NEWS & CHAT Thursday 11 March 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.

Sunday 14 March, Mothering Sunday, worship with the minister at 10am on Facebook.

Mothering Sunday is the day we honour mothers and mother churches. Since this year we will again be unable to visit our mothers, or have children visit those of us who are mothers, I thought it might be nice, if you would like to, to have a picture of your mother handy and visible during the service. (This is of course private as on Facebook no one can see the participants!)

OTHER NEWS

As in previous years, both churches are taking a **Lent collection for Water Aid's 'Jars of Change' appeal**.

HARP Spring Walk - https://www.harpsouthend.org.uk/spring-walk
We may not be able to walk together this year but you can still take steps to help local people to overcome homelessness. Simply walk three miles or more along the route of your choice any time during the Easter Holidays to raise vital funds.

Entrance fee includes free Spring Walk T-shirt:
Adults - £5 (and pledge to raise £30)
Children - £3 (and pledge to raise £30)
Family - £15 (and pledge to raise £50)

Virtual Coffee or Tea and Hot Cross Buns in aid of Rayleigh Combined Churches Refugee Group on Friday 26 March, 10.30am - 12pm
If you feel able to give a small donation, please contact Penny
Further details in next week's News & Chat.

Lent House Groups on Thursdays at 7.30pm via Zoom.

Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930156610?pwd=dTNlTUZJY2JIRlhhb1VVWGdRcW5Sdz09
Passcode: 112886 **Number to phone in: 0203 051 2874**
It will be the same link every week.
Open to all at Bridgwater Drive and Christ Church.

The summary and questions for this week were in last week's N&C. Here is next week's:

Week 4 (18 March) Coming out of Denial and Facing Crisis
Many people are in denial about climate change, or at least the extent of it and how much we as individuals can do about it. The problem may be **fear** – that if we accept it, our lives would have to change significantly. That it's too big a problem to contemplate. Fear can lead to apathy and thinking there is nothing we can do about it.
Illness and death usually results in people evaluating their lives and deciding what is really important. What if we thought of the planet as a dying relative?
The first Christians believed they were living in the end times…It would be a time of great suffering, when people's faith would be severely tested. So St Paul challenged people to change their ways. We now stand under God's judgement for the mess we are making of Creation. We also need to change our ways.

What can be done? 'We have to lobby our politicians, who alone have the power to enforce the changes that need to be made.' They will only act if they feel enough of their constituents are really concerned about climate change.
Air travel is the fastest growing source of carbon dioxide emissions, yet the aviation industry enjoys zero tax on jet fuel and zero-rated VAT on plane tickets. Should we be lobbying government to change this situation post-pandemic? Should people be dissuaded from flying?

Questions
1. What do you think about the idea of denial? Do you think humans are not good at coping with crises?
2. Does prayer help you face reality? (or deny more – leave it to God to sort out)
3. **Read Romans 8:35-39** What difference should our faith make to the way we think about climate change?
4. Have you ever lobbied your MP? Did you feel it was worth it?

TIPS & IDEAS
This week's weekly challenge from #64Million Artists is a bit challenging! But I share it because it is topical (Monday was International Women's Day and Sunday is Mother's Day), and just because something is hard doesn't mean we shouldn't have a go (and maybe you won't think it is hard to do!):

Celebrate a woman that you admire through the medium of collage!
It could be someone you know or someone you don't know, a family member, a public figure or a fictional character. Use any materials you have around you!
Your collage could be a portrait of them or an image that represents their impact on you. Experiment with layering - paper, fabric, drawing, painting, their words, your words, and thoughts or snippets of conversation that tell their story. Or, you might want to simply write something about a woman you admire.

RESOURCES
A new Lent reflection from St Paul's Cathedral by Richard Springer, the Rector of St George-in-the-East, Dean of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Ministry for the Stepney Area and Director of the Urban Leadership School at the Centre for Theology and Community.
https://mailchi.mp/932df9b235e6/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-8242596?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. Especially this week we pray for people around the world dependent on fair trade, and for the people starving in Yemen.

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Ladies.** Give thanks for the ladies – Mums, aunts, friends, grandmas, carers, teachers,… who have mothered and nurtured us in whatever ways (and for the men who have partnered with them). Give thanks for the gift of the next generation, and pray that our lives may enrich, enhance, and nurture theirs. Give thanks for the gift to us of God's child, Jesus.

Particular prayer requests this week:

Sheila S.
Bill and Beth Graham
David, Bill and Beth's son in law
Della
Bob's nephew Tim - who lives in Stevenage was taken into hospital because he kept falling over. They have found a suspected brain tumour and he has been sent to one of the London hospitals. Tim was 40 just before Christmas. He lives alone and has minor learning difficulties. At the moment he's very frightened and [Bob] feels sure he would value our prayers.

Budiriro, Zimbabwe: We pray for Revd. Biggie Mususa who started his ministry at Budiriro on 1st March – that he will be blessed in his new role. We also pray that Zimbabwe will soon receive some vaccines for the coronavirus.

We give thanks as Phil and Penny celebrate their Golden Wedding anniversary on 20th March.
And Ernie H who celebrates his 90th birthday on Friday, 12 March. CONGRATULATIONS!

A poem from Laurie at BDC:

A Recipe from God
Take a teaspoon of unselfishness
And mix it with some love,
A little drip of happy tears

And a prayer sent up above,
Fold in some sweet compassion
And melt a lonely heart,
Mix the cream of human kindness
Make sure it doesn't part.
We don't want any bitterness
No anger should be shed
And that's a Christian recipe
So we can break the bread.