

A warm welcome to

# The Parish of Christ Church, Lancaster

Sunday 22nd December - *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

Sunday 29th December - *First Sunday of Christmas*

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  
us in worship this week:**

## Today - Sunday 22nd December

8.30am *Holy Communion*

10.30am *Parish Eucharist  
with Children's Church*

4pm *Carol Service*

## Christmas Eve

4pm *Crib Service*

11.30pm *Midnight Mass*

## Christmas Day

8.30am *Holy Communion*

10.30am *Parish Eucharist*

## Friday

9.30am *Holy Communion*

## Sunday 29th December

10.30am *Parish Eucharist*

(No 8.30am or 6pm Service)

**No 9:30 Friday Communion 3.1.25**

## Prayer for this week

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Children's Church

welcomes primary-aged children during the 10.30am service during term time. Parents/guardians are also welcome to join in. Please see back-page notice.

## Godly Play - 19 January

Every 3rd Sunday of the month at 4pm in Church for KS1/2 children.



Loop  
facility



Wafers available



Breastfeeding  
Welcome Here



Accessible Toilet  
& Baby Changing



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, Thomas Platt, Yan Connell, David Foster, Lucas Calvert, Ron Holmes, Ann Boss, Geoffrey Heywood, Christine McCrann, Richard Jones, Rev'd Kaarina, Ruby Rodrigues, Anne Brockbank, Marlene Phillips

***that God's healing, wholeness and peace are with them.***

### **Those who have died recently:**

Keith Bridson, Hannah Green, Miles Hickey, Chris Hoyle-Santon

***may they rest in peace and rise in glory.***

### **In our parish, we ask God to bless and provide:**

For those who live and work on Firbank Road, Derwent Road.

For our King and government

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

For those working to provide us with clean water, and protect our water courses.

For the people we have supported through gifts to the Salvation Army, LDHAS, Olive Branch and Children's Society

***that God's loving kindness is found and shared.***

### **Tuesday Evening Prayer**

At 5pm each Tuesday, Rev'd Carol and Rev'd Kaarina say Evening Prayer over Zoom. If you'd like to join them to give thanks for the day past, readings from the Scriptures and prayer, the details are: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81366929814?pwd=jTDuW7HO8IR7I0nQ9Jrm2BrMxjIqVS.I>.

(Please note there will be a break on the 24th and 31st December)

### **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](mailto: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.

### **Rev'd Kaarina's News**

Rev'd Kaarina has had surgery recently, and we keep her in our prayers as she recovers. Please direct any enquiries or pastoral conversations to Rev'd Carol in the first instance.

### **Christ Church Choir**

..... sings at the 10.30 service about once a month, plus other special occasions, and practises in church on Thursdays, 7-8:15 pm. 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](mailto:cliveshaw54@gmail.com)



## In Other News...

### Book Group

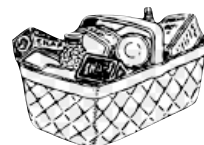


The church book group meets next on the 3rd January and then on the first Friday of each month at 4 pm in the church hall. Anyone who enjoys reading and discussion is very welcome to join us. You can just turn up on the day, speak to Joyce, or send an email to

[joycelynch1946@gmail.com](mailto:joycelynch1946@gmail.com)

### The Olive Branch Foodbank Christmas Appeal (& staples!)

The Olive Branch have made a Christmas Appeal - for mince pies, Christmas cakes, boxes of biscuits, crisps, nuts, coffee, Christmas puddings and other seasonal foods to make up the Christmas parcels. *They are also very low on regular staples, like pasta, rice, tinned meat, vegetables, etc.* You can also give money for them to buy what people need: <https://www.the-olivebranch.org.uk/donate/>



### Eco-Group Thought/Action for the Week



This year climate change has continued to have devastating effects around the world resulting in death, injury and loss of homes and livelihoods. Remember them at Christmas and pray that action is taken to prevent further suffering.

*Then after Christmas* - Remember to recycle cards, place stamps in the box in church and keep wrapping paper and present bags to reuse next year.

### Recycling at Christ Church - from the Eco Group

On the first Sunday of the month, we collect plastic toothbrushes and electric brush heads, covers and flosser nozzles, also flossing sticks, interdental brushes and dental tape containers. We can still take medical blister packs, but owing to the large quantities, please take your own to Superdrug if you can. **No bottle tops or toothpaste tubes, please.**

### Craft Group

.... meets in the Hall on the second Tuesday of each month (and sometimes others) at 11.30am. Everyone welcome - bring your own project, or share in one of the others on the go! No prior experience needed.

### Allergies at Christ Church

If you help with refreshments and serving food at Christ Church, please consider doing the Food Safety and Allergy training available here: <https://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/> It's free, and simply requires you to register through the website. Thank you!

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

*The Christmas sweater I was given last year kept picking up static electricity, so I took it back and exchanged it for another one - free of charge.*

## Scripture Readings for our Worship today:



### **Micah 5.2-5a**

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth;

then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

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

### **Psalm 80.1-8**

*Refrain:* **Turn us again, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, you that led Joseph like a flock;

2 Shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim, before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

3 Stir up your mighty strength and come to our salvation.

**4 Turn us again, O God; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

5 O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry at your people's prayer?

6 You feed them with the bread of tears;

you give them abundance of tears to drink.

7 You have made us the derision of our neighbours,

and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

**8 Turn us again, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

### **Hebrews 10.5-10**

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God"

(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).’

When he said above, ‘You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings’ (these are offered according to the law), then he added, ‘See, I have come to do your will.’ He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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

*Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Luke 1.39-45[46-55]***

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.’

And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

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



**Prayer after Communion:**

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## **Readings for worship on Sunday 29th December:**

### **Collect:**

Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as he came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of his divinity; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **I Samuel 2.18-20, 26**

Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord'; and then they would return to their home.

Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the Lord and with the people.

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

*No Psalm.*

### **Colossians 3.12-17**

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

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

*Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to* **Luke 2.41-52**  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

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

### **Prayer after Communion:**



Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home: help your Church to live as one family, united in love and obedience, and bring us all at last to our home in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Community at Christ Church:**

### **Toy Service Appeal - thank you!**

Thank you to everyone who supported the Toy Appeal this year - 12 bags of toys were taken to the Salvation Army to share with local families this Christmas. (They need to provide for over 900 families this year.)

### **Christmas Tree Festival - thank you!**

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas Tree Festival possible. Preliminary estimates indicate that we shall send just under £930 to support the world of Lancaster & District Homeless Action, with a similar amount for church funds. Most important, it was a wonderful community event - thank you all!



### **Christingle - thank you!**

Thank you to everyone who supported the work of the Children's Society through our Christingle Appeal - please keep the work of this charity in your prayers. There will be at least £280 to send from the combined donations from school and church, with more to come in the New Year.

### **Monthly lunch and Open Church - trial in January**

We want to increase our welcome to visitors, so in January we are trialling hosting a free soup, bread and cheese (or vegan alternative) lunch on the second Sunday of the month (12th) and keeping the church open during the afternoon, with basic self-serve refreshments available in church. We therefore need volunteers to make and serve soup, buy bread and cheese, etc., and also to welcome visitors into church for a few hours in the afternoon. *Expenses will be reimbursed.* Please sign up on the list at the back of church if you're able to help.

### **Advent Course**

Please join us for the *Advent Study Group* in the Hall after the 10.30am Eucharist, looking at John Bell's new course, *The Life in the Comma*, which ends today, 22nd December. It doesn't matter if you haven't been able to get to any of the other sessions as each session stands in its own right.

### **Carol Singing in our Nursing Homes**

Please help to bring some Christmas cheer to the staff and residents of the nursing homes in our parish. On Monday 23rd December, we'll be visiting Moorside Hall at 2pm, and Dolphinlee House at 3.30pm. Enthusiasm as much as experience in singing welcomed!



## 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

If you're able to support Christ Church via a direct debit donation, you can do this via the Parish Giving Scheme. Every penny goes to our church, and it's easy to review how much you give depending on circumstances. Online at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://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.

### EasyFundraising

Did you know you can support Christ Church when you shop online? Register using <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and the brand's commission will go to church.

### PCC

... next meets on the 15th January. If there are aspects of life and worship at Christ Church which you'd like discussing, please speak to Rev'd Carol, Julie Buckley, or one of the PCC members.

We ask you to pray this prayer 'this time tomorrow' after a Sunday service - wherever you are. (Why not put a reminder in your phone?)

*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.***



### Sponsor a Hymn

If you'd like to suggest and sponsor a hymn to be sung within the 10.30am Eucharist, please fill in one of the blue forms from the noticeboard.

### Thought for the Week

The Magnificat praises the loyal and merciful God, who carries out his design of salvation with the little ones and the poor, with those who have faith in Him, who trust his Word, like Mary. *Pope Francis*

### Hall for Hire

Don't forget that the Hall is available for hire, especially during the day and at weekends. £24/first hour and £12 for each subsequent hour/part-hour. Please contact Pat on [hall@christchurchlancaster.org.uk](mailto:hall@christchurchlancaster.org.uk) 07980 351855 for more info.

**Key contacts:**

<b>Vicar:</b> .....	Rev'd Carol Backhouse 01524 942105 <a href="mailto:revcarolbackhouse@gmail.com">revcarolbackhouse@gmail.com</a>
<b>Curate:</b> .....	Rev'd Kaarina Leong (On Leave)
<b>Children's Ministry Leader:</b> .....	Innes Heron-Stamp 07853791776 <a href="mailto:children@christchurchlancaster.org.uk">children@christchurchlancaster.org.uk</a>
<b>Priest with PTO and Choir Contact:</b> .....	Rev'd Clive Shaw <a href="mailto:cliveshaw54@gmail.com">cliveshaw54@gmail.com</a>
<b>Lay Reader:</b> .....	Dr Pat Allen 01524 39552 <a href="mailto:reader@christchurchlancaster.org.uk">reader@christchurchlancaster.org.uk</a>
<b>Notices:</b> .....	Ms Jacqueline Stamper 01524 64083 <a href="mailto:churchwarden@christchurchlancaster.org.uk">churchwarden@christchurchlancaster.org.uk</a>
<b>Parish Safeguarding Officer:</b> .....	Mrs Emma Muckalt & Ms Debbie Steele <a href="mailto:safeguarding@christchurchlancaster.org">safeguarding@christchurchlancaster.org</a> 07547 717060
<b>Parish Secretary:</b> .....	Mrs Julie Buckley <a href="mailto:buckleys@live.co.uk">buckleys@live.co.uk</a> 07717824574
<b>Hall Bookings:</b> .....	<a href="mailto:hall@christchurchlancaster.org.uk">hall@christchurchlancaster.org.uk</a> 07980 351855
<b>Christ Church School</b> .....	Miss Emma Simpson 01524 60955

If you'd like to keep in touch with Christ Church news, events, services and prayer requests, please complete one of the contact cards in the pews and return to Rev'd Carol

**Promoting a Safer Church**

If you believe that someone is at risk of immediate harm please call emergency services on 999. Any safeguarding concerns in a parish should be brought to the attention of your Parish Safeguarding Officers, Debbie Steele and Emma Muckalt, who can be contacted as above. Concerns can also be raised directly with our Diocesan Team, Tel: 01254 503088 or email [safeguarding@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@blackburn.anglican.org)

**Children's Church**

... is an important part of our church life, and one of the ways children learn more about Christian faith. If you can offer one Sunday morning each a month (or more if possible) please have a word with Innes. An Enhanced DBS check will be arranged.

**Christ Church Primary School at 150!**

On the 25th January 2025, our school will celebrate its 150th anniversary! If you have photos or other memorabilia which you'd like to share for their history project, please drop this into the school office (labelled, so they can return it to you!). There'll be a special service for the school on the 19th January, and then our 10.30am service on the 26th January will have an open invitation to past pupils and staff to celebrate this fantastic milestone!

**Christmas Communion**

If you, or someone you know, is unable to attend church over Christmas due to illness or infirmity, and would like to receive Communion, please let Rev'd Carol know.