



## THE MINISTER WRITES ...



Dear All,

The other day, I was thinking about buying a new Christmas jumper. Previously owned options seem to have ended up in other family member's drawers! To be fair, they look better on them than they did on me anyway! So, the search begins as I head onto the internet, onto Google and begin to type in the search box. As always, as I begin to type, Google begins to offer me helpful suggestions to complete my phrase to try and save me from typing it out in full. As I type 'Christmas' a list of possible second words and phrases appear below based on popular searches in Google by all users. The 'second word' options were very interesting: Christmas... songs, markets, hampers, pyjamas, gifts, tree,

decorations and wrapping paper. However, guess what was top of the list of options! Yes, it was 'jumpers', 'Christmas jumpers!' How did Google know?! Anyway, the Christmas jumper search began well (but no new jumper quite yet!), and some of the other options were of interest and I'm sure many of us will, with good reason, be buying and/or enjoying some of these listed Christmas items over the coming weeks. I have to say though, I think it is also quite surprising what is not in this most helpful of lists!

I wonder, will you be embarking on any kind of search this Advent and Christmas time? Perhaps you'll also be using the internet to help you with some of your Christmas preparations and purchases. Perhaps some of you will be searching for that Christmas decoration or early bought gift that you stored so well that you can't now remember where it is! Or is it really just us who do this?! Okay, our season of Advent will no doubt include some of those search engine suggestions. But I would like to add the following suggestions to our search! What about the wonderful Christmas story of God's love for humanity? What about Christmas hope, Christmas joy, Christmas peace and Christmas mystery?

Friends, let the search begin! I hope you find everything you are looking for in the coming weeks! And this Advent, I hope that for each of us there is that deep searching, deep longing for the coming of God into our world through Jesus with his wonderful gifts of redemption and renewal. Let us be open to God's presence in this season of searching and sensitive to the Spirit's leading as we seek to share God's love with others.

And then on Christmas Day we will rejoice as we find what we are looking for: *Hail! Thou ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn! Sing through all Jerusalem, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"* On this day we will celebrate as in many ways our search is over! We delve into a great mystery and find Jesus, God with us - we find a Saviour! We are not left alone. Before our search even begins, in love, God also goes on a search, and he comes among us who once were lost, but now are found. Christmas reminds us that we have much to be thankful for and much to share with others.

I hope you and your loved ones have a great Christmas!

With love,  
Neil

### A prayer for Christmas from the Anglican Daily Office:

*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 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.*



## CHRISTMAS CARDS



### Christ Church

As in previous years, there will be a board in the display area at the back of the church if you wish to write one Christmas card for all your friends at Christ Church. There will be a box available for donations to our current charity, Suffolk Refugee Support.

The alphabetical pigeon-holes should not be used for cards this year.

*Church Life Committee*

### The Fair Trade Shop

The shop has a range of Christmas Cards, which can be ordered and delivered, or collected from church. Traidcraft catalogues are also available for your orders.



## PRAYERS FOR DECEMBER

*5<sup>th</sup> December* - Christmas preparations are well underway. As we get busier, let us pray that we do not lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. The celebration of the greatest gift of all, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*12<sup>th</sup> December* - Our Christmas Gift service. We have so much, Lord. As we give as generously as we are able, we pray for those receiving our gifts. May they experience God's love through our gifts. We pray for those who work for Home Start. They have seen a huge increase in referrals this year. Please give them the resources they need to continue their vital work.

*19<sup>th</sup> December* - Our Carol Service with a difference. We pray for those friends unable to join with us this year, through ill-health, frailty or still feeling vulnerable, with Covid still very much with us. We think of them all with love.

*26<sup>th</sup> December* - We give thanks for the joy of Christmas Day. As we think of the greetings sent and received, let us keep friends, old and new, in our hearts not just at Christmas, but as we move on towards a New Year and beyond.

## PRAYERS FOR JANUARY 2022

*2<sup>nd</sup> January* - At the beginning of a new year, we pray for our minister, the officers and deacons and all those who contribute to the life of the church.

*9<sup>th</sup> January* - We think of our Emmaus groups as they restart their study session and pray that new members may join.

*16<sup>th</sup> January* - This is the week of prayer for Christian unity. May the churches work together to share the Gospel with their communities.

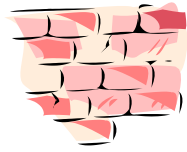
*23<sup>rd</sup> January* - As we come together for Church Meeting, guide us to seek your will for us as a Fellowship.

*30<sup>th</sup> January* - Today is remembered as Leprosy Sunday and we pray for those who bring help and healing to Leprosy sufferers throughout the world.



## OVER THE GARDEN WALL

... from our neighbours at St Pancras



Dear Friends,

As Covid stalks we seem to be living in some sort of post-lockdown limbo, waiting to put the coronavirus behind us. Numbers attending Masses appear to be just over half the levels that they were before the pandemic. Our bishops recognised that it was impossible for all Catholics to attend Sunday Mass while the virus raged but hope they can fulfil their Sunday Obligation by the First Sunday in Advent. We hope to encourage more of our parishioners to return, safely, to keeping holy the Sabbath Day as we prepare for Christmas. Many of our parishioners have lived through the Second World War and personal tragedies. With God's help, we will overcome.

My fellow worshippers embrace a range of beliefs and attitudes across politics and culture – some even support Arsenal, for example. Members of our congregation have a wide spectrum of attitudes towards the COP26 climate conference. I know Christ Church is en route to becoming an Eco-Church. Pope Francis published an encyclical in 2015, *Laudato Si'*, about caring for the Earth, our common home. Some critics claimed that the Bible showed humans had dominion over nature as opposed to the vision of stewardship that Francis presented. Let us pray that COP26 is followed by the right decisions, and actions, being taken.

Away from the planetary scale, and separate from climate change, I saw two people doing the right thing at the Delimarche cafe in Ipswich hospital. A customer had difficulty handling his change and the sales assistant and a colleague went out of their way to help him. They could not have been more caring and considerate. It made me ashamed about the way I had behaved a week or so earlier in a queue at a Ryanair airport check-in desk. A couple ahead of me had failed to check in online and I found myself becoming irritated by their apparent inefficiency. However, I then began wondering who was I to judge. I did not know what had contributed to their problem and another time it might be me who failed to meet the airline's Byzantine requirements. How many of the world's problems stem from our pride in falsely thinking that we are better than others and failing to treat one another as we want to be treated ourselves? I hope this Christmas we all experience the joy of having good neighbours.

*Stephen Donaghy, St Pancras parishioner*

### Advent Taizé Service

St Mary's Church, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 7.30pm

Streaming details below

<https://youtu.be/pWcgv5ipFgw>



## FROM IPSWICH ENGLAND TO IPSWICH USA

Below is a photo of friends from the First Congregational Church in Ipswich Massachusetts with a copy of Mike Smith's History of Christ Church book.







## CHRIST CHURCH'S ECO GROUP

After an 18 month enforced break, the Eco Group were able to meet up again this month to discuss how Christ Church can make further progress on their journey towards a 'greener' environment in and around our place of worship. We agreed that if we are serious about achieving A Rocha UK Eco Church's gold award, Deacons would be asked to formally agree any recommendations made.

Our focus over the coming months is to see how we can make some simple but effective changes now, as well as exploring opportunities to look after the land around the church in a more wildlife-friendly way.

More information about A Rocha UK can be found on their website [Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project](#).

## DECEMBER DIARY DATES

*Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November* - Thursday Forum: 'My time serving as a Royal Naval Chaplain' with Revd Neil Coulson

*Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December* - Thursday Forum: Folk Music with David Stainer and Diz Deacon

*Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December* - Thursday Forum: A Touch of Clay - Sculpture by Margaret Berry

*Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December* - Start of Angel Trail Project (until 6<sup>th</sup> January)

*Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December* - Thursday Forum: It's Christmas - Celebrations, carol singing, readings for all

## JANUARY 2022 DIARY DATES

*Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January* - Thursday Forum resumes after the Christmas break

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January* - Start of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January* - Pulpit exchange

*Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January* - Church Meeting after the morning service

## REGULAR EVENTS

### Emmaus Bible Study groups

*Mondays* - Weekly in the Turret Room until 13<sup>th</sup> December, but not on 6<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am. After Christmas, these will restart on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

*Wednesdays* - 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December and 26<sup>th</sup> January at 7.45pm

*Thursdays* - Fortnightly on 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30am

*Thursdays* - Forum lunches weekly from 12pm during the Forum season.

## REGULAR EVENTS (TERM TIME ONLY)

*Mondays* - Beavers, Cubs and Scouts

Contact Group Scout Lead John Rockett: [jdrockett@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jdrockett@hotmail.co.uk)

*Tuesdays* - Tots Plus for all under-school aged children and their carers in the Christ Church Halls 9.30am

Contact Jo Robertson: [joanneholmes@hotmail.com](mailto:joanneholmes@hotmail.com)

*Fridays* - Rainbows, Brownies & Guides

Contact Ruth Strudwick: [ruthstrudwick@gmail.com](mailto:ruthstrudwick@gmail.com)



## SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2021

All Services will be led by our Minister, Revd Neil Coulson unless otherwise stated.

### **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

10.45am Family Worship with Holy Communion

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

10.45am Church Parade and Gift Service

### **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

10.45am All-age Carol Service followed by mince pies

### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> December**

10.45am Christmas Day Family Worship

There will not be a service on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December

## SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2022

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

10.45am Family Worship with Holy Communion and Commissioning of Deacons

### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January**

10.45am Family Worship

### **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January**

10.45am Family Worship

### **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January**

10.45am Town Centre Churches Pulpit Exchange Sunday

### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January**

10.45am Family Worship followed by our Church Meeting

### **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> February**

10.45 am Family Worship with Holy Communion

This service will be followed by a Church Family meal to raise money for Leprosy Mission.

