

A warm welcome to

The Parish of Christ Church, Lancaster

Sunday 17th December 2023 *Third Sunday of Advent*

Vicar: Revd Carol Backhouse 01524 942105
1 East Road, Lancaster, LA1 3EE

www.christchurchlancaster.org.uk Facebook: @ChristChurchLancaster



a vibrant, inclusive
worshipping
community

**Everyone is welcome to join in
prayer and worship this week:**

Today - 17th December

8:30am *Holy Communion*

10:30am *All Together Eucharist - Toy Service*

4pm *Traditional Carol Service*
(*No* 6pm Service)

Tuesday

4pm *Prayer4* (see notice)

7:30pm *Advent Course* (Storey Chapel)

Wednesday

5.30pm *Meditation and Evening Prayer*
(Storey Chapel)

Friday

No 9.30am *Holy Communion*
(Due to Ripley Service)

Next Sunday - 24th December

No 8:30am *Holy Communion*
10:30am *Parish Eucharist*
4pm *Crib Service*
11.30pm *Midnight Mass*

Prayer for the Week:

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Children's Church

Every Sunday of term time during the 10.30 service for KSI/2 children

A special rehearsal for children helping with the Crib Service will be on Sunday 24th at 2.30pm

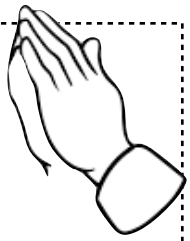
Contact: Mrs Julie Tinnion 07749 489623 for more information



Please ask the Stewards for directions and assistance.

Please send items for inclusion in this newsletter to Jacqueline Stamper by Thursday lunchtime. Many thanks.

Please remember in your prayers:



Those who are sick:

Youngblood McCray, Ernie Wilson, Thomas Platt, Yan Connell, David Foster, Susanna Michaelis, Juliann Dougherty, Lucas Calvert, Ron Holmes, Peter.

Those who have died recently: Fred Jones, Annie Lee, Sue Widden, Stephen Gardner.

Couples preparing for marriage: Laura Dixon and Mike Sambell.

Parish Cycle of Prayer:

For those who live and work on Ambleside Road, Patterdale Road.

For our MP and local council.

For those attending our forthcoming Christmas Services, and for Mingle on Mondays.

Zoom Prayer:

Tuesday 19th December is the next meeting of Prayer4 - 30 minutes of prayer, at 4pm every fortnight. There'll be a short Bible reading, some music, some stillness, and space to pray for the people and places on your heart - all from the comfort of your own sofa. Zoom details: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8069459310?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8069459310?pwd=cVJlZDlnNXF2dDVFVThVa0Z0VWE5dz09)

[pwd=cVJlZDlnNXF2dDVFVThVa0Z0VWE5dz09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8069459310?pwd=cVJlZDlnNXF2dDVFVThVa0Z0VWE5dz09). Meeting ID: 806 945 9310

Passcode 942105

Advent Study Group

All are welcome to join our Advent Study Course, *Preparing the Way*. Next week we meet on Tuesday 19th December at 7:30 pm for the last session. Do come along to the Storey Chapel for about an hour. The sessions are related, but also work on their own, so you don't have to commit to every session.

Thought for the Week

When Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan and was baptized by John the Baptist, he did so not because he was in need of repentance, or conversion: he did it to be among people who need forgiveness, among us sinners, and to take upon himself the burden of our sins.

Pope Francis

Meeting up

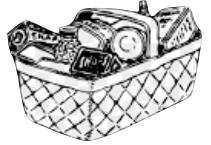
The clergy are available for pastoral support and spiritual direction, so please don't hesitate to be in contact. If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time or is seriously ill, please let us know as soon as possible, to arrange prayers, home communion, a hospital visit, or anointing of the sick. If you would like us to pray for you, or for someone you know, for any reason, please email your request to prayer@christchurchlancaster.org.uk or text the Prayer Chain on 07980 351855.

Please ask the person's permission if you'd like them included in the weekly notices.

In Other News...

The Olive Branch Foodbank

... is making it's Christmas Appeal for the following items - biscuit boxes, mince pies, yule logs, Christmas puddings and cakes, crisps, chocolates and coffee. All other items, including toiletries, are also gratefully received! Or you can give money for them to buy what is needed: <https://www.the-olivebranch.org.uk/donate/>



Eco-Group Thought/Action for the Week



While you prepare for Christmas pray for those people who are displaced from their homes owing to fire, flood and famine. Even in UK many will not be able to spend Christmas in their own homes due to flood damage in recent months.

Donations for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Donations of washing powder, laundry liquid, men's toiletries, men's hats and gloves needed. Please leave donations in the box at the back of church for RAIS.

Recycling at Christ Church

The next collection of crisp packets, used toothbrushes, plastic bottle tops, toothpaste tubes, and blister packets of tablets will be on the first Sunday of each month.

Giggle (or Groan) of the week - suggestions welcome!

Q. What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party? A. Freeze a jolly good fellow!

Other Diary Dates...why not invite a friend?

17th December 4pmChristmas Carol Service
24th December 4pmCrib Service
24th December 11.30pmMidnight Mass
25th December 8.30am and 10.30amChristmas Eucharists
31st December - 10.30amEucharist (no 8.30am or 6pm)

Thank you!

To everyone who helped with our Christmas tree festival - whether putting the trees up, sweeping up needles, decorating sponsoring, making refreshments, leading music or inviting others to visit our church - it was a lovely occasion to share the joy of many local groups this Christmas season! We raised over £1000 (subject to confirmation) to be shared with LDHAS

Help Needed!

Julie Tinnion will be taking a sabbatical from leading Children's Church in the new year. We need help to cover the 4-week gap. Materials will be provided, and all helpers will need a church DBS check. Please have a chat with Rev'd Carol, and there will be a meeting after the 10.30am service on the 17th December to find out more.

Scripture Readings for our Worship today:



Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

*This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.***

Psalm 126

Refrain: The Lord has indeed done great things for us.

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with songs of joy.

3 Then said they among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'

4 The Lord has indeed done great things for us, and therefore we rejoiced.

Refrain: The Lord has indeed done great things for us.

5 Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, as the river beds of the desert.

6 Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy.

7 Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed, will come back with shouts of joy, bearing their sheaves with them.

Refrain: The Lord has indeed done great things for us.

I Thessalonians 5.16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

*This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.***

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 1.6-8, 19-28

Glory to you, O Lord

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.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.'

Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said,

'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

"Make straight the way of the Lord" ', as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'

John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

*This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ.***

Prayer after Communion:



We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever. **Amen**

Community at Christ Church:

Christingle

Thank you to everyone who supported both our Christingle Services - here and with Christ Church Primary School. Thank you for all the donations for the work of the Children's Society - a great effort!



Toy Service

A Christ Church tradition - every year, we collect new and good-condition second-hand toys (no gift-wrapping, and no soft toys please) to share with local families. This year these will be distributed by the Salvation Army. Please bring them along for the 10.30am All Together Service on Sunday 17th December. *If you can help take the toys across on Monday morning, that would be much appreciated - please contact Jacqueline, thank you.*

Advent Preparation

As part of the season of watching and waiting for Christ's coming, it's traditional to set aside time for prayer and study. You may wish to join the Study Group (see notice) and/or help yourself to some of the booklets available at the back of church. These are also available online at <https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/seasonal-resources>

Special Appeal - Doorways and Windows

You may be aware that the stonework around the porch is deteriorating, and has been shedding pieces of masonry. We *urgently* need to re-mortar the porch to make it safe and weathertight for decades to come. There are also several of our unique and historic windows which currently do not have protection from stones, pellets, weather, etc - and need a polycarbonate shield fixing. This combined work will cost around £8000. Whilst we can apply for a grant towards some of the work - please will you help by making a donation to the Church Repair Fund? Thank you!

Starting in the New Year

On Tuesday 9th January at 7.30pm in the Vicarage, everyone welcome as we begin *Pilgrim - A Course for the Christian Journey*. Whether you're new to church, or wanting to go deeper, this 6-week course will help us think about what it means to turn to Christ. Please ask Rev'd Carol if you'd like more info.

Also starting in the New Year!

On Sunday 21st January at 4pm in Church, we're beginning *Godly Play*. This is a way of sharing Scripture stories with children, and helping them wonder about their faith, using a Montessori approach, with crafts and a snack to share too. It's free, and especially suitable for primary age children (accompanied by an adult please). We'll meet every month on the 3rd Sunday. If you can help, or would like to come along, please pick up a flyer, and ask Rev'd Carol if you are curious.

Supporting Christ Church

Supporting Christ Church - One-off Gifts

If you would like to make a one-off donation to the church as an offering, to pay a fee, or as a gift to regular funds, you can give through our 'Give a little' page: <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/f63a0655-b270-4d05-bf35-3994747785d0> This will also give you the option to Gift Aid your donation (if you pay tax in the UK), enabling the church to get an extra 25p back from the taxman for every £1 you give.



Supporting Christ Church - Regularly

Christ Church is now taking part in the Parish Giving Scheme, which enables you to give regularly by Direct Debit, and to easily review how much you give depending on circumstances. Online at www.parishgiving.org.uk Or by telephone 0333 002 1271 Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm. For any of these methods our PGS code 030603240 ensures that your gift goes to our church.

PCC

.... met on the 13th November. We discussed repairs to the North Porch, and the church finances. Please let Rev'd Carol or Julie Buckley have your ideas and suggestions for discussion. Please keep your PCC in your prayers, and share this prayer for our church:

Lord God, Together with you by our side, we can bring growth to our Church. Send your Holy Spirit to give us good planning, wise actions, joy in worship and our welcome, the right words when we speak to others. Help our Church grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local community, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Christ Church Choir

..... sings at the 10.30 service about once a month, plus other special occasions, and practises in church on Thursdays at 7 pm for an hour. New members always welcome; if you're not sure, come along and give it a try for a few weeks!

Have a word with Clive or contact him via cliveshaw54@gmail.com



Mingle on Mondays this autumn/winter

This space for warmth, welcome, food and fellowship started up last month, We're open from 11:30 am - 2 pm each Monday (apart from Christmas and New Year's Day). If you're able to help set up and host, even occasionally, or if you can make soup or cake, or shop for bread and other supplies and bring them along on a Sunday, ready for the Monday, please sign up on the rota at the back of church. Please claim expenses - no-one should be out of pocket. Please pray for all who will come and all who will host, and do please encourage people to come along and enjoy a warm welcome! Thank you.

Key contacts:

Vicar: Rev'd Carol Backhouse..... 01524 942105 revcarolbackhouse@gmail.com

Churchwarden:Ms Jacqueline Stamper
01524 64083

churchwarden@christchurchlancaster.org.uk

Priest with PTO and Choir Contact:Rev'd Clive Shaw

cliveshaw54@gmail.com

Lay Reader:.....Dr Pat Allen

reader@christchurchlancaster.org.uk 01524 39552

Parish Safeguarding Officer:Sue Taylor

safeguarding@christchurchlancaster.org.uk 07547 717060

Children's Church Leader.....Mrs Julie Tinnion

children@christchurchlancaster.org.uk 07749 489623

Parish Secretary:Mrs Julie Buckley

buckleys@live.co.uk 01524 37229

Hall Bookings:.....hall@christchurchlancaster.org.uk 07980 351855

Christ Church SchoolMiss Emma Simpson 01524 60955

If you would like to receive the notices by email, please contact Jacqueline Stamper.

Refreshments today!

All are welcome for refreshments after the 10.30am service today.



Emergency Short Term Refugee Accommodation

RAIS Lancaster will be asking people in local churches to help find short-term accommodation to prevent new refugees suddenly becoming street homeless. (Help with additional costs is available). More information will be made available early in the New Year.

Please note that there will be no 6pm service between the 26th November and the 7th January.

Sunday 17th December

8.30am Eucharist

10.30am All Together Service* with toy collection for local families.

4pm Carol Festival with the choir

Christmas Eve

No 8.30am Eucharist

10.30am Advent Eucharist

4pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Eucharist with carols

Sunday 31st December

No 8.30 Eucharist

10.30am Parish Eucharist with carols

Sunday 7th January

8.30 and 10.30 Eucharists

6pm Taizé Eucharist