



# The Messenger

**Winter 2021**

**Christ Church, Longridge “Living for  
Christ at the heart of the community”**

[www.christchurchlongridge.org.uk](http://www.christchurchlongridge.org.uk)

# Advent: a time of waiting

I feel like I have been waiting for ages, but as I write this my sabbatical is beginning to appear as a glimmer on the horizon, and by the time you read this, it will have just begun!

Do you ever feel like you are constantly waiting for something?

Waiting... for Covid to end; for test results; for the family get together; for the pain or loneliness to end; for holidays to come; for travel to be easier; and at this time of year children especially will be waiting for Christmas!

Advent is a time of waiting, waiting on the Word, but it is also a time of preparation. As we wait for Covid to end we



are preparing ourselves for the fact that we need to live with it. We prepare ourselves for the possibility of bad news from test results. We prepare ourselves to visit or host a family gathering. We prepare ourselves for the pain that may

come as we are about to move, or to think about a loved one we have lost. We prepare for holidays – the travel, what we need to take, where we will stay and what we will do.

Now at this time of advent we too need to prepare for Christmas. Preparing gives us a sense of purpose and direction in our waiting and leads to hope for the event we are waiting for to happen. We are waiting on the Word of God, who is waiting on us too. Waiting for us to notice him

in this time of waiting, waiting to spend more time with us, waiting to deepen our relationship with each other, waiting to reveal new insights into loving God and loving others and by doing so loving all of creation.

In John 15: 1-16 Jesus talks about being the vine and how the vine needs pruning and tending to, and we are told to remain in the vine - in Jesus, abiding in him, dwelling in him. During this time of waiting, we need to be 'present' to each day, each moment of the day, dwelling in Jesus as we prepare, not constantly wishing the day away to get to the next. These times of waiting are a time to prepare to grow, to grow deeper roots in our faith. Like shrubs being pruned, trees discarding their leaves and seeds to allow new growth to take place; roots go deeper to allow for a stronger core to withstand whatever weathers it encounters.

How will you wait? How will you prepare? How will you grow your faith in this time of waiting and preparation?

New life brings renewed hope. We are blessed as we journey through this time of waiting with Emmanuel: God with us, as we look forward to remembering and celebrating this wonderful gift. Have a fruitful time of waiting and may you be greatly blessed this Advent, Christmas and always.

Karen le Mouton

# Syrian Refugees

On October 31<sup>st</sup>, we were pleased to welcome James Hawkes and his fiancée to our Sunday service. James works as a volunteer for the Jasmine Project and also acts as liaison with Churches Together in Longridge and District. The Jasmine Project arranges housing and all the necessary services for people arriving in Britain having received official status as refugees from the British Government. A house has been provided in Longridge for refugees for a number of years. Recently the house has been repaired and refurbished for a family of refugees from Syria. The family of father, mother and three young children was due to arrive in Lancashire on November 17<sup>th</sup>. As well as the house and furniture, help with organising language learning; medical registration and education and all the other necessities for a refugee family had been prepared. The family actually arrived at Manchester Airport on November 16<sup>th</sup> and someone from the project was there to collect them and bring them to Longridge.

As may be imagined, this is an overwhelming experience for people who have undergone terrible experiences. All the infrastructure has been put in place and we are not asking for further help at the moment but if you should come across any members of the family as you go about your normal everyday life, please make them welcome.

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‘We send our sincere condolences to the family of Connie Wearing who died aged 91. Although always very quiet and in recent years suffering increasing sight and hearing loss, Connie was a faithful member of Christ Church and rarely missed a morning service right up to the time we had to stop services during lockdown. She will be sorely missed.’

## **Craft Club (Mondays 10 -12)**

The Craft Club is now in full swing again. New members are always welcome. Usually, we each bring our own craft projects (knitting, crochet, cross-stitch, card-making etc.) and help each other if we hit snags. We sit and chat and have a brew. Once a month, we have a demo or workshop, to learn about another craft. These are not on set weeks so watch the notices if you would like to attend one of these.

## **Shoeboxes and Bags**

Last year at rather short notice because of the pandemic, we managed to make up about 50 boxes and bags for the Blytheswood charity who delivered them to churches in Eastern Europe (mainly Serbia) to distribute to the neediest families in their areas. It was particularly helpful that we were able to pack draw string bags as shoe boxes have become a fairly rare commodity during lockdown and we have not been able to collect boxes from the big stores such as Boundary Mill, which have helped us out in the past. It also saves us the effort of covering the boxes to make them suitably festive. This brings me to the bags. For many years now, Alison Bainbridge has made attractive draw string bags for the shoeboxes. Each box has had a bag placed in the bottom for the recipient to use for whatever purpose they wished. Thanks to Alison we have been able to supplement our supply of boxes with bags for the last two years and each bag has had a smaller bag, suitable to be for instance a wash or toiletry bag, placed in it. I'm not sure how many bags Alison must have made but it is clearly in

the hundreds and we are grateful to her for so magnificent a contribution.

This year we have made up or received complete 70 bags and boxes which are to be collected on Nov 17<sup>th</sup> so should be well on their way to Eastern Europe by the time you read this. A sincere thank you to everyone who has contributed whole boxes or bags or items to be placed in the ones we have assembled in church. Thank you too to everyone who has given money (c. £120 so far) towards the transport of the gifts.

We feel that we are appreciated by the Blythswood Charity. They don't ask for specific amounts of money and they keep their own costs down. We have been particularly impressed by the volunteer worker who collects the boxes and bags throughout the North West of England. He lives in Whitchurch in Shropshire and covers remarkable distances to collect and deliver the parcels for onward transfer. On the day he comes to us, he will be collecting from several other centres in Lancashire. Please continue to pray for the people of Eastern Europe where many do not have a well-developed welfare state to help their poorest and pray for the churches who minister among them.

Before the Covid epidemic, we used to collect items for the boxes throughout the year. We are hoping to start doing this again in the New Year and we will try to produce helpful material so we can see what items would be most useful.

Once again sincere thanks to all who have given including those who have assembled bags and boxes in church.

# News From Sierra Leone

As we have said before, we have been impressed with the way the people of this small country have tackled the Covid pandemic and have come through it considerably better than many more developed and affluent countries. We were however upset to hear of the recent oil tanker crash. This took place on the outskirts of the capital Freetown, well away from the areas where we have been working. However, we don't have any information as to whether any of our friends, church members or family members were affected. When the tanker crashed, the fuel began to run out of it. Many people came with containers to try to collect as much fuel as possible. This wasn't just greedy people trying to get some free fuel, but people trying to clear the road of the dangerous oil slick which threatened road safety and the buildings in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, the fuel exploded while many people were still around the accident. Either 98 or 99 depending on the source of the statistics were killed and 100 injured. This is a huge disaster for such a small country, and they need our prayers as they try to recover.

# Dates For the Diary

Regular Sunday services will continue at 3.00pm through the Winter but there are a number of special times round Christmas so please check the times carefully. The Monday Craft Club (10.00am – 12noon) and ‘Friday Coffee’ (also 10.00am – 12.00noon) have now restarted. Everyone is welcome. We are still trying to keep as Covid safe as possible so please use the hand gel provided and wear a mask at appropriate times. Times will vary around the Christmas period so again, please check carefully to save yourself from wasted journeys.

## **Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup>**

*11.00am*                      Blessing of the town crib at Towneley Gardens

## **Sunday December 5<sup>th</sup>                      (Advent 2)**

*3.00pm*                      Led by Henry Rose

## **Monday December 6<sup>th</sup>**

*10.00am*                      Craft Club (all welcome) bring your own projects.

## **Friday December 10<sup>th</sup>**

*10am – 12am*              Church open for Tea and Coffee. Drop in for a chat.

## **Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup>                      (Advent 3)**

*3.00pm*                      Led by Carol Spencer

## **Monday December 13<sup>th</sup>              Craft Club Christmas Meal at the Derby Arms**

**Thursday December 16<sup>th</sup>** Lancashire Sings Christmas (please watch notices for details – notices are displayed on the church window if you miss collecting one on Sundays)

## **Friday December 17<sup>th</sup>**

*10.00am*                      Call in for Coffee followed by Shoppers’ Carol Service at

*12.15pm*                      A short service with lots of Christmas music based around the Action for Children theme of Shining Stars.



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

3.00pm Carol Service led by Carol Rose and team

**Monday December 20<sup>th</sup>**

10.00am Craft Club

**Saturday December 25<sup>th</sup>** CHRISTMAS DAY Service at 11.00am

**Sunday December 26<sup>th</sup>** There will not be any individual church services but a Circuit Service will be held by Zoom at 10.30am led by Rev Jane Wild (the Circuit Superintendent Minister.) The Meeting ID is 862 648 0567 and the Pass Code is 0987.

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

3.00pm Service with Holy Communion led by Rev Jane Wild

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

3.00pm Led by Rev Janet Titterton

6.30pm Churches Together in Longridge and District  
Epiphany Service at St Lawrence's

**Monday January 10<sup>th</sup>**

10.00am Craft Club resumes

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

3.00pm Led by Henry Rose

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

3.00 pm Led by Rev Barbara Pettit with Holy Communion

**Thursday January 27<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm Circuit Meeting – details to follow

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

3.00pm Led by Carol Spencer

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

3.00pm Led by Jason McMahon

**Sunday February 13<sup>th</sup>**

3.00pm Led by Carol Rose

**Sunday February 20<sup>th</sup>**

3.00pm Led by Becca Ainsworth (from W Preston)

**Sunday February 27<sup>th</sup>**

3.00pm Led by Rev Jane Wild with Holy Communion

**ADVANCE NOTICE**

**Wednesday March 2<sup>nd</sup>** ASH WEDNESDAY

**Friday March 4<sup>th</sup>** World Day of Prayer and First Lent lunch

Further Lent lunches will be held on March 11<sup>th</sup>; March 18<sup>th</sup>; March 25<sup>th</sup>; April 1<sup>st</sup> (no – this isn't a joke) and April 8<sup>th</sup> as long as Government regulations allow.

**Sunday April 10<sup>th</sup>** PALM SUNDAY

Details of Holy Week and Easter Services will be in the notices and the next magazine.

We look forward to welcoming back our own minister, the Rev Karen LeMouton in mid-March after what we hope, has been an interesting and refreshing Sabbatical.

Sabbaticals are periods of 3 months length which are given to Methodist Ministers every 7 years for further study or other learning experiences which are meant to refresh and renew their ministry. Karen has been in full time ministry for about 9 years and various quirks in the system have delayed her first (and probably only) Sabbatical. She will begin her period of 3 months at the beginning of December. Other Circuit Ministers will cover the period when she is away. The Circuit Superintendent, the Rev Jane Wild, will ensure that ministers are available to take Communion Services and any emergencies such as funerals. [Rev Jane Wild - 01772 715134 - janwld@aol.co.uk]

People to contact during the Sabbatical are: -

Rev Jane Wild; John or Carol Spencer or any of the Church Council or via the Church website.

# Activities

## SUNDAY

**3.00pm** Afternoon Worship\*

\*only Sunday service until further notice

Please note that Sunday worship will continue at 3.00pm for the time being and any occasional changes will be printed on the church notices. As usual a copy of the notices will be displayed on the front doors.

## FRIDAY

**7.45am** CTL Morning Prayers\*

\*At St Wilfrid's in 2021

**MINISTER** Rev Karen Le Mouton

**CONTACTS** Rev Jane Wild 01772 715134  
janwld@aol.co.uk

(Church Secretary) Mrs Mel Watson 01772 783581 or  
(Senior Steward) Mr John Spencer 01772 782829 or  
(Pastoral Secretary) Dr Carol Spencer 01772 782829

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