

Christ Church

New Southgate & Friern Barnet
(Baptist/United Reformed)

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NEWSLETTER

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www.christchurchnsfb.org

Merry Christmas!





‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out’. *John 1.5*

This year we have learnt how to wait; how to wait for a space in a supermarket, how to wait for buses at a quarter of capacity and how to wait for church services to begin again.

Advent 2020 offers us an opportunity to reflect on our most challenging of years and particularly on our relationship with God while waiting for church to return to the building. Each family at Christ Church has been given an Advent candle personalised for our church this year. As we light the candle day by day and read scripture alongside it, we are illuminated by beautiful candlelight and our souls are brightened by God’s word.

Our Advent this year is domestic; it’s more at home than outside. This is exactly where the story of Christ’s arrival began too, in a small makeshift home with just a few visitors. His birth brought light and life to Mary, Joseph and all those who met him as a baby. His light shone in the darkness bringing hope and healing then and today.

As we wait for a different Christmas, as our entire lives have become different, we consider what is really important to celebrate at Christmas. In our waiting at home, our lives have been disrupted and all that we thought was important has been challenged. Christ, likewise disturbed and disrupted every idea of what a King might be.

As we wait now, may our Advent candle light, disturb us. May it show us new areas of our lives to develop, may it bring light to those which should change and may it remind us of the baby born in Bethlehem who brought radical change with his light, the light of the world.

Blessings Ruth

SERVICES RESTARTING

We are delighted that we are able to return to in-person services. From 6 December, Christ Church will offer in-person/online/paper versions of services where possible. Please take special note of our arrangements for Advent and Christmas services.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

| | |
|--------|--|
| 6 Dec | 11am Advent service <i>in-person/online/paper</i> |
| 13 Dec | 11am Advent service <i>in-person/online/paper</i> (With Communion) |
| 20 Dec | <i>No morning service</i> |
| 20 Dec | 4pm Carol service <i>in-person/online/paper</i> |
| 24 Dec | 4pm Christingle service <i>in-person</i> |
| 25 Dec | 11am Christmas Day <i>online/paper</i> (With Communion) |
| 27 Dec | <i>No service</i> |
| 3 Jan | 11am Epiphany service <i>in-person/online/paper</i> |

You need to book to attend every service either via:

www.christchurchnsfb.org

christchurchnsfb.sec@gmail.com (state date of service in subject)

text Clare on 07977 444651

As we return to church for in-person services please remember - do not attend if you have virus symptoms, sanitise your hands on entry, wear a mask, exit the building quickly.

Please sit exactly where the stewards ask you to sit. It is a really difficult and complex task to organise the seating plan for every service. The seats are allocated to ensure distancing and will vary if it is a communion service or bubbles attending are different sizes for social distancing reasons.

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION FOR FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

We are collecting money only for our Christmas appeal to be able to give Tesco gift vouchers to the Family Resource Centre. Families can then choose to spend the money on gifts or food as they wish. The closing date for contributions is 13 December. Please either bring your contribution to church and use an envelope for the collection or take it to Anthea's house.

FAMILY NEWS

With great sadness we report the recent death of Brian. Brian who died on the 5th November after a short time in hospital lived in North London for much of his life and worked for "Times Furnishings" in Palmers Green and subsequently for "Heals". He was a long-standing Church Member and a good friend of us all here at Christ Church who will be greatly missed.

Whilst remembering Brian at this time we also think of his wife Jane and her sister Susan, his daughter and granddaughter and all their family and friends. We send them our condolences and remember them all in our prayers.

The funeral service at New Southgate Crematorium on the 3rd December should be available to view online for 28 days on "Watch Again" from the 6th or 7th December at <https://www.obitus.com> (Username Segu9851 / Password 826308)

A Service of Thanksgiving at Christ Church in memory of Brian is to be planned for the New Year.

We remember also all who are bereaved at this time including Sherry. Sadly, her Mother passed away recently.

In these different times, we pray for all those who mourn.

There are many who have been or are unwell and we pray for them all and for a speedy recovery.

We think of all who have had a Birthday recently and also all students who will be returning home from College and University for Christmas.

BMS BIRTHDAY APPEAL

The Baptist Missionary Society run a gift scheme, where every year on your birthday you can donate to the Birthday appeal. At present with Covid restrictions this is difficult to achieve through our normal methods at church. For the time being, if you wish to make a donation to this scheme please either send a cheque payable to BMS by post to:

BMS World Mission
PO Box 49, 129 Broadway
Didcot
OX11 8XA

Or online :

<https://www.bmsworldmission.org/get-involved/fundraising/birthday-scheme/#give>

Please use the reference: Christ Church NSFB (1498)

During the past month of November, we have been in another period of “Lockdown” when things have been different once again, although some people say it has been just as busy everywhere, particularly the amount of traffic on the roads!

As we come out of this Lockdown, we here in London now have to follow “Covid” measures for Tier 2. Whilst still following social distancing guidelines we can again do more including going to Non- essential shops who can, if they wish, remain open longer. Everywhere will get even more busy in the run up to Christmas.

We can also now return to Church on Sundays for the morning service (see above).

Please let us know how your daily routine changed again through Lockdown in November and what you are doing in the run up to Christmas and we can include your news in the January Newsletter.

The Newsletter Committee thank all who send us articles each month.

We wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas. Greetings and Best Wishes to you all – *Clare Jenkins & Gladys Townsend.*

EMAIL SCAM

Many of you will be aware that our Secretary, Clare, recently received an email purporting to come from the Minister, Ruth, but it was in fact from an incorrect email address, and not from Ruth, at all!

If anyone receives anything suspicious the Government web site (www.gov.uk) provides contact details for the National Cyber Security Centre (www.ncsc.gov.uk) where you will find a great deal of information including reporting potential phishing messages to the "Suspicious Email Reporting Service(SERS)" at "report@phishing.gov.uk".

There is also a lot of information and advice on the Metropolitan Police web site (www.met.police.uk)

You can also find further information at "Action Fraud" (www.actionfraud.police.uk) where you can again report various fraud or cyber crime, although there are also details for certain types of fraud where reports should be made direct to specific areas.

Remember if you receive an unusual or suspicious email, text or phone call then it is probably not genuine - Take care and exercise caution, end any calls, and do not click on any link or open attachments and then report.

There are a lot of scammers out there, and fraudsters are very active at the present time in the run up to Christmas.
Please exercise care and stay safe.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

My lovely Commissioning service and celebration as a URC Synod Accredited Lay Preacher, on Sunday, 19th January 2020 felt like it happened in another year. I continue to thank Lord Jesus immensely for His call and love.

However, none of us could have imagined that a month or so after the celebration, a virus called COVID -19 will disrupt the year causing so much devastation and difficulty across most of the world. Neither could we have envisaged that in order to prevent the spread of the virus, 2020 will be a year of country lock-downs and social distancing. A year we were not allowed to worship inside the church, visit one another freely or sit closely together. Or hug loved ones when they visit us at home, in care homes or dying in the hospital. A year spouses were disallowed from accompanying pregnant partners to hospital appointments or the delivery. It is also incredible the numerous lives that had been turned upside down either because of the loss of loved ones or jobs because of the pandemic.

No wonder many have concluded the 2020 Christmas celebration cannot be the same. It cannot be as exuberant or as extravagant as previous years. Nevertheless, I feel the true meaning of Christmas looms larger this year. Christmas is about Jesus Christ, God incarnate, and Saviour, who came into the world to save us because He deeply loves us. Considering how difficult, the year had turned out to be, we need the love, grace and mercy, of Immanuel, (God with us), more than ever this Christmas. We also need to uplift ourselves with the truth that Jesus the light of the world, had overcome all darkness including Covid -19, which will soon pass. This Christmas may be more somber, but we, His children, should try not to be afraid or sad. Jesus Christ will help us through this Christmas and beyond because He has promised to be with us always. He will grant us His peace, comfort and joy. Rest in His love.

Matthew 1:23

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means “God with us”).

Luke 2:10

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Happy, Peaceful Christmas.

Ola Lawal