

# The Messenger

**Christ Church Barnstaple**  
Methodist & United Reformed Church



**March 2025**

*“We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.*

**Psalms 33:20-22**

**Yes, this IS The Messenger** - but in a temporary format. Our thanks to Amelia for taking on the task of putting this together ... watch this space!

We hope this month to email copies out to those who previously received them.

Also thanks to Jennifer, who with advice and help has set up a Facebook page, to advertise regular events (like Café Church) and specials (eg fundraising events).

Offers of help with the Church website are being followed up.

Facebook Link for any of those who wish to share.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61572712444101>

## March Diary

Sun	2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am 3.00pm	Morning Worship with Holy Communion: Revd Stephen Caddick Causeway Service
Tues	4 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Holy Communion: Rev. Stephen Caddick
Sun	9 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am 4.30pm	Morning Worship: Rev. Sue Macbeth Café Church
Mon	10 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am 2.30pm	Sound It Out Friendship Group
Sun	16 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Deacon Ruth Richey (includes Clara's baptism) Followed by a Bring-and-Share lunch
Sun	23 <sup>rd</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship: Local Arrangement
Mon	24 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am 2.30pm	Sound It Out Friendship Group
Sun	30 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am 6.30pm	Peter Edwardson Oasis: Time for prayer and reflection

Regular meetings:

Tuesdays: Rainbows and Brownies 5.30pm (term-time only)

Wednesdays: Parents and Toddlers 9.30am (term-time only)

Thursdays: Circuit Zoom Service 7.00pm

Fridays: Hobnob 10.00 – 11.30am (except Bank Holidays)

***Note from Rev. Marilyn:***

*Please continue to keep Action for Children staff, and future plans for April and beyond in your prayers, as Devon County Council prepares to take over management of the provision for families from Action for Children*

## **Sing for your Supper**



### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7.00pm**

**An evening of joyful singing and good company**

**Supper** of your choice will be served at 8.15pm  
either from the Silver Cod Menu –  
fish, pies, sausages chips etc –  
or home made soup and roll. Special diets catered for.

To book please sign in on the form in the vestibule  
or let Anthea Coates know your choice  
by Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 01237 471740

Should you have a new hymn or song to share  
or a particular one you would like included,  
please contact Jenny Newman on 01271 342864

Looking forward to seeing you!

## **Events in March**

### **Circuit Lent Bible Study: 'In the Shadow of the Cross'**

Wednesdays 2.00pm, starting March 5<sup>th</sup> to April 16<sup>th</sup>

Sticklepath Methodist Church. Led by Peter Edwards

Everyone welcome

### **Fri. March 7<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm World Day of Prayer Service**

**St Peter's Church, Barnstaple.** This year's service has been prepared by Christians from the Cook Islands in the South Pacific. Refreshments afterwards All are welcome – an opportunity to meet up with people from different local churches.

### **Sunday March 16<sup>th</sup> 10.30am**

Today is a special day for Clara: not only is it her first birthday but Rev. Marilyn will baptise her during this morning's service. And of course we welcome Amelia and George, and big brother Owen, along with Clara's godparents, family and friends.

The service will be led by Deacon Ruth Richey, joining us for the first time. We welcome Deacon Ruth, who is the 'Mission Area Lead' for the North of our Methodist District: she has been in post since September, and is there to support and encourage us as we seek new ways to share God's love in our communities.

After the service *everyone* is invited to stay for a bring-and-share lunch

### **Upcoming Friendship Group Sessions:**

**March 10<sup>th</sup>** - Rob Ward, the Clerk of the council will be visiting.

**March 24<sup>th</sup>** - Shirley Baxter: sharing with us her work in the prisons.

**Fri. March 21<sup>st</sup> 7.00pm** 'Sing for Your Supper' – details elsewhere

### **Sunday March 30<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Oasis Service**

A time of quiet reflection, readings, prayers and music.

There will be a meeting earlier in March to plan this act of worship: anyone who would like to be involved, please contact Rev. Marilyn.



**Saturday 15th March**  
**10am - 4pm**

***Christ Church***  
***Spring cleaning***  
***Day !***



**Don't miss the social event of the year.**  
**Pop in for half an hour or stay all day.**  
**Please bring your own cleaning kit as there is a**  
**limited supply in the church.**  
**Jobs for everyone, including making the tea/coffee.**

**Other Dates for your diary:**

**Tues. April 1<sup>st</sup> 2.30pm on Zoom** Worship Group – planning ahead for worship, special services and Local Arrangements. Open to all – ask Eff or one of the elders to be put on the list.

**Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup>** Church Away Day, led by Deacon Ruth Richey: all are welcome – time to relax, talk and pray together. Includes lunch. Further details to follow.

**Notes from the Elders' Meeting on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**chaired by Rev. Stephen**

- *Safeguarding report* received from Maureen Thomas. Extra help may be needed on March 16<sup>th</sup> (Clara's baptism Sunday)
- *Worship: Special Services* in April / May were agreed:  
Apr. 17<sup>th</sup> Maundy Thursday 1.00pm Bread and Soup lunch  
2.00 Communion Service led by Rev. Stephen  
Apr. 18<sup>th</sup> Good Friday 10.30am Rev. Marilyn  
May 11<sup>th</sup> Christian Aid Service 10.30am (Paula and Janet)
- *Monitor for the front door* to be used when Jane (Circuit Admin) is in the office, as a safety measure. Circuit to provide.
- *Concern about the future of Family Hubs and Action for Children staff* when Devon County Council takes over from Action for Children in April. Maintaining these contacts is a key part of Community Links.
- *Finance.* Increases in regular giving have been appreciated, but more still needed. Need to use resources and advice available from URC and Methodist Churches. Raise commitment and enthusiasm! Remember we are people of faith carrying out the work of God. Chris and Janet will share questions/ideas.
- *Practical:* Bowdens to steam clean kitchen (£295 + VAT); piano in room 1 available to someone who can collect; Church Cleaning Day March 15<sup>th</sup>
- *Events:* Afternoon Tea planned for Sat. 31<sup>st</sup> May
- *Thanks to Amelia and Jennifer (and others)* offering help with the Messenger and a Facebook page. Possible offers of help with the website are being followed up.

**Date of the next elders' meeting:**  
**Monday March 10<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm at church**

### **Café Church**

The theme in February was the story of Jesus' Special Friends. The story follows Jesus as he borrows a boat from a fisherman named Peter, to address a large crowd on the bank of a lake. After Jesus' speech, he led Peter out further from the lake's shore and caught a large amount of fish of all different colours. To celebrate this story, we decorated fish shaped biscuits and ornaments to show the variety of fish caught that fateful day. Participating children stood at the front of the attendees and led with their own prayers, then shared with us the importance of helping others and gave us their own examples. We were encouraged to help both people close to us and strangers, for through helping others you may also find an abundance of your own.

### **Parents and toddlers**

We have had the opportunity to welcome several new families to the Parent and Toddlers group over the last few weeks. It is always a privilege to see budding families and young people develop and grow throughout these formative years.

In these groups we blend sensory play, singing and activities to create moments for families to bond and to encourage socialisation of both adults and their toddlers, in hope of creating lasting friendships.

### **Friendship group**

The friendship group has met twice since February, with good attendance in each session.

**Bob-Lee** shared with us a book he has written, '*The Last Boat Home*' by Robert E. Lee, following his Father-in-law's experience throughout World War 2. Rob and Carol have a stall in the Pannier Market every Friday, where the book is available to purchase.

**Marlene** told us the story of Florence Nightingale and her family. Florence Nightingale is well renowned and respected, so having the chance to hear so many facts about her life was truly fascinating.

Both sessions were entertaining, informative and introspective, as we consider figures in history who overcame a variety of life's challenges.

**Our Mission Statement:**

**Christ Church seeks to express the love of Christ for everyone.**

*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](http://www.methodist.org.uk))

**Contacts:**

Rev. Tracey Darling 01271

649955 [tracey.darling@methodist.org.uk](mailto:tracey.darling@methodist.org.uk)

Rev. Stephen Caddick: 01271 345956

Alison Cairns (Church Secretary) 343154 [alisoncairns@hotmail.com](mailto:alisoncairns@hotmail.com)

Kathy Jeacock (Church Treasurer) 373555

*Church Elders:* Chris Marshall, Jenny Newman, Staveley Dawson, Janet Marshall, Shirley Baxter, Elaine Stevens, Anthea Coates, Jennifer Allen

*Pastoral Team (Church Friends):* Shirley Baxter and Elaine Stevens  
*Room Bookings:* 371808

*Christian Aid Reps:* Janet Marshall and Paula Littlewood

Janet: [jcbmar18@btinternet.com](mailto:jcbmar18@btinternet.com)

For the April Messenger please send information and photos of church events to Amelia by Wednesday March

19<sup>th</sup>: [ameliablackwood97@gmail.com](mailto:ameliablackwood97@gmail.com)



### **Ash Wednesday thoughts and prayers.**

The Christian season of Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday**. The date of Ash Wednesday varies each year depending on the date of Easter. It is always six-and-a-half weeks before Easter. It can be as early as the 4th February and the latest possible date is the 10th March. **This year it is on the 5th March.**

Traditionally on Ash Wednesday the palm leaves and crosses saved from last year's Palm Sunday are burnt into grey ashes. They are then smeared in the shape of a cross on the foreheads of Christian people. At this point, their season of Lent begins.

We are not having an Ash Wednesday service at Christ Church this year but you may wish to begin your personal journey through Lent with the prayer below.

#### **The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian**

"O Lord and Master of my life, keep from me  
the spirit of indifference and discouragement,  
lust for power, and idle chatter.

Instead, grant to me, your servant,  
the spirit of wholeness of being,  
humble-mindedness, patience, and love.

O Lord and King, grant me the grace  
to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother;  
for you are blessed now and ever and forever". Amen.

It is a prayer for self-awareness and of awareness of our brothers and sisters, a day for restoring good and balanced relationships with those around us.

As we move through Lent let us deepen our awareness of how we interact with others and what we can do to bring grace and healing to them and to our world.

*Janet Marshall*

