

Littlehampton United Church

Mini Newsletter 20



Keeping
our church
together

Following the Prime Minister's announcement that after the lock-down ends, churches in all three tiers will be able to hold worship services again, I am pleased to announce that **our next service will be on Sunday 6th December—the 2nd Sunday in Advent.**

Please respect the rules for worship when you come to church. Please do not come if you feel unwell.

You must wear your face mask, there will be no singing, use the hand sanitiser and maintain a 2m distance between yourself and anyone outside your family or social bubble. In Tier 2 we must not interact with anyone outside our household or support bubble. This means being careful when entering and leaving the building and not wandering around to greet friends. Chairs will be suitably placed to enable everyone to be suitably separated. We will still have to limit the number of people in the building, although, when we were last able to meet, we did not reach our capacity of 26. (You can meet outside but no more than six).

Services are currently planned for 6th December (Chris), 13th December (Naison— communion) and 20th December (Nigel).

Details of any other services will be announced when the Leadership team have been able to meet and decisions taken in the light of any further government advice. We are hoping to hold our Covenant service on January 3rd.

If you have any concerns or questions that you might normally bring to a Church Meeting, please contact any member of the Leadership team or send your question to me, as Church Secretary, and we will endeavour to give you an answer in a reasonable length of time.

This newsletter was written and edited by Chris Azzaro, who can be contacted on 01903 718070 or by email: christopher.azzaro@sky.com

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome

There is also information about our church on the website: www.littlehamptonunitedchurch.org.uk

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK

A PASTORAL LETTER

20 NOVEMBER, 2020

Dear Friends

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I write to you my brothers and sisters, longing to wish you a Merry Christmas and the best complements of the season but I find myself conflicted. Conflicted because we come to this time with a mixture of emotions as begin advent, preparing to celebrate the birth of "Immanuel" ~" God with us." As usual, we want to get excited and start preparing for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ on Christmas but at the same time facing a barrage of misfortunes and dark corners on every side.

2020 has not been the best year for many of us. The Covid 19 Pandemic plunged us into unfathomable depth of uncertainty. Instantaneously, our church buildings were closed and we had to learn new ways of operating. Being cut off from friends and family at times, was the worst thing to happen. We were robbed of our usual way of showing love and affection. Sad to note that 'Social Distancing' remains the norm even now as Christmas approaches.

The wounds inflicted in the year are still fresh. Many have lost their loved ones and the tears are yet to dry. We want to be positive now and approach Christmas in the right frame of mind but the Covid 19 cases continue to go up and our spirits remain pressed down again. We do not know what to do or where to turn. Our hospitals are beginning to filling up again and we panic. While this is happening, the plight of the poor and the most vulnerable is heightened. Many are still having to rely on food Banks for food and for them, I am not sure how Merry their Christmas is going to be. Unless we reach out and give, it may remain dark and bleak as the year has been.

We continue to see a stream of refugees fleeing their homelands to escape from violence and hardship. These are probably going to spend Christmas in camps and some makeshift structures. How Merry their Christmas is going to be, I am not sure. The truth be told, many of us still have these dark corners and grey areas in which we do not know exactly what to do or where to turn but one thing I know, is that Christmas is coming anyway, and when it comes, our story is going to be different when Christ begins to re-write it on a new script.

Jesus spoke through John 8:12 and said, "...I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life..."

With these words above, I'm no longer conflicted but, to raise my head high confidently to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Why can we not be Merry and celebrate when the light has come?

Christ is coming to re-write our story. All the dark areas and places are going to be illumined. In Luke 4:18 he says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

Friends, this changed my whole perspective on my view to the current situation. Where I could have hesitated to wish you a Merry Christmas, I can do it now with confidence because I now know that it still can be Merry. This Jesus is capable of doing this once he comes into your life. All we need is to follow him and believe in what he can do. He tells us in John that if we do this, we will never walk in darkness again.

Friends, I invite you now to look forward to the new season with hope. Christ is coming and soon, our story is going to be different.

Wishing You A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year 2021.

Blessings.

Rev Naison M. Hove

News of the Family

Church Members will be sad to learn of the death of Jane Allan. Jane moved into Ashdown Lodge in September where she was comfortable and very happy. Gradually Jane became more forgetful and confused and recently a chest infection developed into pneumonia and she was admitted into Worthing Hospital where she died peacefully on Tuesday evening.

John Stevens is still awaiting hospital treatment.

Doreen Redington is awaiting hospital appointments for her shoulder.

Please remember in your prayers all those who are unwell but also their partners and friends who care for them.

Malcolm Nicholls has recently moved. His new address is: Flat 33, St Catherine's Court, Irvine Road, Littlehampton. BN17 5HP Malcolm is our pastoral Secretary, so please contact him if you have news or concerns of pastoral matters. His phone number is 07912 353007 or you can email him malcolmnicholls@gmail.com

Christmas Greetings

Don't forget the Christmas Greeting messages that will be shown before the start of our services in December.

Please contact Peter Spencer with your message (or to confirm that he can use last year's greeting again) 01903 715711. Donations, if you wish, can be made directly to Nigel (as treasurer) - easier now that we are meeting again), or on-line via the church website.



The Crib figures have arrived in time for Advent.