

The Messenger

◆ Christmas message-
see page 3

◆ News of where
all those shoeboxes
are going-
see pages 8 + 9

◆ Saint Lucy
- see page 10

**December 2019
January 2020**

Christ Church
Methodist United Reformed Church
Barnstaple

www.christ-church-barnstaple.org.uk

◆ Young Families Work
-see page 12

◆ News of our carol service 17th
December – see page 14



◆ News of our New Year's
Party –see page 5



Calendar

December 2019

Sun			ADVENT SUNDAY	
	1st	10.30pm	Rev Don Macalister	Communion
		6.30pm	Rev Marilyn Tricker	
Mon	2nd	7.15pm	Elders' meeting	
Wed	4th	2.00pm	Meeting to explore ideas for 'Rejoice!' - all welcome	
Thur	5th	10.15am	- 11.30am Two Bridges Café	
		2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship & Barnstaple Longbridge Townswomen's Guild combined Carol Service	
		6.30pm	Girl Guides Carol Service	
Sun	8th	10.30am	Rev John Robinson	
		4.30pm	Café Church	
Mon	9th	7.30pm	Friendship Group	- Flower arranging, Maureen Body
Tues	10th	10.00am	- 12noon 'Sound it Out'	
Thur	12th	10.15am	- 11.30am Two Bridges Café (nearly the end of term - check before you go)	
		2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship	- change of programme, see Sunday notices
		7.00pm	Light up a Life Service	
Fri	13th	7.00pm	Jubilee Singers Christmas Celebration	see page 7
Sat	14th	8.30am	Men's Breakfast	- speaker Roger Byrom
		11.00am	- 1.00pm Nativity Trail	see page 5
Sun	15th	10.30am	Rev Don Macalister - Christmas Family Service	
		6.30pm	Mrs Brenda Prentice	Communion
Tues	17th	10.30am	Carol Service - all welcome	see page 14
		1.45pm	Yeo Valley School	
Thur	19th	2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship	- change of programme, see Sunday notices
Sun	22nd	10.30am	Rev Don Macalister	
		6.30pm	Carol Service - Jenny Newmam & Eff Poole	
Tues	24th	4.00pm	Christingle Service	
Wed	25th		CHRISTMAS DAY	
		10.30am	Christmas Service	
Sun	29th	10.30pm	Rev Tony Coates	
		6.30pm	No Service	
Tues	31st	4.00pm	- 6.30pm New Year's Eve Party	see page 5

The Two Bridges Café does not open during the school holidays but we'll see them back next term..

January - limited information available!

Fri	17th		<i>Last day for contributions to the February Messenger</i>	
Mon	13th	7.30pm	Friendship Group - Bring & Share Supper	
Mon	27th	7.30pm	Friendship Group - Exmoor Search & Rescue, Lionel Murphy	
Fri	31st	7.30pm	Community Links Project prayer meeting	

Bible Study - there are four Bible study groups, two in Christ Church Barnstaple on Thursday evening and Friday morning, one in Sticklepath on Thursday lunchtime and one on the third Monday afternoon of the month at the home of Reg & Muriel.

Contacts:-

Third Monday Group - (Sue Macbeth 345445) Sticklepath - Joan Cole - (326348)

Thursday evening - Marilyn Tricker (830869) Friday morning - Shirley Baxter (375560)

They will have a break over the Christmas season

Message

Dear Friends

Can it really be Advent and just a few weeks until Christmas? This wonderful time full of traditions which gathers us up and carries us along in its preparations and celebrations.

In our worship in church in the coming weeks we shall hear the familiar stories, sing carols we know so well, decorate and enjoy the excitement of preparing to celebrate together as a church family. We shall light candles and experience those silent, poignant moments in their glow. For each of us there is a spiritual journey to be taken, the journey to Bethlehem, to the dark and drafty stable where the child, Jesus, was born.

What is it we are looking for? For us the image of Bethlehem may be there, burning brightly from our childhood. It's a place we've imagined and visited in our Christmas pilgrimage since we were very young. Perhaps, like me, you have vivid memories of nativity plays reaching way back into your childhood. In the tradition it's a 'little town' that sleeps a 'silent' and 'dreamless' sleep. It's a lovely warm picture. A place which signifies God making his home with us and drawing us to be at home with God.

And yet, today, Bethlehem is a city surrounded by a concrete security wall where the division between people can be an all too obvious and damaging physical presence. So this Christmas let us travel again to Bethlehem as it is now and share our prayers and hopes for all God's children. God makes his home with us and invites us to make our home with him – not escaping the world but embracing it and loving it. And so this Christmas may we be reminded once more of both the joy and the challenge of the good news that is revealed in this child – Jesus.

Eddy joins me in wishing you joy and peace this Christmas.



Prayers for December

1st December

O Lord, clear away any darkness in my life. May I put on the armour of light, be assured of your salvation, and be determined to follow your ways. Remind me of your faithfulness and inspire a new hope in my heart. In Jesus' name. Amen.

8th December

Lord, as the Spirit rested on Jesus, filling him with wisdom and understanding, may the Spirit also rest on me, teaching and guiding me, reminding me of Jesus and all that he has done.

May your Spirit give me what I need for every day and every task, big or small, extravagant or mundane.

Holy Spirit, fill my life today and grow good fruit in me. Amen.

15th December

Jesus, help me to see you. Show me who you are.

Remind me of the things you have done, how you can turn situations upside down, and that nothing is impossible for you.

As I go through my days, help me to recognise your work in my life, to see what you have done for me. Lord, increase my faith in you. Amen.

22nd December

Lord God, in all the decisions I need to make, give me wisdom and strength.

Help me be brave enough to change my mind if that is what I need to do. May I be open to your will at work in me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

29th December

God of Joseph and Mary, God of the prophets and the gospel writers, God of all – may my words, my thoughts, my actions honour you.

May I follow you; may I find you, as they did, not cradled in your mother's arms, but reigning in my heart. Amen.

Prayers for January

5th January

Loving Lord, you inspire humility and not power.

You were content with a stable and did not demand a palace.

You were born for the many and not for a few.

May I always praise you and adore you, and bring you my love. Amen.

12th January

Heal me, Lord Jesus, I pray, from all the hurt that has come from the words spoken over me, about me or to me, that have been damaging and not affirming: words that have held me back; words that dismantled my confidence; words that I have falsely believed to be true.

Help me to hear your voice in the silence, to begin again where I have given up, to believe where I have doubted, and to be an encourager of others in all that I do and say – to your glory. Amen.

19th January

Living Lord, may I greet others in your name with humility, respect and openness.

May I serve others in your name with generosity, compassion and integrity.

May I pray for others in your name with faithfulness, grace and feeling.

And may I identify with others in your name, and receive your gifts of fellowship, grace and peace. Amen.

26th January

Forgive us, Christ of the cross, when we claim allegiance to our church rather than to your cross; when we identify with a style of worship and dishonour those of different traditions; when we unite with those who share our agenda and not with those who share your baptism. Forgive us when we are at cross purposes with you and with those you call your own. We ask this in your name. Amen.

The churches of Barnstaple invite you to join the

Nativity Trail!



WHEN?
Saturday 14th
December,
11.00am—1.00pm

HOW MUCH?
Nothing!! Entry is
free and there will
be free
refreshments for all
participants.

WHAT?
Various characters
from the first
Christmas will be
dotted around the
High Street and
Green Lanes area!

HOW?
Simply collect a
passport from
any of the
characters to get
started.

WHO?
Children will be invited to
find them all and collect
stickers and a code word
from them. Get a prize at
the end in exchange for
the coded message.

See you there! Come and be a TRAILBLAZER!

By popular demand.....

New Year's Eve party

4:00pm - 6:30pm
Everyone welcome.

Details still to be finalised - look
out for information in the Sunday
notices.

It's sure to include fun and
games for all ages!

North Devon Choral Society
will be performing

Vivaldi Gloria and **Vivaldi Magnificat**
plus **Bach Cantata 65** and **Bach Magnificat** on

Saturday 14th December at Torrington Church at 7.30 pm.

Conducted by John Hobbs.

Tickets are £15

(See Jennifer & Ian Allen for more information)

CHURCH FLOWERS

Thank you everyone for providing flowers for Christ Church on so many occasions. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to give a donation or arrange flowers, maybe for a specific Sunday special to you, do please add your name to the 2020 Flower Rota in the vestibule.

Also if you are able to take some Church flowers to cheer someone up, please speak to Gill Greenland.



Tuesday coffee rota

Dec	3rd	Pam, Gordon & Sylvia
Dec	10th	Wendy, Anne & Gill
Dec	17th	Pam & Rose
Dec	24th	No coffee morning
Dec	31st	No coffee morning

Jan	7th	Joy & Andy
Jan	14th	Ena, Joy & Rose
Jan	21st	Tony, Celia & Lorna
Jan	28th	Pam, Gordon & Sylvia

Feb	4th	Wendy, Anne & Gill
Feb	11th	Pam & Rose
Feb	18th	Joy & Andy
Feb	25th	Ena, Joy & Rose





The **Salvation Army** with funding from the local council is supporting rough sleepers in the town by providing a safe place to sleep during the winter months.

Grosvenor Church – is once again providing a free Christmas Day lunch for those who would otherwise be on their own.

Volunteers from most of the churches in Barnstaple will be going along to provide help and support in the run up to Christmas Day and on the day itself.

Please pray for all the conversations and outreach opportunities that will be made for these and other ventures during Christmas and into the New Year.

Thank you - Shirley B



Barnstaple Jubilee Singers Christmas Celebration

Christ Church Barnstaple

Friday 13th Dec. 7.00pm

Guests: **Orchard Vale School**

Braunton Ladies Handbell Ringers

Refreshments – Raffle

Free admission + Retiring Collection

for

Age Concern Barnstaple and District



**Our Christ Church
Winter Fair
Saturday 16th November**



**Our
contribution
to the
Shoebbox
appeal**



EVENTS

Thank you to everyone who helped or contributed in any way at our recent Winter Fair.

A grand total of £1081.47 has been raised for church funds.

Your Committee has not been sitting back in the meantime, but rather, we have been busy planning for events for 2020. Keep an eye out for what is happening. Remember, we can have fun and fellowship whilst fund raising. There should be an event that is just right for you.

Our busy year starts with our ever popular Quiz which will be held in April. Thank you so much for your support over the past 12 months.

Andy Morley (Secretary - Events Committee)

A letter of appreciation from June & Adrian Redfern following the collection of the 'shoeboxes'.

Dear Sylvia and members and friends of Christ Church Barnstaple,

500+ shoeboxes

£476.00 in cash

Numerous black sacks!!

(With over 200 blankets, knitted cardigans, jumpers & baby clothes.)

Thank you all so much for whatever involvement you had in either filling shoeboxes, providing items for shoeboxes, beautiful knitting of all sorts and for those in the background, shoebox coverers (if that is a word!) and those who provided transport.

It is always a joy to see you all, I regard you as friends as we have been meeting up for at least 10 years – so thank you.

So Sylvia, what can I say about you – THANK YOU for being an enabler and encourager to so many! We are amazed and so happy to see you looking so well! Thank the Lord.

One final request – I am afraid I don't know the name of the lady with the tablet who always takes photos, but we have a request from IAT for 'shoebox' photos – the email address is as per the enclosed piece of paper – Julie@internationalaidtrust.org.uk Do please send what you have.

Best wishes to you all,
June & Adrian

SAINT LUCY (SANTA LUCIA)

Saint Lucy is the patron saint of Syracuse (Sicily). According to apocryphal facts, Saint Lucy came from a wealthy Sicilian family; she spurned worldly goods and marriage from wealthy suitors and vowed to remain a virgin, like St Agatha. Saint Lucy was a Christian at the time of the Diocletian persecutions, it was around the year 304. A wealthy suitor feeling miffed by her rejection reported her to the authorities. The judge ordered several horrible punishments but each time divine intervention rescued her. However, she was finally killed by the sword.

St Lucy's feast day is celebrated on 13th December, which in the old Julian calendar is mid-winter and symbolises the return of the light. Saint Lucy is also the patron saint of Sweden, a country that experiences long dark winters, so the time when the Sun appears to climb again in the heavens is a very important one. In Sweden it marks the beginning of the Christmas celebrations. On 13th December the youngest daughter of the house rises, puts on a white dress and a headdress containing candles and wakes the rest of the house with coffee and Saint Lucy buns. (*see recipe*).

In many Scandinavian countries and areas of the USA to which Scandinavian people have emigrated, the day is celebrated with a procession, each town having chosen its own St Lucy. Young girls wear white with lighted wreaths on their heads and the boys wear white pyjama-like outfits. The festival is also meant to bring light and hope during the darkest time of the year.

Due to her connection with light and the eyes she is patron saint of the blind.

Jennifer Allen



Church Greetings Cards



As well as a variety of Greetings cards, Christmas cards are now available from Faith, at Hobnob, or myself. All proceeds from the sale of these cards go to Christ Church funds.

My thanks to all who support me in this work.

Anne Roberts

ST LUCIA BUNS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb (500gms) plain white bread flour
6 ounces (150gms) softened butter
2 eggs
2 tspns dried easybake yeast
A few strands of saffron (optional)
Pinch of salt
¼ pint milk
¼ tspn cinnamon
2 ounces (50gms) raisins (soaked in boiling water and strained before using).

METHOD

Heat milk with saffron strands if using and leave to cool with the lid on the saucepan. Sift flour into a large bowl, add yeast and salt. Add 4 ounces (100gms) softened butter and cut into flour.

Beat the eggs, strain the milk onto the eggs (milk should now be coloured and warm, beat together. Add to the flour mixture, attach dough hook if using a fixed head mixer and knead for 10 minutes. Dough should be soft and silky when kneading is complete. Brush bowl with oil and return dough to bowl and cover with oiled polythene or cling film. Allow to rise to double in size in a warm place.

Meanwhile mix remaining butter with brown sugar and cinnamon. When dough is ready cut into 12 pieces, roll each piece to approximately 8 inches (20cms) by about 4 inches (10cms), spread a little butter mixture onto the dough and cover with a few soaked raisins. Roll up the dough length wise and tease even longer. Make into an S shape and leave to prove on a greased tray. Reserve a few of the raisins for putting on the buns before going into the oven. These are put into the S bends to look like eyes. Put in a warm place to double in size. Have the oven heated to Gas 6 Electric 200, brush with beaten egg and cook for about 12 mins. Best enjoyed warm from the oven.



Setting up a small business.

Update from Francisco on Kira Farm. He still continues to amaze! This will probably be his last but one letter before he returns home. We shall miss him!

'Greetings of joy from Kira Farm. How are you doing my dear friends?

I am doing well on Kira, happily counting down months to come to the end of my training. I am happy to inform you that we are receiving a good amount of rain so my garden is doing so well, in a few weeks I will be harvesting some vegetables and I am looking forward to a good harvest.

On top of the normal daily training, I have been taken through a wonderful business training. I always thought it was a very complicated thing to learn about business. We have been blessed to have a wonderful trainer who has made everything so easy for us to understand.

We were given a loan of £15 to start up a business and together with my group we decided to do a samosa and donut selling business but can you believe that in just a week we had paid back the £15 and we are now counting a lot of profits. This has given me a lot of confidence that I cannot fail in life.

'Thanks a lot for your support which is getting me this skilled.

Yours Francisco.'

Young Families Work

Thank you for your part in all that has taken place in 2019. We look forward to all that 2020 will bring.

Here are some upcoming dates for your diary:-

Café Church (Christmas) – Sunday 8th December 4:30-6:00pm

Nativity Trail – Saturday 14th December 11:00am-1:00pm

Christmas Family Service – Sunday 15th December 10:30am

Christingle Service – Christmas Eve 4:00-6:30pm

New Year's Eve Party – Tuesday 31st December 4:00-6:30pm

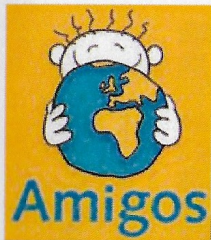
Café Church (Hope & Joy) – Sunday 12th January 4:30-6:00pm

For more information on any of the above, please contact Jo on 07450 582414.

If you would like to be a new volunteer at any of the Young Families activities, we would be pleased to hear from you. The regular groups are Sunday Club, Toddler Praise, Parents & Toddlers, Holiday Club and Café Church. Please see Jo or Anthea if you are interested.

I wish you a peaceful Christmas and many good wishes for the New Year.

Jo



Making remembrance poppies at Café Church



You are warmly invited to a
Carol Service
at
Christ Church, Bear Street
on
Tuesday the 17th December
at
10:30am



This will be a special short and interactive carol service with old and familiar traditional carols, readings and prayers, reminding us all what Christmas is all about.

Refreshments after the service will be available for a small donation.










For further details, please contact
Shirley 01271 375560











Our family matters









Christ Church Family News

There are many of our church family on the sick list and some house-bound. Some are named in the Prayer Book, which is kept in the vestry and used at prayer meetings, but may not always be used in Sunday services while we consider the implications of new legislation around data protection.

If you would like your name to be added to the list in the Prayer Book, please speak to the duty elder on a Sunday, and indicate whether or not you would like to be included in congregational prayers in the Sunday service.

SUNDAY ROTAS	1st December	8th December	15th December	22nd December	29th December
Coffee 	Jennifer Allen	Gill Tucker	Joy Morley	Nicola Wilkins	Elaine Stevens
Flowers 		Hilary Iley	George Hopkins	Christmas	Christmas
Projector 	Gordon Pearce	Jack Neville	Kathy Jeacock	Andy Morley	David Wilson
Preparing Communion Morning 1st Sunday Evening 3rd Sunday	Gordon & Pam Pearce		Liz Seymour		
Serving Communion 	Jack Neville Ronnie Wilson Rosemary Cole Mike Smith				
Vestry Steward Morning Evening 	Jack Neville Alison Cairns	Ronnie Wilson -	Gill Greenland Shirley Baxter	Liz Seymour Eff Poole	Elaine Stevens Anthea Coates

SUNDAY ROTAS	5th January	12th January	19th January	26th January
Coffee 	Celia Huxtable	Elaine Stevens	Muriel Symons	Pauline Dawson
Flowers 	If you would like to give a donation or arrange flowers, maybe for a specific Sunday special to you, do please add your name to the 2020 Flower Rota in the vestibule.			
Projector 	Gordon Pearce	Jack Wilson	Kathy Jeacock	David Wilson
Preparing Communion Morning 1st Sunday Evening 3rd Sunday	Gordon & Pam Pearce		Ronnie Wilson	
Serving Communion 	Liz Seymour Kathy Jeacock Celia Huxtable Reg Symons	 		
Vestry Steward Morning Evening 	Liz Seymour Shirley Baxter	Elaine Stevens	Ian Allen Eff Poole	Jack Neville Anthea Coates

SUNDAY ROTAS	2nd February	9th February	16th February	23rd February
Coffee 	Gill Tucker	Joy Morley	Celia Huxtable	Elaine Stevens
Flowers 	If you would like to give a donation or arrange flowers, maybe for a specific Sunday special to you, do please add your name to the 2020 Flower Rota in the vestibule.			
Projector 	Gordon Pearce	Jack Neville	Kathy Jeacock	David Wilson
Preparing Communion Morning 1st Sunday Evening 3rd Sunday	Gordon & Pam Pearce		Elaine Stevens	
Serving Communion 	Gill Greenland Ronnie Wilson Norman Tucker David Wilson			
Vestry Steward Morning Evening 	Gill Greenland Jenny Newman	Ronnie Wilson	Liz Seymour Alison Cairns	Elaine Stevens Shirley Baxter

Weekly Meetings

Monday	7.30pm	Friendship group	(2nd & 4th Mondays of each month) contact Rose de la Cour tel 830824
Tuesday	9.30am - 12.00 noon	Coffee morning	
	9.30am	Prayer meeting ...	(except the last Tuesday of each month)
	10.30am	Holy Communion ...	(last Tuesday of each month)
	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Brownies ...	contact Heather Collins 07803841000
	5.30pm 6.30pm	Rainbows ...	contact Nicola Wilkins
	7.00pm - 8.30pm	Guides ...	tel 07813620615 or 01271377154
Wednesday	1.30pm - 3.00pm	Parents & Toddlers	contact Jo Grant 07450582414
Thursday	2.30pm	Ladies Fellowship ...	contact Sylvia Jones tel 346607
	7.30pm	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Friday	10.00am - 12.00 noon	Hobnob coffee morning	
	10.30am	Bible Study...	contact Shirley Baxter tel 375560
Saturday	8.30am	2nd Saturday of each month - circuit event	
		Men's Breakfast	contact Mike Smith tel 345019

All at Christ Church Barnstaple are committed to the following Safeguarding Principles:

- * the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
- * the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- * the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
(Methodist Safeguarding Guidelines, online: www.methodist.org.uk)

Sunday Offertory for October 2019

		Cash	Envelopes
October	6th	£	£
	13th	£	£
	20th	£	£
	27th	£	£

An increasing number of people are donating money direct to the Church account by standing order. Currently this offertory is £ per month. *If you are a tax payer* and would like the church to claim back the tax on your giving or if you change your address or other details, please contact Judith Smith on 01271 345019 or speak to a serving elder - Thank you.



*If you are visiting Christ Church today we extend a warm welcome.
Please take a Messenger home with our good wishes.*

Christ Church Minister
Rev Don Macalister
8 Kestrel Way,
Westacott
Barnstaple EX32 8QN

tel. 01271 345313
dasmacalister@icloud.com

Young families worker
Jo Grant

jogrant-christchurch@outlook.com
tel 07450 582414

Elders

Ian Allen	Kathy Jeacock (treas)	Liz Seymour
Shirley Baxter	Sylvia Jones	Elaine Stevens (sec)
Alison Cairns	Jack Neville	Ronnie Wilson
Anthea Coates	Jenny Newman	
Gill Greenland	Eff Poole	

Telephone Directory (01271)

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Room Bookings	374085
Circuit Administrators	379116

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Thank you to Tesco for a generous contribution to Sound it Out



A wonderful Baptism celebration for Annie Grace and Ellie May, their parents, friends and family. Lovely that we were able to welcome them all to our church.