

Littlehampton Churches Together

December 2020

We greatly appreciate the prayers and support of local churches, particularly at this time.

Praise:

- thankful that the whole school community have been supportive, understanding and pro-active during this tough time.
- that we have been able to carry on our Collective worship, involving local church leaders - albeit via video link.
- thankful for the support of the diocese - and the spiritual guidance they have offered school leaders during this time.

From Churches:

We give praise...

- that one of the LBC Zoom Alpha people has made a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- for opportunities opening up.
- for the answer to prayer and the hard work of the scientists resulting in vaccines.
- for the generosity of Rotary, Morrisons, and many other people to the Foodbank this Christmas season.

Praise and thanks to God...

- for our Pastors, Vicars and Ministers who are working so hard to make Christmas special this year.
- restrictions due to Covid have resulted in more people feeling isolated, depressed and anxious. Thank God for the "Samaritans" and "Time to Talk" seeking to meet the needs of desperate people through counselling, listening and empathy.
- for the Sunday services that have taken place and that have been such a blessing.

AS offers praise to God...

- for the continued opportunities to reach out to people online, with newcomers at our online Carol Services and families signing up for the online holiday club
- 6 of those who did Alpha online continuing to meet as a small group online and reading the advent

From Schools:

Give thanks for:

- the health of our staff and families
- the community support from the wider community
- focused children who want to learn
- staff who are committed to their vocation.
- the thoughts and prayers of many.

Given everything that has been going on...

- we are incredibly grateful for having the support of our community.
- parents and families have been appreciative of the work going on in school and are understanding about all of the changes to arrivals and departures that have been made.
- thankful to the children for being just themselves and giving everyone a sense of normality.
- thankful for our committed and hardworking staff.
- grateful for the lovely grounds that we have which means that we can get outside as much as possible.

Give thanks that...

- *the new way of teaching and learning is something we are extremely proud of as a school.*
- *staff have worked hard to ensure they deliver an excellent curriculum for our children.*

Praise and Prayer

devotions in Tim Chester's Fixated together

- some lovely answers to prayer recently for a number of people in the church
- praise for the Christingle service at Lyminster just over a week ago. Very well attended from the all-age congregation.
- great praise for the service of confirmation and baptism at Lyminster last Sunday afternoon. 1 baptism and 2 confirmations as a result of the Alpha group last year. Others were being confirmed to mark the next stage in their Christian lives.

Praise God for...

- being in the position to buy food vouchers for families in our networks. We would usually create hampers for these families, but to limit contact across households we are providing supermarket vouchers instead. This also gives the family the option to spend the money as/when they need it most which is an added benefit.
- we purchased all of the supermarket vouchers at Morrison's and their Community Champion recognised the large number of families we were engaging with and decided to campaign for toys on our behalf. When we collected the vouchers, we were also met with a large trolley of toys that had been bought in-store and donated to families. Incredible!
- Littlehampton Town Mayor. We recently connected with Cllr David Chace as part of our online services and he has donated a further 62 presents for to be distributed to local children.

Prayer



From Turning Tides...

Thank you for everyone's support...

Here is an update:

The redeveloped Littlehampton Hub -

With the support of the community, coupled with the financial commitment made by so many organisations and groups Turning Tides is making a difference, despite COVID restrictions.

We opened the doors in September and although there are limited opening hours for safety reasons, we are running a service. At the Hub we now have a greater space to carry out group sessions. One recent success was our art group where sculpture was the feature.

This activity really captured the imagination. More activity sessions to develop skills and interests will be put on when it is OK to do so. The great welcoming communal space will allow for up to 40 people to be involved at any one time and film shows are also planned. With this area and dedicated space to allow for privacy, plus our computer area, we can offer a flexible yet targeted service.

The main Hub space is also set up for hot meals which is also making a difference but the new showers, toilets and laundry facilities - a first for us here - are getting brilliant reviews. This is about restoring dignity and self-worth and the feedback has been so positive and making all the difference, not just for rough sleepers, but for so many in our area who are 'hidden homeless' - sleeping in vehicles, on other people's sofas and in emergency accommodation.

We also opened the doors at Arundel Road accommodation in September.

We had been full with all six bedrooms occupied. However, a positive move on to independent living for one of our community members last week has meant that a vacancy became available which has already been filled.

Please pray

- for our clients who will be focusing on Christmas's past and how they have ended up where they are
- give them the strength to see a brighter future, how things could be and surround them with God's love.
- for people in our Community who are sleeping on the streets or whose

- accommodation is not secure, especially during the cold weather.
- for those who feel financial pressures at this time. Help them to seek help and advice if needed.
- people will draw closer to God's love and, through the Christmas message, experience the peace and joy of knowing Him.
- particularly during this Christmas and New Year please help us to be patient with each other, considerate of challenges we face and honour COVID guidelines.
- and a warm thank you for all the kindness and donations this year - our homeless community appreciate your support. Our Christmas Appeal continues and will fund food, warmth and support over these harsh winter months.

Prayer news from HMP Ford...

Lockdown hits Prisons hard with fewer family visits and fewer volunteers going in. But God's word is not chained.

- pray for the Christian men to be walking with Christ and ministering to others.

The men ask for prayer...

- the **first** and largest category are men asking for prayer for their families.
- the **second** most requested is men 'struggling'.
- the **third** is prayer surrounding fears for the future.
- Pray for the chaplains as they minister Christ's comfort and joy to the men.

Various small groups, including Alpha and Alpha +, hope to restart in January. Sunday morning services are now running, with the Prison Fellowship team leading on Christmas Day and Sunday 27th.

- Pray for wisdom for Dave Green and James Baron as they plan these.
- Praise for the promising start on Sunday Dec 13th.
- Praise that Andy Kerr returns to Ford as lead chaplain in January.

From Churches...

Pray for Lyminster.

- We have 3 of the 11:00a.m. congregation who are seriously ill and receiving various treatments. They are not the older members of the congregation. Also, some who come to the All-Age service have husbands who are very seriously ill. Again, they are not among the older members of the congregation.
- for growth of relationship between the All-Age service members and clergy, so that we can help them move on in their relationship with God. Ideally, we would like to start an Alpha Group from among them in the early Spring.

We know that Christmas will not be easy for a lot of people this year...

Pray ...

- that they will to know God's peace and presence with them
- for the remaining Christmas services, both as an outreach and also that the church would be encouraged
- in the new year AS are hoping to run another online Alpha and to use CAP's Kickstart to bring positive conversations to our local community

Pray...

- for members of the Church family who are facing their first Christmas without their loved one.
- for guidance as the Leadership team plan getting back to church.
- for a good response to the online Carol Service.
- for wise use of the vaccines.
- for help and strength for those involved in the NHS over the Christmas period.
- that people will not get careless about taking precautions against the virus.
- for shop-keepers and market-traders over the coming weeks.
- at this Christmas season, we pray for the lonely, homeless, sufferers of domestic abuse made worse by the lockdowns, and those who fear 2021.
- We, at LBC, will be singing carols in our car park on Sunday 20th at 3:00p.m. (socially distanced and mask-wearing!)

Pray...

- for the Littlehampton Churches Together cards being sent to many local businesses and shops, councils and emergency services, that God will be at work to change lives and bring hope.
- for all those who work tirelessly to care for the disabled and elderly in residential homes, especially St Winefrides, Nightingale and Oakland Grange where we would normally have held a Carol Service.
- for carol services being held in cathedrals, and churches across the UK, and for the carol services in our local churches. May the wonder and joy of the birth of Jesus cause us to worship and adore him, and to spread his love and message to those around.
- for our Drs surgeries as they organise their vaccination programme, that this will protect the most vulnerable.

PRAY for...

- our Christmas Premier (Share the Light) goes live this Sunday 20th December at 6pm. We are really excited about the video and even more excited to let our community know about Jesus this Christmas. Our teams have worked so hard to produce the video and you can watch it this Sunday on Facebook (www.facebook.com/arunchurch)
- 'Tis the season... to ask questions. And boy, has this year thrown up all sorts of questions! That's why we want to offer an open invitation to try Alpha! Our next Alpha Course is in January (our first one as a hub church) starts on January 12th and will be fully online. The discussion will take place on Alpha's online platform. More details at www.arunchurch.com/alpha
- vulnerable people in our communities at a time of huge uncertainty and doubt.

From Town Chaplains ...

Pray...

- for good relationships with market stallholders
- for good physical health for Chaplains
- for safety
- for encouraging conversations which will bring lasting fruit

From Arun Angels...

The team is not going out at the moment. Please pray for wisdom to know when it's best to start the patrols on a Friday evening once a fortnight.

From Schools...

Pray for:

- all our families over the Christmas holiday
- those families who are struggling over the Christmas period
- those people who will be alone over the holiday period

Pray...

- that all children and families have a happy new year and seek some positivity in the Year 2021.
- for three members of staff who are due new arrivals in January.

Pray...

- that all families and staff stay safe through the Christmas period
- that they enjoy special times with their families. We have some staff members who have not seen their parents since the first lockdown in March.

Pray...

- for disadvantaged families over the Christmas period, especially those who have suffered financially as a result of Covid
- for teachers and all school staff to be refreshed over the Christmas break.
- for school leaders - to make wise decisions in the face of never-ending challenges

- for wisdom for local and national government - as they create educational policy that will affect the short term and long-term future of this generation of pupils.

Please pray...

- for peace and rest for all the staff at TLA who have worked tirelessly to teach, encourage and keep safe the local young people in our care.
- We ask for wisdom and guidance for the Senior Leadership Team as they take each day at a time and plan for what January may bring.
- may they embrace the message of Comfort and Joy and find it this Christmas of all Christmases

From one HT...

Thank you for your prayers. At this time, I feel schools really need prayer with some of the decision-making processes our current government takes (although I think it is a hard place to be at the moment).

As a school it would be good if prayers would focus on the following -

- **Focus area one - Prayers about the outbreak**

Lord, keep us all safe under the shadow of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful and lift up all who are brought low.

- **Focus area two - prayers about those ill in our school community** (as we have some staff whose family members are unwell -non covid-19 related though).

O God our Father, knowing that whenever danger threatens, your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them and restore them to health and strength.

- **Focus area three - For the Christian community as a whole including our school.**

Lord, we are not people of fear; encourage us to be people of courage. Encourage us to be people who protect not just our own safety but reach out to our neighbours in love.

And finally ...



"Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit" (Jn 15:5-9)

The week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021 is Monday 18th - Friday 22nd January



because the Littlehampton Churches Together are planning to have a Zoom Prayer Meeting, hosted by a different church each evening but open for anyone to join. On each evening we will pray for a group in the town which is linked to the churches.

More information in the New Year.

**Happy Christmas to you all.
God bless you in the coming year.**