

NEWS & CHAT 2 December 2021

The online service will remain 'joint' while each church has 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.

In order to keep Covid-19 safe, please remember to:

- Where possible, wear a mask at all times (unless you have an exemption)
- Sanitise hands when entering the building
- Keep at least 1m from people you are not in a 'bubble' or live with
- Try to keep conversations to a minimum

During services and other events, we will endeavour to keep the Church as warm as possible whilst maintaining good ventilation, so please dress accordingly.

Sunday 5 Dec 2nd Sunday of Advent

10.30 a.m. Robert Dart Morning Worship at The BDC

10.00 a.m. The Minister at CC, Advent II & Gift Sunday, followed by Christmas Lunch

Please remember this is **YOUR** weekly newsletter – if you have items of news, short articles, poems, photos etc you want included, please send them to Naomi – minister@christchurchrayleigh.org.uk or to Margaret, margaretbates@blueyonder.co.uk by Monday morning of the week you want them included.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the Art & Craft Sale at Christ Church last Saturday and to those who donated items. It made £553.

The Bridgwater Drive Church News

Our Rainbows, Brownies and Guides have been busy preparing for Christmas! Sylv lets me know what's going on each Tuesday. This was her message last week,

'I know you like to know what we do on a Tuesday so:

Rainbows decorated biscuits and I discovered that fish knives make excellent spreading devices for little ones!!

Brownies are cooking brownies next week and did badge work tonight.

Guides decorated fabric bags for presents for themselves or others for Christmas.

Crystals did a bake off challenge - 'Make a Yule log' - They did really well.

Star baker was voted on by the guides doing a 'penny vote' for presentation while Sal (Paul) and I (Prue) did a taste test'



This week Sylv raided our garden for greenery. These are the beautiful Christmas decorations the girls created.

Well done Sylv and all the leaders for organising such varied activities for the girls - no wonder there are more and more girls joining and staying! Well done to all the girls for creating such beautiful gifts.

Margaret

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

The Bridgwater Drive Church Dates

Cats and Dogs Quiz - Please let Margaret have your answers by Sunday at the latest. The winner of the £10 voucher will be announced next Sunday.

Film Morning -Tuesday 7th December - 9.30 Please let Margaret know what film you would like to watch - maybe something Christmassy? So far, the only suggestion is 'Planes, Trains and Automobiles' - Yes, it's about Thanksgiving not Christmas but it's very funny!

Saturday, 11th December - Carols Round the Tree - from 2.30 - 4.00

14th December - Tuesday Church - Naomi leading the second session of our **Advent Course** (more details below - see Advent House Groups).

Christingle Service - 10.30 a.m. Sunday, 19th December

Tuesday 21st December - 10.30 - 11.30 'Let's Chat about Books' (our starter topic, magazines!)

Friday 24th December - Christmas Eve Communion – following the discussion at the Church Meeting last Sunday it was agreed that the communion service, traditionally held at 11.30 p.m. on Christmas Eve, should be brought to **an earlier time**. Please let **Cherry (01702 343980) or Naomi (07555 705530) know whether you would attend if the start time was 6.00 p.m. or 8.00 p.m.** as it is helpful in the planning of the service to have some idea of how many people might attend.

Christmas Day - 10.30 a.m. - Margaret will lead a short service of Carols, Readings and Prayers. It will be good to be able to meet again (last year we were in lockdown!) to celebrate our Lord's birth.

Sunday 26th December - NO SERVICE

Christ Church News and Dates

Sunday 12 December - The **Harmonie Concert** at 3pm, with Covid restrictions including **compulsory mask wearing and there will be no audience singing**. Tickets £9, £8 concession, £18 family, available from Helen Dart. **Please sign the sheet at the back of the church if you plan to attend, as capacity will be limited to 70.**

TIPS & IDEAS

This week's creative idea is perfect for an Eco Church!:

Make a festive decoration from leftover paper.

Find some scrap paper, this could be pages from a magazine or the paper wrapping from some groceries. Cut the paper into pieces, strips, circles, anything you like. Use small dots of glue or sticky tape, experiment with joining, twisting and curving the pieces of paper to see what shapes you can come up with. Can you join different pieces together to create a larger object? Thread your decoration and hang it up somewhere so you can start feeling excited about the festive season.



RESOURCES

A new reflection – 'What is Good' - from St Paul's Cathedral, by **Amanda Mukwashi** who is the CEO of Christian Aid. <https://mailchi.mp/1d6fa156f293/coming-up-from-st-pauls-cathedral-8251148?e=e30a1f608a>

Advent House Groups - Joint with Rayleigh Methodist Church – the Advent Bible Study sessions are on Tuesdays

- **2.30pm in person at Rayleigh Methodist Church**

- **7.30pm on Zoom** – (same link each week)

<https://zoom.us/j/99345651990?pwd=OW45UkVzZVJDND08wM05WY2JNWDYwZz09>

Meeting ID: 993 4565 1990

Passcode: 805792

To phone in - 0131 460 1196

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

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. We pray especially this week for the refugees and asylum seekers crossing the Channel.

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Gifts.** We thank the Lord for the opportunity to give our gifts of presents and money to families in our community through our Gift Service. Lord, help us give generously. You have given so abundantly to us, thank You for the joy of sharing our abundance with those around us.

Particular prayer requests this week:

The BDC

Barbara: Clive: Marlene's daughter, Christine: Janet: Colin: Celia: Sandra: Margaret and Ted: Gerry: Margaret's friends, Jean, Peggy and Doreen.

Christ Church

Mark E and his family: John, Ian's nephew: Audrey: Sheila S: Phil and Grace: Peter C: Joy A: Beth, Bill & Elizabeth G: Janet – Judy C's sister: Jenny & Tom.

An Advent Devotion from the UCC (United Church of Christ, USA)

Lift Your Heads, Again by Mary Luti

"Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." - Luke 21:28 (NRSV)

A friend told me she finds Advent frustrating. Every year we lift our heads, stand on tiptoe, watch for Christ to bring in the new age, and nothing happens. After 2,000 years, her toes are starting to go numb, her enthusiasm's waning. Advent feels sort of routine.

Scripture says that for God, a thousand years are like a day. By divine standards, we have short attention spans. If Advent feels routine, maybe we have a skewed sense of time. But it could also be that we're harbouring the illusion that we're OK. Even amid pandemics and wars and political upheaval, we persist in that delusion. Maybe we get tired of waiting because we don't really need what we're waiting for.

I go through my days with my Visa in one hand and the Golden Rule in the other, and with them I shape a mostly adequate life. And as long as it's not disrupted in some truly disastrous way, I don't feel a crying need to be redeemed. I pray with the church, "Come, Lord Jesus!" But under my breath I'm begging, "Just not right now." As someone once quipped, if you're having a decent year in your own kingdom, it's hard to long sincerely for the coming of God's.

If Advent feels frustrating, or boring, or beside the point, maybe it's because we haven't gotten real enough yet to need what it promises. Or to perceive and care about how much others need it.

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

One more time, then. Let's prop up our heads and keep them lifted again, this year and year after year. Pray again for Christ to come. But even more, hope to be struck to the core by just how much we need him to.

Prayer

Make me feel my need for you, O Christ. Help me say, "Come!" And mean it

