

Christ Church

New Southgate & Friern Barnet
(Baptist/United Reformed)

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NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2018 **ISSUE 251**

www.christchurchnsfb.org



2018

DIARY FOR JANUARY 2018

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|---|
| Sun. 7 th | | Rev. Ruth Moriarty |
| | 11.00 am. | Morning Worship & Junior Church |
| | 12.15 pm. | Mission Group Meeting |
| Tues. 9 th | 2.00 pm. | Friendship Club |
| | 4.15 pm. | Rainbows (every Tues. until break) |
| | 5.15 pm. | Brownies (" " " ") |
| | 7.15 pm. | Guides (" " " ") |
| | 8.00 pm. | Fabric & Finance at Lynda's house |
| Wed. 10 th | 8.00 pm. | Deacons Meeting at the Manse |
| Thurs. 11 th | 2.00 pm. | Women's Club – Games |
| | 5.20 pm. | Beavers (every Thurs. until break) |
| | 6.15 pm. | Cub Scouts (" " " ") |
| | 7.00 pm. | Scouts (" " " ") |
| Fri. 12 th | 10.00 am. | Parent & Toddlers (every Friday until break) |
| Sun. 14 th | | Mission Sunday |
| | | Rev. Ruth Moriarty |
| | 11.00 am. | Morning Worship & Junior Church |
| Wed. 17 th | 7.45 pm. | Grapevine |
| Sun. 21 st | | Rev. Ruth Moriarty |
| | 11.00 am. | Morning Worship, Communion & Junior Church |
| Tues. 23 rd | 2.00 pm. | Friendship Club |
| Thurs. 25 th | 2.00 pm. | Women's Club |
| Sat. 27 th | 10.00 am. | Deacons Away Day |
| Sun. 28 th | | Rev. Ruth Moriarty |
| | 11.00 am. | Morning Worship & Junior Church |
| | 12.15 pm. | Church Meeting |

FAMILY NEWS

There was snow on Sunday 10th December which sadly kept some people away from Church that day. In addition there has also been a lot of seasonal illness around which has also resulted in a number of people being absent over recent weeks.

We send our good wishes to all those who have been unwell and our love and prayers.

Thank you to all who sent cards, letters and emails to the Church this Christmas. We also thank everyone who has sent articles for this Newsletter and throughout the year.

Good wishes to everyone for a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

May God Bless you all.

The next meeting of the Newsletter Committee
will be held at 39 The Ridgeway, London N11
at 8pm. On Monday 15th January 2018.

Please let us have your material for the
February Newsletter by Sunday 14th January.

FINANCE FOR APRIL 2017 TO 24th DECEMBER 2017

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| Cash | £2,927.81 |
| Envelopes | <u>£5,085.00</u> |
| | £8,012.81 |

December Communion Collection of £3.00
For the Compassionate Fund

PASTORAL LETTER

I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever

This is a well known phrase which can be found in Psalms 23 and no-one really knows what awaits us beyond the barriers of time and space, but this image beckons to us like a bright star. An image of a place filled with warmth and light and a beautiful way to enter into the very presence of God. This is the same promise and imagery that Jesus used “in my Fathers house there are many rooms”.

At the very close of life we are close to God, just as is a new born baby when held in it's mothers' arms, and we have come full circle on the journey which has taken us all the way from the beginning to the end.

In moments of inspiration we feel the presence of God all around us, more comforting than the light of the summer sun. When the moment of inspiration fades and the clouds gather once more, the foundations of our faith are shaken. Now we are put to the test, and being tested we find a presence and a power greater than we can imagine. We are armed with God's sure staff and in the wild places of our daily lives we can find our way with a sense of courage and confidence that comes even in the eye of a storm.

Now is the time between the times and we learn the value of the support that comes from our fellow Christians, and when breaking bread at Holy Communion we can revisit Psalm 23, “You prepare a table before me even in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil and my cup overflows”.

Finally, we look ahead beyond the barriers of time and space and we are filled with a deep conviction and confidence, and we can safely say “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”.

So, in the time between times, between life and death, between creation and consummation, between peace and war, with God as our guide the way shall be made plain and the passage sure throughout the journey we call our lives.

Tony Fensome

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR 2017

Christ Church made sure the Sanctuary was looking really festive for Advent to welcome all visitors to the Christmas bazaar. Thanks go to the small group of people led by Sara Skinner who came together on the 25th November to decorate the sanctuary.

Thanks also to the many people who manned the “tables”. Some of the tables invited a selection of guessing games, other tables had a variety of items including a table of largely Christian jewellery etc, manned by Tony Fensome; another table manned by Val & Linda had potted Hyacinths and Christmas tree decorations for sale, among other things.

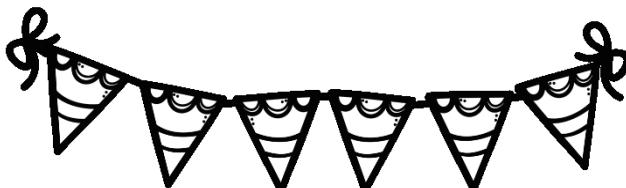
Naturally a lot of preparation is required for such an event, and Christ Church is grateful to all those who gave freely of their time and effort to bring things together.

The money earned and donated to Christ Church totalled £241.49. A small amount was collected for Junior Church and another small amount for Rainbows.

As we all appreciate, the real purpose of the Christmas Bazaar this year is not so much to earn money but to make Christ Church visible within this community.

We were happy to see a few visitors we had not seen before and others we see regularly at events held by Christ Church, for this we can recognise the day as a success.

Sue Rogers



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

I was really looking forward to Carols by candlelight this year as I was NOT running it!!

For the last few years, I have been asking people to read passages from the bible, prayers and do a short drama instead of a talk. Some years we have had soloists, notably Tanya Forward, and other years the choir has sung new pieces. Well this year I was going to be singing with a bigger choir, with the Life and Mission Choir and I would get to enjoy the singing with no risk of being on a live microphone.

Paul Day who runs the Life and Mission Choir has always been interested in doing a 9 lessons and carols service but had often had competing activities on. But this year he had enough time to be able to run the necessary rehearsals and planning. He suggested this idea to the members of the choir who all liked the idea. He asked around for a church that would like to host the choir and help run the service and we volunteered.

Ruth chose the bible readings and some of the readers were from our congregation and some readers were chosen from the choir.

However, there was a slight change of plan on the day – SNOW – we were a small (19 brave souls) at the morning service when Ruth announced that the carol service would be on. Then, we waited to see how many people ventured out. Pennie Bongomin arrived on foot – photographic evidence available on request. Others decided not to take the risk and so the choir was not made of 3 rows but 2 and was 9 people smaller than expected. This included soloists, so these parts were reassigned shortly before we sang. Well done to all those who took over roles at such short notice.

I really enjoyed being part of a larger choir singing carols as this allowed us to sing in parts – being able to practice and then sing the descants for the major carols was really nice. They are very difficult to sing on your own and nothing like as enjoyable.

Clare Jenkins

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our last meeting on the 12th December was a Christmas Afternoon. We were happy that the weather had improved for the day and the pavements were not too slippery.

The Parlour was lovely and warm and we enjoyed mince pies and chocolate cake with our tea. There was Christmas music playing, although we didn't hear it very well as we were talking too much!

We had a Christmas Quiz which had been sent to us from Dorothy Brown (Dorothy led our club for many years, before she moved to Lindfield). She always remembers us at Christmas and Easter and keeps in touch throughout the year. Many thanks Dorothy the quiz was most enjoyable.

We hope you all enjoyed Christmas time and the New Year celebrations.

We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting which will be on the 9th January at 2pm. when we will have a welcome back afternoon.

Please join us if you can.

New Year greetings to you all.

Gladys Townsend

PARENT AND TODDLERS

This is still going strong very ably run by Sara Skinner and Anne Petts.

The children had a little party and a Christmas present. It was too cold to take them in the church to see the tree and receive their presents. They are closed now for the holiday and re-opening on Friday 12th January.

Anthea Denham

WOMEN'S CLUB

Our last session was on 14th December when we had our Christmas afternoon with a card game of pass the parcel, a Christmas related quiz and the Twelve Days of Christmas read by Joan Gray, a witty and amusing twist on the well-known song. We enjoyed a selection of savoury snacks (Susan) and a variety of cakes (Barbara) and drinks. We missed a few of our members, Joyce, Clara and Yvonne and wish them well.

A change to my last note, we start back early on Thursday 11th January 2018 (and not the 18th) for a Welcome Back afternoon.

If you would like to find out more about our club please ring me on 07703 483791.

Jane Gibbins

CHRISTIAN AID

Carol Singing for Christian Aid at Arnos Grove Tube Station happened on Monday 18th December.

They were accompanied by a young man on the cello and a young violinist. They had about 12 singers including a number from Friern Barnet's St. John's congregation.

Robert Wright will let me know how much they collected after Christmas.

The annual Christian Aid Quiz and Supper will be on Saturday 27th January at 7pm. I will be receiving more details soon and look out for the poster. Most churches in Churches Together organise a table of 8 people from their church. Please let me know if you are interested. Happy New Year.

Anthea Denham

MISSION GROUP

Hello there and Happy New Year to you all!

Roger was asked if we (the choir-2 members!) plus anyone else willing to sing at Austin Chambers Estate Agents in Friern Barnet. We met up at Church, well wrapped up as freezing cold, but blue sky and sunshine. They were celebrating 40 years presence in Friern Barnet. With balloons blowing, we stood under the awning with the new "Hetty" to help us with the music and the amplifier. We enjoyed ourselves singing away while a photographer took umpteen photos of us! Then the Mayor of Barnet drew up in his chauffeur driven car and his lovely wife Kate Salinger. She immediately joined in the singing! The money raised from people passing and celebrating plus the £100 given to us, all went to "Barnet Homeless in Action", The Mayor's Charity.

Later at 5pm we sang again at Holly Park School Christmas Bazaar! We stood on the stage and wondered if anyone was listening, as there was a lot of activity happening in the Main Hall but later on lots of people said it was lovely and provided a good atmosphere. So that was a fun day!

On the 12th December we were singing carols at Arnos Grove Station supported by the Brownies and their Mums. Considering it was only for one and a half hours over £301 was raised for "Baptist World Aid". The night was extremely cold and the pavements like glass so I'm afraid I was persuaded not to go and risk another fall! It's always such a worthwhile thing to do and it provides Christian Witness to the commuters and good cheer.

On December 18th Sara Skinner, Pennie, Chris and I went food shopping for the Family Resource Centre. We used your most generous donations to make 12 food parcels with fifteen items in each one; some basics and some luxuries. That is the most we've done for a long time. The staff at the Family Resource Centre know us well now and were delighted when we delivered them the same morning. Lynda Eade had been there earlier and delivered all those wonderful toys you brought for the Toy Service. They were very pleased with all those too! They said "Such beautiful toys". Such generosity and thoughtfulness from you all. Thank you!

Now for 2018.

On Sunday 7th January we are having a Mission meeting after the service. Please note all members. We will try not to be too long. On Sunday 14th January please bring your Mission Boxes in for the morning service. A friend of Ruth's is going to take the sermon. All Mission boxes will be dedicated that day but if not possible bring it at any time.

Every Blessings for 2018.

Anthea Denham

NATIVITY SERVICE

This year's Nativity Service was one to remember for several reasons: Firstly, we were treated to a Christmas Nativity play from the Innkeeper's perspective, ably played by Allister, who brought to the part a cross between Mr Grumpy and Scrooge!! He kept getting crosser and crosser as he was disturbed during that eventful night. First Mary and Joseph then an angel choir, shepherds, bright stars. It was all too much for him - as it often is for us at this time. So much to do and no time to rest. Then suddenly it is all over. One thing I liked in the story was the Innkeeper visited the stable to see Jesus and his character changed, a good sermon there.

Of course, we all know the Innkeeper is not in the Bible, we assume he gave Mary and Joseph a stable. One thing crossed my mind – I wonder if the Innkeeper was wishing he had more rooms to let, would that make him grumpy too? Imagine the money he could make if his Inn was bigger? As today we mix the story of Jesus' birth with commercial concerns, it is inevitable that Jesus enters our world as it is, commercial and pagan elements are involved in our Christmas too, but Jesus remains in the centre of the story.

Secondly, the toys given by the church for distribution to children who otherwise will have nothing this Christmas. It touched my heart to see how people responded to this with their gifts. We may think of it as pandering to commercialism, but all I imagine is how a child's eyes will light up on Christmas day because someone cared enough to donate toys.

Thirdly, Ruth led us in considering each person/element involved in that nativity and showed how they can assist us in our prayers, not only at Christmas but every day. From the star showing the way when we are confused to God sending His son to be with us and help us. I will use this to help me pray over this season.

Fourthly, our very own live music group who led us in worship for some of the service. The worship of God is always associated with instruments (except for Scottish Wee Frees!!) and there is something about live music in worship that I believe is sacred. We have some very talented musicians at Christchurch who use their gift to the glory of God.

Finally, it did not snow so we were able to come to the service and enjoy it, and if only the Urn had not failed the whole thing would have been perfect. But then Christmas is about God's perfection entering our imperfections - so in a sense the service ended well.

Peter Griffiths

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE CHRISTMAS EVE 24TH DECEMBER 2017

I'd heard a lot about 'Christingle' services but had never been to one before so was excited to be going to my first.

Ruth, Sara and I arrived at church early to prepare oranges with candles, put sweets into bowls and then make the general preparations for the Service.

About 35 people attended the Service and for Sara and me it was so lovely to see some past and present members from the 'Parent and Toddler Group'.

Following the welcome and an opening prayer we sang 'While Shepherds Watched'. Luke Chapter 2 was read by Ruth who introduced some actions to go along with the text:

For Joseph - Stroke of your pretend beard

For Mary - A belly rub

For Shepherds - A rustic 'ooh aar'

For Angels - Hands like wings

We then had a quiz about the passage we had just heard.

After that came the main event, making the Christingles. Ruth explaining the meaning of the parts involved:

The orange for the world

The candle for Jesus 'The Light of the World'

The red ribbon for the blood that was shed for us and also as a symbol of love

4 cocktail sticks the 4 seasons

Sweets placed on the cocktail sticks as a symbol of all the good things that God has given to us.

With that explained, Children were invited up to make their own Christingle, followed by the 'older children' who wanted to make one too.

Oranges with candles in them, ribbons, cocktail sticks and sweets were laid out on the dais. Cheerful chatter was heard as we all made our Christingles.

During the final carol 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' the candles on the Christingles were lit. As we sung, the main lights in the church were dimmed leaving the light from the candles to shine bright.

What an enjoyable service! I hope it continues in our church for many years to come.

Happy New Year to you all.

Anne Petts

CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION

The time of waiting to celebrate the arrival of our Lord and Saviour has ended.

We came together on a mild winters evening to share refreshments before the service began. Candles lit up the Sanctuary and lanterns were alight along the aisles to complete the adornment of the sanctuary to celebrate the Holy birth.

Jesus came into this world as a seemingly small insignificant baby but became the Saviour of mankind.

Diana Bensted led the service for a small and intimate group gathered around the table made ready to serve Holy Communion. After the welcome we began with the carol: As with gladness men of old.

Sadly, Rev Ruth Moriarty had been hit by a cold virus but Diana led us through the prepared service starting with Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart. Sarah Greenwood read from Luke 1:47-55 (Mary's Song of Praise), The Message, followed by the carol: O Little town of Bethlehem.

At midnight all the candles were lit in the advent wreath with lastly the most important candle signifying the arrival of Christ, boy child, God made flesh in the image of man. A precious gift from God to save mankind, let us celebrate his Holy name and praise the Lord.

The reading of 1 Corinthians 11.23-26, prepared us to receive Holy Communion.

A short poem entitled: We've mucked out the stable by Thom M Shuman, was a reminder; we do not always remember our Lord and constantly make mistakes in our lives but the Lord will always be there even to the end.

The service ended with the carol: O come all ye faithful.

We were all encouraged to engage in the mission of Christ this day,
Open our eyes to see his coming and guide our feet to follow in his way, Amen.

We parted to meet again shortly for Family Christmas Day Service with our families in joyous celebration.

Sue Rogers

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE AND COMMUNION

I love this family service, as although we may be missing some regular members, the Christmas Day service is a time when whole families come to church and we are able to catch up with people we may not have seen for a while. Made easier by Ruth's challenge to say hello to people in 10 different aisles in one minute!

The music was a mix of the traditional and modern with 'Joy to the World,' and 'In the Bleak Midwinter' rubbing shoulders with a beautiful new song 'He Who is Mighty' from Sovereign Grace Music (well worth a look for some lovely modern worship music) and Stormzy's "Blinded by Your Grace".

Ruth led the service throughout with joy and clarity. We were given little purple bags, with a small wooden doll, a heart and a prayer, she asked us to cradle the baby Jesus in our hands as she led us in prayers. She asked us to remember that God sent his Son as a vulnerable human baby, to save us from our sins.

We also had an informal communion, which reminds us that God is in the everyday things of life, in the bread which we eat and in the squash we drink, and also that all are welcome to partake with open hearts and minds.

The last hymn had an extra verse which we were able to sing – Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning – and as we finished to go on to our other commitments we were reminded fully of why we celebrate Jesus' birth.

I leave you with Stormzy's words:

Lord, I've been broken
Although I'm not worthy
You fixed me, I'm blinded
By your grace
You came and saved me.

Diana Bensted

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Thank you Father God for your love and blessings in 2017.

We have positive expectation that as your children, 2018 will be full of all that is good for us, because you love us and had made us perfect. As you are in heaven Lord Jesus, so we are in this world (1John 4:17). Cast out all our fears. We entrust 2018 into your loving arms.

Help us to stay strong by regularly reminding ourselves the words of the song below.

“Through the love of God our Saviour
All will be well
Free and changeless is His favour
All, all is well
Precious is the blood that healed us,
Perfect is the grace that sealed us,
Strong is the hand stretch'd forth to shield us,
All must be well” Amen.

Happy, Blessed, Peaceful and Healthy New Year.

Ola Lawal

