



## ST CHRISTOPHER'S 'CATCH-UP CHURCH'

### NEWSLETTER

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

### NEWS UPDATE



#### A word of Thanks

Firstly, may I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

I want to thank you all for your support and prayers the week before Christmas when my family endured the coronavirus. My wife and our three children all tested positive for Covid-19; I was the only person who didn't seem to show any symptoms. Our youngest (Meredith) developed a persistent high temperature with tonsillitis, which meant that we were up all night when we really needed to rest! It was a difficult time, but we got through it.



We unfortunately begin our new year at a time when the coronavirus is spreading quite rapidly. I am pleased that our church services can still go ahead, I would just remind us all to remain careful to practice good safety when we come together, not letting our guard down or being relaxed about the rules. We can enjoy meeting safely if we continue to observe good social distancing.

#### Junior Church

We are permitted to continue with Junior Church whilst in tier four. This is a privilege when you consider that other extra-curricular activities for children like sports, dance, or gymnastics are suspended. We intend to continue with the Junior Church, whilst recognising that it has to be delivered in a way that is more restricted than before. Children will be expected to remain at their table without moving around, with the chosen activities in keeping with this.



We feel that there are nevertheless benefits to offering Junior Church at this time, with Dawn Edwards keen to offer a safe space where the children can gather. You can let Dawn or Louise know that you intend to bring your child to Junior Church by emailing [dawnmay62@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dawnmay62@hotmail.co.uk) or [youngpeople@stchristopherslea.org](mailto:youngpeople@stchristopherslea.org).

#### Jean Hill

Some of you will know Jean Hill, who has died recently on 17<sup>th</sup> December at the age of 88. Jean lived at her home on Blackpool Road in Lea for 65 years, before spending some time at Abraham House care home. She was a longstanding member of St Christopher's, with her children David and Michael singing in the choir years ago. She was a delightful lady, full of warmth and kindness. Her funeral service is being held at St Christopher's on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January, though due to restrictions on numbers the service is not open to the public. Attendance can be arranged through Jean's son Michael.

## Answers to Beryl's Christmas Quiz!

### Well-known Christmas Songs and Phrases

1. R.T. R-N. R.-----*Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer*
2. S. C .I. C. T. T.----- *Santa Claus is coming to town*
3. L.I.S. L.I.S. L.I.S. -----*Let it snow Let it snow Let it snow-*
4. L.D. -----*Little Donkey*
5. M.B.C.----- *Mary's Boy Child*
6. I.B.T.L. A. L. L. C. ----- *It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas*
7. I. D. O. A. W. C. -----*I'm dreaming of a white Christmas*
8. I. W. I. C. B. C. E. D. ----- *I wish it could be Christmas every day*
9. W.A. C. I. B. ----- *When a child is born*
10. W.W. Y. A. M. C.- ----- *We wish you a Merry Christmas*
11. C. R. B. A. O. F. -----*Chestnuts roasting by an open fire*
12. A. I. W. F. C. I. Y.----- *All I want for Christmas is you*

### Answers to the CHOCOLATE QUIZ

- (a) Cinderella's friend (7) .....*Buttons.*
- (b) 100 AU (3,4) .....*All Gold.*
- (c) 9,10,11 (5,5) .....*After Eight.*
- (d)  $2 - 0 + 9$  (4) .....*Twix.*
- (e) Lots of Parties (12) .....*Celebrations.*

### **BIBLE READING – John 1:1-18**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.*

*He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.*

*And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ' ) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.*

## **THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE – Rev Dr Mike Clayton**

### **The Maker's Instructions**



I have never been that good at cooking – my wife would readily agree with this. When the kids were younger and still at home, they all knew that if Dad was cooking, then whatever it was would be well and truly “crispy” come serving time.

Which is one reason why I have always loved microwave meals! Just a quick whizz through the instructions (why do they make the print so small?), pierce the film, in it goes, and ping! A few minutes later all done! Yes, the tricky ones need stirring halfway through and maybe some water adding as well but even I can manage that.

One thing that has always struck me though, is that the instructions often have a clause towards the end stating that you may need to put it in for longer or shorter than the stated time. And yet, I have never needed to do that. So long as I have followed the instructions properly like it says, it is always piping hot, always.

Our reading today is God our Father's instructions – telling us on the side of the packet – what He was doing when he sent his Son the Lord Jesus into our world.

*“The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world” v.9*

And then John goes onto say later on (v14):-

*“And the word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory”*



The instructions are clear, this is not a light that is still some way off in the distance, at the far end of the tunnel. This light is a person, this light is Christ, and this light is already here with us.

John adds that he and others have had that deep experience of Jesus being amongst them, “...we have seen his glory...”. John has found that all those instructions from the Father about Jesus have proved true in practice, in his own life too.

And to have that radiant trust in Another's care for us at the core of our being is worth its weight in gold – here, now, today. And with Christ in us, we carry that certainty of hope with us always, wherever we go, always.

And how will that show? It will show in the 1001 ways in which we help all those in need around us. By the help we give to our neighbours, our family, our friends, our work colleagues, basically anyone and everyone we come across. Whatever the need is, whatever shape or form that help takes. Many are doing such wonderful stuff already for others, and the simple prayer, "Lord show me who I can help and where I can help today?" will always be answered. And even with quite little things, people often still remember many years later down the line the kindness that was shown to them at the time.

*"The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world" v.9*

### **Prayers – Written by Peter**

Lord Jesus, at the start of this New Year we ask you to abide with us.

We thank you that you entered our world to bring us your true light, and we thank you that by your Holy Spirit we carry this light within. May we shine Your light through acts of kindness and grace, seeking every opportunity to do good, and may we bring hope to others where there is fear, anxiety, or despair.



Lord in your mercy;

**Hear our prayer.**

We thank you Lord for all that was good about 2020, for every gift of grace that was given and received, in the midst of so many trials. As we look to the year ahead, give us eyes to see where you are at work, to recognise that you go with us, and to look for your guiding hand. We offer you our hopes and our fears for the year ahead, and ask that you give us faith to trust in you.

We pray especially for those who will manage and deliver the covid-19 vaccinations, that wise leadership will be shown both locally and nationally. We pray that our world will be delivered not only from this disease, but from all that would spoil human society and the natural world.

In your mercy, deliver us from evil.

Lord in your mercy;

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for our church, that we will be a faithful people. May we be steadfast in our love for God and our love for our neighbours. Where there is trouble and strife, give us courage to work for healing and peace.

Bless our families, our church, our neighbours, and our parish of St Christopher's. Let this be a year when differences are put aside and people come together to work for the common good.

Merciful Father; **accept these prayers for the sake of you Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**