



Christ Church Notice Sheet 06 December 2020

Covid-19 Outreach Support team

Christ Church has assembled a small, flexible group of volunteers to support vulnerable and self-isolating parishioners in a variety of ways - from shopping and collecting prescriptions to phone support and sending letters. For more information, see the church website or email christchurch-covid19-outreach@outlook.com

Personal prayer

While churches are closed for services, Christ Church will still offer space for personal prayer. This will be the usual weekly opening on Wednesdays 10-11am. Government guidance on social distancing and face coverings will be followed, look out for signs showing where you can sit.

Book pews for Christ Church Christmas services

Christmas will be different this year, but Christ Church will still be offering the usual services so that we can celebrate and worship together. To stay safe, social distancing will be followed and a ticketing system will be in place to make sure the church isn't overcrowded.

Here are the services you can book:

Carols by Candlelight - Sat 19th and Sun 20th at 6.30pm

Midnight Communion - Thurs 24th at 11.30pm

Christmas Day - Fri 25th at 8am and 10.30am

Book your free tickets on this website: www.ticketsource.co.uk/christ-church-cheltenham

Brass by Candlelight - Mon 21st at 4pm, tickets cost £10 (£5 students), on sale at:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/cheltenhamchristianarts>

A Carol by Candlelight service will also be available on YouTube at the same time as the one in church on Sun 20th, and there will be an online Christingle Service on Thurs 24th at 3pm.

Stewards/helpers for Christmas services

The Wardens are putting together a Stewards' Rota for Christmas. Please speak to us (Barbara 07912345056 or Sarah 01242 513067) if you can help at any of the following times:

Stewards and candle lighters at Carols by Candlelight Sat 19th/Sun20th at 5.30pm

Stewards on Christmas Eve Thurs 24th at 10.45pm

Stewards on Christmas Day Fri 25th at 9.45am

Online fitness classes from Cheltenham's faith-based gym

If you want to work on your fitness in the festive season, Jon Taylor, the mastermind behind the Armoury, is running a new kind of exercise class to get your mind and your body working. Working with PSALMS and the Diocese, Jon is exploring sessions for family fitness, adult fitness and mobility. Try out the online classes on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/PSALMSUK/playlists>

A message from Bishop Rachel

You can see the Diocesan Synod Presidential address, given on Sat 28th November here:

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2020/bishops-presidential-address-nov-2020/>

Outreach Magazine Christmas Issue

A limited number of printed copies will be available at the back of Church. These are primarily intended for people who do not have Internet access, newcomers/visitors to Christmas Services, and for distributors.

Get involved in the Big Christmas Carol Service - 12 December, 6pm

The RSCM will be hosting an exclusive free joint Christmas Carol Service together with the Churches Conservation Trust. led by the Very Revd Dr John Hall. There will be readings and contributions from some very special guests including the Rt Hon Theresa May MP, Alexander Armstrong and Timothy Bentinck ('David Archer'); and a wide variety of music including John Rutter conducting one of his own carols. Broadcasting from the beautiful All Saints' church in the heart of Cambridge, the music will include well-known and loved favourites, as well as approachable new carols. Click the link for details on how to get involved: <https://www.rscm.org.uk/online-resources/the-big-christmas-carol-service/>

Support Christ Church financially

You can give by texting CHURCH, plus the amount you would like to donate (up to £20), to 70450. So to give £5, text CHURCH 5 to 70450, or to give £20, text CHURCH 20 to 70450. This service costs your donation plus your standard message rate. You can also give any amount online by visiting the http://www.give.net/Christ_Church_Chelt - Thank you!

PRAYERS:

God of hope you raised up John the Baptist to prepare your people, a strange man in a strange place, prophesying that Jesus the Messiah would come.

May we, who are in these difficult days, sometimes strange, sometimes not, give thanks that we can gather to worship you. As we joyfully await the coming of Christ, we pray to you for the needs of the church and the world.

This past week as our four nations reset the restrictions to meet the impact of the virus across our country, we give thanks for our leaders and their medical advisers, as they strive to guide us out of the coronavirus pandemic. Let the arrangements leading up to Christmas be followed with care so that the transmission rate will continue to be below 1. Now that a vaccine has been approved by the MHRA let us pray the vaccine will be taken up, and applied fairly and effectively as quickly as possible.

Beyond our hopes and desires let us think of those who are at a very low ebb, frightened and lonely. Those with mental health issues, those in pain and those suffering domestic abuse. We pray for people around the world who are facing covid hardship especially in the countries where the virus is spreading out of control.

We remember the people of Beirut whose medical facilities were so badly damaged by the explosion last summer, the refugees across the Middle East and those still on the Greek islands. This week the Amos Trust asks us to pray especially for the Children and young people of Gaza.

We pray for our own Church here in Cheltenham. We lift in prayer our ministry team as they plan the forthcoming Christmas services and as they come together to plan, rehearse and record the Christingle service to be transmitted online on Christmas Eve.

We pray for those who are sick in body and in mind especially: Manal Al-Badish, Julia Bamford, Ghazi Chehaib, Chris and June Eddershaw, Mary Edwards, Jane Heaton, Tina Holland, Grace Hood, Pam Jenner, Rose Marville, Daphne Simpson, Rosemary Singer, William Staight, Anne Standish, Jane Weston, Keith White, Paul and Zak.

We pray too for the bereaved, especially at this time when loved ones cannot gather.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21 NIV)