Group series. (Naomi has one idea – a Bible Study on James).

Prayer

God of the possible,

Open our eyes to what we can achieve, not in our own strength but yours.

Convict us to care for the issues you care about, knowing no inch of public life is outside of your domain.

Inspire us with your Holy Spirit to think creatively, passionately, and practically about what we can do to

further your Kingdom on Earth. May your will be done through us, In Jesus' name, Amen

RESOURCES

Reflections from St Paul's Cathedral by Brother Sam who is a Franciscan brother on 'Sabbath Wisdom for a Post-Pandemic World'

<https://mailchi.mp/e1321d42dc62/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-8251028?e=e30a1f608a>

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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. This week we pray especially for refugees and for fathers and families.

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Dads (and Mums)**. Please pray for the dads you know, for those present with their families that they are free to be the best dad they want to be; for those absent from their families, that there will be reconciliation and loving return; for those who grieve for their dads and for the mums who find themselves now having to try and be dad as well.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Della
Brian, Jenny C's brother
Tim, Bob W's nephew
Bill & Beth
Grace & Phil

Audrey
Peter C
Sheila S
Irene C
Rachel S & family



The family of Joyce's brother John, following his death, especially his wife Margaret

ECO CHAT

Church Front Garden (Eco Restoration)

Just wanted to say a big THANK YOU to Penny and anyone else who helps with the church garden. It was lovely on Sunday walking into church and feeling part of God's creation just by seeing all the bees busy on the flowers – the pink and purple linaria, blue geraniums, benchers and the mass of yellow corydalis; the thyme and rosemary on the path down to the car park continuing the colour, insect activity, textures and interest, not only to church goers but passers-by as well. It is demonstrating the importance of front gardens, different planting ideas and giving habitats to wildlife.

This is what Ecosystems are about and showing how a garden can be restored even by individuals on small scales.

Happy Gardening - Elizabeth

