

# Christ Church

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## NEWSLETTER

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[www.christchurchnsfb.org](http://www.christchurchnsfb.org)

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*Happy New Year*

## PASTORAL LETTER

I gave myself the job of writing the first Pastoral Letter of 2021. We have a rota so that all the Deacons and the Minister share the chance/opportunity of writing these letters. I was thinking about this year and the thought occurred to me that Paul wrote letters, I write emails.

I specifically thought of Paul's letter to the Romans:

chapter 1 <sup>11</sup> I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— <sup>12</sup> that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. <sup>13</sup> I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.

I identified with the longing to see people in 'real life' and not just by phone, computer or on the door-step. It struck me that Paul's reason is for mutual encouragement by each other's faith. And also, that he had been prevented from doing so - I am sure we can all identify with that feeling. I thought the emphasis on mutual encouragement was valuable - that we all should aim to encourage one another as is also mentioned in another letter from Paul (but this time with Silas and Timothy)

1 Thessalonians 5 <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

And

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray continually, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit.

I was really touched by the emphasis on encouragement and building up each other's faith. This is something that we can do whilst we are unable to meet in person, or even when we can meet in person but are extremely limited in the inter-person interactions that are allowed - no tea and biscuits and chatting; or in government speak 'no mingling'.

My New Year's resolution is to work to build each other up. We can all work toward this aim - thinking what can we each do to enable communication and staying connected to one another. Might we aim to contact others in our congregation to chat and pray together, to plan a Bible study group or someway to build each other up.

Overall, we need to build each other up in faith in whatever ways we can and not quench the Spirit.

*Clare Jenkins*

## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

This Christmas we offered you an opportunity for reflection and prayer in the most challenging of years at our services. We pray that you will know Christ's light at Christmas and be sustained by God for 2021.

Following the change to Tier 4, we have decided to move all of our services online. While the new restrictions for London do allow for communal worship, we have decided to exercise greater caution to protect the vulnerable within our community.

This decision will be reviewed when we receive further information via the government website.

Our Sunday Services during January will be Online only as follows-

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January – including Communion

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January – including Communion

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January

## **FAMILY NEWS**

As we enter this new year we are still having to cope with the problems and many issues of Coronavirus. Throughout the World many people continue to suffer with Covid-19 and sadly many are dying both here and in other countries.

We pray for all who have the virus and think of those who have passed away and all their families.

With the good news of vaccinations being given the go ahead, we hope and pray that there is now some light at the end of the tunnel as we head through 2021.

We especially remember NHS staff, key workers and other volunteers at this time and all of our own Members and friends who have been unwell and pray for their quick and full recovery.

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you everyone for your cards and kind messages of support on the death of my darling husband, Brian Dominic Gibbins, at the age of 88 years to that dreadful Coronavirus on 5th November 2020.

We all know that Brian enjoyed life and was always positive and a generous person.

For the first half of 2020 we had some lovely, memorable moments coping with the lockdown with painting and games of dominos and singing along with our Singing for the Brain on-line.

Such memories sustain one in the sad times together with our faith in Christ that Brian is in God's Heavenly Kingdom with others who have gone before and that we will meet again.

*Jane Gibbins*

## DEAR LORD

A Poem by Dorothy Brown

It's been the strangest year Lord since last we raised our voice  
The Saviour of the world is born, come everyone Rejoice!  
We welcomed 2020 Lord, how wonderful it seemed  
Then suddenly, the whole world changed  
Now, nothing's as it seemed.

Our generation had it all, we put our faith in 'things'  
And then, from whence, we know not why  
A Toll Bell, slowly rings  
We cling to faith, if faith we have  
We follow all the rules  
We find we need, quite suddenly  
A different set of tools.

The world has changed and change we must  
To take it in our stride  
We're here to play what part we can  
Not sit around and hide  
So Lord, dear Lord come near us now  
At this your time of birth  
And help your people in their need  
Your people here on Earth.



## CAROL SERVICE AND CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

We would normally have reviews of the services held at this time of year in our January newsletter. This is so that those not present could get a feel for these services. But due to the change in government restrictions to tier 4 all our services have been online.

This means that everyone can access the services and watch for themselves at any time. Or read, as we supply a text version on our website ([www.christchurchnsfb.org](http://www.christchurchnsfb.org))

I encourage everyone to watch and re-watch these services to feel a connection to our congregation. We can also watch other services from different churches to experience alternative worship styles and to discover different ways of doing things. Find out good ideas and let others know!

*Clare Jenkins*



Thank you to the Minister for the “Advent Candle” issued to families at the end of November together with the list of Scripture references to read each day throughout Advent.

We thank Tanya for singing at our Carol Service on the 20<sup>th</sup> December, accompanied on the piano by Felicity and of course, John, for playing Saxophone, not only at this service, but for the hymns he has played on many other weeks during the past months.

A big thank you also to all who helped decorate the Church ready for our Carol Service and Christingle Service which sadly did not happen in person as planned. The Christingle Service became a “Zoom” gathering thanks again to technology!

Our “Online” Christmas Services (and others through the year) can be seen on our YouTube Channel (see Church web site for further details). Thanks also go to many people who have read or said prayers on many occasions and to Ruth and others who continue to prepare our weekly “Online” Services.

For those who want to see the various Christmas Worship or Carol Services that were on the BBC and other Channels go to the iPlayer or other “Catch up” facilities. BBC “Songs of Praise” on the 20<sup>th</sup> December showed “The UK’s 10 Favourite Carols”.

We have had what can only be described as a very different Christmas with ever changing arrangements. When we came out of the November Lockdown, we here in London followed “Covid” measures for “Tier 2” Now we, and many other areas have moved into “Tier 4”. Again, we are restricted in what we can do to try to stay safe and whilst we are limited in where we can go at the moment, we can of course contact each other for a chat. A quick telephone call will go a long way, or send someone an email, text or letter. Remember “Zoom” is not just for Christmas.

## **THE MISSION GROUP**

Firstly, may I wish you all a much easier 2021. Happy New Year everyone.

### **The Family Resource Centre**

We decided that we would not be able to go shopping for The Family Resource Centre in 2020, as it was not really Covid safe!

Unfortunately, we could not give toys either, as we usually do, following the Toy Service at Christmas time for the same reason, not wishing to spread the virus.

Ruth suggested that we should buy Tesco food vouchers with the donations we hoped to collect.

We put out donation envelopes in Church and appealed for any donations which should be delivered to my house, or given to me at Church, if we were able to meet there.

We really hit a record; people were amazingly generous. We received £400 altogether!

Tanya and I went to Tesco and asked for 20, £20 vouchers! – They said “You can only have 10! The lady behind us in the queue said, “Now, ask for another 10!

We took them straight round to the Family Resource Centre and they were delighted. They support very needy families.

So fantastic everyone! God Bless.

### **Birthday Scheme**

Some of our congregation give to the BMS Birthday Scheme. This is to thank God for another year of life and the money goes to education and support where BMS missionaries work.

Please see the December Newsletter where Ruth suggests that people who give to this scheme should send a gift directly to BMS, for the time being. Kindly quote the reference "Christ Church NSFB (1498).

The address is in that issue:-  
BMS World Mission  
PO Box 49, 129 Broadway,  
Didcot OX11 8XA

Thank you.

*Anthea Denham*

## **CHURCH GIVING – GIFT AID**

We thank all who are able to give regularly to help support the Church and can provide printed weekly envelopes for you to use for your offerings. Please contact Gladys Townsend and we will get some to you.

There is another option for those who are able and want to make regular payments and that is to pay by "Standing Order" direct from your Bank Account to the Church Account. For those who want to set up a new Standing Order, payments should be sent to the Church Account at Barclays Bank UK PLC, Sort Code 20-95-61, Account Number 20596027 in the name of Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet (Baptist/United Reformed). Please advise the Church Treasurer if you set up a regular arrangement.

Also, if you pay the same amount or more in Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax in the tax year that you wish to donate to the Church, then we can benefit by claiming back from the HMRC the amount of 25p for every £1 you give. Should you be able to donate and want to complete a Gift Aid declaration form, please contact Gladys Townsend at [arthurtownsend@aol.com](mailto:arthurtownsend@aol.com).

Thank you all.

## **WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

I am sure many of us are glad to see the end of the unimaginable 2020 and its devastation.

Thank you, Lord Jesus for your care in 2020 and for bringing us safely into 2021.

Whatever 2021 holds in store, try to remain firmly in Jesus Christ's embrace.

Try not to dwell on the sadness and the devastation of last year.

In this 2021, go forward boldly in the power of Jesus, knowing we have a faithful Shepherd who will never abandon His sheep. The Light of the world who shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

When fear or worry raises its ugly head, try singing or reciting the words of the much-loved hymn below for the reassurance of God's love and faithfulness to you.

*“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 the hand stretched out to shield us;*

*All must be well.”*

*(Mary Bowley Peters, 1847)*

**Happy, Blessed and Peaceful 2021.**

*Ola Lawal*