



Christ Church Abingdon

“With Jesus. Like Jesus. For Jesus”

Prayer Diary December 20th 2020 to January 9th 2021

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

This is the second part of the December/January prayer diary. The Comfort and Joy contributions are from the Church of England’s 2020 Christmas campaign.

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER: FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT: At 10.30am: LF Christmas Celebration (Zoom); NCR Christ Church Carol Services at 4pm (Livestreamed) and 7pm. Carols Watch Party for youth and young adults at 7pm (Zoom).

MONDAY 21 DECEMBER: Pray for the staff team as they continue to guide and lead us through these difficult times. Give thanks for The Oxford Foodbank and volunteers delivering a Christmas Meal to those who would have usually attending Christmas Day Events (this includes Abingdon residents). Long Furlong Sheep Trail (up to December 26th) - give thanks for all involved with planning, knitting and “hosting” sheep. Please pray for people to join the hunt and be encouraged to seek Jesus. Christmas holidays begin for schools; pray for everyone who has had a disrupted education because of the pandemic. CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS: The Good Shepherd Life Group and The Rainbow Group. CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES: Hugh Price, Secondary School Teacher

TUESDAY 22 DECEMBER: Pray for our cleaning staff, Mark Chapman, Naomi Challis and John Rowe. Please pray for the FOOTPRINTS team and all their guests. LF COFFEE BREAK: Pray for Shirley Cole and her team and guests. **FOODBANK** open today; pray that all who come experience the love and compassion of Jesus reflected in each volunteer. **Youth Gaming Event** online

today. **CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS:** Thursday Fellowship and Tuesday Life Group. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Nicola Price, Retired

WEDNESDAY 23 DECEMBER: 8am prayer meeting by Zoom (final one in 2020). **South Abingdon FOODBANK** open at lunchtime in the Preston Road Community Centre. Today, parcels will be given out at Preston Road to local families in the south of the town. We rejoice that there has been such a generous movement nationally to support foodbanks, and that we have no fears about having sufficient food to give out to all who are referred to us.

CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS: Thursday Afternoon Life Group and Thursday Evening Life Group. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Samantha Primmer, Primary School Teacher

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS EVE: Christingle giveaway – 10am to 12noon at LF Community Centre, 1pm to 3pm at Northcourt Road. We're making 500 packs! Christ Church Together Christingle Service (Livestreamed) at 4pm. Please pray for God's light and love to shine and for many to be part of this online celebration. Midnight Communion at 11pm (Livestreamed) from NCR.

THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP: Pray that we will all wonder afresh at "The Love that came down at Christmas" and worship the Father's gift of His Son Jesus to be our Saviour. **CHURCH NETWORKS:** Turner Life Group and Village People. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Brian Privett, Archway

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS DAY: LF Christmas Morning All-Age Worship on Zoom at 10am. NCR Christmas Day Worship at 10am (Livestreamed).

COMFORT AND JOY (Carol "God rest you merry") *Christmas is good news. After a tough year, Christmas brings comfort and joy to you and to a world that is weary and hurting. The message of the baby born in Bethlehem is that God is in the mix. God does not stand far off, watching from a distance. God comes to us, walks with us and stays with us. READ Luke 2:1-7. PRAY God of comfort and joy, may we know your presence with us today and bring your gentle, joyful love to others, this Christmas and always.*

SATURDAY 26 DECEMBER: BOXING DAY: JOY TO THE WORLD! (Carol "Joy to the world") *Shepherds, on a dark hillside outside the sleeping town, were the first to hear the joyful news of the birth of Jesus. A message of peace and joy for all, celebrated by a vast choir of angels. READ Luke 2:8-14. PRAY*

God of all the world, may we hear today the good news of your love, whether in a quiet whisper or an exultant song, and may your love bring peace and joy in and through us.

Last day of Long Furlong Sheep Trail - give thanks for all involved with this and pray for all those who have joined in the hunt – may they be encouraged to seek and find Jesus.

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER: There are no services at Christ Church today. **ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT** (Carol: “Silent night”) *Sometimes, there’s a Christmas moment of calm: before guests arrive, or perhaps after they’ve left, even if that’s only a memory this year. When the angels departed, the shepherds had their moment of calm, to pause and think, before going to Bethlehem to see the baby. In the busyness of Christmas, it’s good to stop and reflect, and maybe notice something you’ve not seen before. READ Luke 2:15-20. PRAY God of peace, in moments of calm and silence, you help us to pause and to see afresh. Give us grace to notice both the signs of your presence and the needs of others today.*

MONDAY 28 DECEMBER: **REST BESIDE THE WEARY ROAD** (Carol “It came upon the midnight clear”) *2020 has been a long and tough journey and there are still many uncertainties as we go into next year. The reading for today comes for the opening of John’s Gospel. It reminds us that as we look back, we see God at the beginning of all things, and as we look forward, we see a light that can never be put out. READ John 1:1-5. PRAY God of life, you are the beginning and the end. You hold our past and light our future. May we find our rest in you today and trust you for all that will be.*

Pray for the staff team for a good rest for everyone. Give thanks for all the amazing care workers, medical teams, research teams - all those who have worked so hard over this Christmas period, that those feeling exhausted may have times of rest and refreshment.

TUESDAY 29 DECEMBER: **SING, CHOIRS OF ANGELS** (Carol “O come, all ye faithful”) *“Come and behold him.” Come and see. Take time to look and reflect on all that Jesus is and offers. That’s the invitation in today’s carol. In the reading from John’s Gospel, there’s a promise. As we see, we trust, and as we trust, we receive. The gift God gives is love, now and eternally. READ John 1:6-13. PRAY God of love, in Jesus we see you as you are, and as we see*

you, we love you and find that you see us and love us. Open our eyes and hearts to you today.

FOODBANK open today. We are trying to develop a delivery team so that isolated people can still receive the food they need. We are also trying to develop a signposting system which will offer more support than can be given when clients cannot stay for a chat with us.

WEDNESDAY 30 DECEMBER: **O HOLY NIGHT!** (Carol "O holy night") *God's glory is seen in a beautiful sunset or landscape. God's glory is known in the transcendence of worship or the stillness of prayer. God's glory is revealed quietly and wonderfully in the birth of Jesus and the life of Jesus. God's glory seen fully, in a human being. READ John 1:14, 16-18. PRAY God of glory, thank you that you walk with us. Fill us with your grace today, that others may see your glory reflected in us, as we see you in them.*

Pray for the South Abingdon **FOODBANK** in the Preston Road Community Centre and for Ray Ball and his team.

THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER: **NEW YEAR'S EVE – LIGHT AND LIFE TO ALL HE BRINGS** (Carol "Hark the herald angels sing") *In today's reading, Mary's soul erupts into poetry as she looks to God her Saviour in preparation for the birth of Jesus. As we stand on the cusp of a new year, we meet God who turns our world's values upside down to reveal his light and love to all. READ Luke 1: 46-55. PRAY Lord of light and life, as we prepare for a new year, fill our hearts with praise and hope, as we, with you and one another, seek to bring your kingdom to our world.*

ARCHWAY - Pray for those who feel especially troubled and desperate at the turn of the year, for their protection and comfort. **THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP:** As a New Year begins may we look back in thankfulness for God's faithfulness and forward in hope trusting in the one who knows the future.

FRIDAY 01 JANUARY: **NEW YEAR'S DAY – THE HOPES AND FEARS OF ALL THE YEARS** (Carol "O little town of Bethlehem") *The words in today's reading are those spoken to John the Baptist when he was still in his mother's womb proclaiming him the forerunner of Jesus. As we read them at the dawn of a new year, let's ponder how Christ himself is a new dawn for the world. READ Luke 1:67-70, 76-79. PRAY Loving God, this New Year, guide our feet, comfort our hearts and strengthen our will, that with your hand to lead, we may build a better world.*

John Owen and the Alpha team: HMP Bullingdon - pray for the effects of lockdown over the holidays on the prisoners, staff and volunteers. May they find hope in the future.

SATURDAY 02 JANUARY: **WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM?** (Carol "In the bleak midwinter") *Today's beautiful poem-carol lays out three different reactions to the arrival of God. The earth is hard, unresponsive, cold and bleak; the heavens are ablaze with angels singing hallelujahs; but the mother of God holds her baby and kisses him. You don't need to be high and holy to worship God, says the poet Christina Rossetti. Be like Mary, open your heart and love him. READ Luke 2:28-32. PRAY God of all the world, help us to live today with Simeon's faith and Mary's love, that with gentleness and courage we may give freely to others as you have given freely to us.*

SUNDAY 03 JANUARY: At NCR: 9am HC in church; 10.30am GENESIS Youth leading Christ Church Together service on Epiphany followed by a Youth zoom reunion. Mission of the Month focus for January will be Chris and Suzy Wilson.

MONDAY 04 JANUARY: **Pray for the staff team** as they plan for the new term with all the uncertainties of what we'll be allowed to do. **Pray for Keith** as he leads us in 2021. **Pray for Andy Dent and Andy Lowe**, our newly elected wardens. **Pray for our link schools:** Long Furlong Primary (Head Teacher: Carol Dunne) for all staff, pupils, and their families. **Pray for students** as they begin the new academic term in colleges and universities in these uncertain times. **Meeting God in the Silence** from 9.30am and 7:30pm in the church (please check final arrangements). **Standing Committee** meets at 7:30pm.

CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS: After Eight and Barnabas Life Group. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Sue Quantick, Older Person's Ministry Leader

TUESDAY 05 JANUARY: **Pray for Hilary Beale, Philip Bingham and Paul Brombley**, deputy wardens and **Martin Steel** our Treasurer. **FOODBANK** open today; we praise the Lord for a wonderful supply of volunteers, old and new, and their commitment to the Foodbank. We are meeting folk who have little or no connection to the Church, and the opportunity to show love in action occurs nearly every day. **Give thanks for Archway volunteers and staff** continuing to provide telephone support throughout the Christmas and New Year period. **CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS:** Bible Journalling and Bingham Life

Group. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Joanna Reinders Green, Pharmaceutical Finance Consultant

WEDNESDAY 06 JANUARY: Pray for John Rogers, chair of MSG and Mission Partners Ashleigh Gibb, Tabitha Jordan, Martin Riddall and Viva. **8am prayer meeting** resumes, by Zoom. **South Abingdon FOODBANK** open today at lunchtime in the Preston Road Community Centre, pray for Ray Ball and his team and guests. **CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS:** Coffee Break and Coffee Cake and Chat. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Pearl Renshaw, Retired

THURSDAY 07 JANUARY: Pray for Roland Knight, Karen Brombley and Val Challis, Safeguarding Officers, and Trainers. **SINGING CIRCLE** begins again today. Please pray that new mums in the neighbourhood will find us - experiencing loneliness is very common at the moment. **THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP:** Pray that every member will be aware of the promised

presence of the Lord with them always; may "The joy of the Lord be our strength." **CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS:** Didcot Life Group and Dubock Life Group. **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Will Russell, IT Consultant

FRIDAY 08 JANUARY: **FOODBANK** open today. **John Owen and the Alpha team:** **HMP Bullingdon** - pray for the effects of lockdown on the prisoners and staff; pray for volunteers, who long to be allowed back in to visit the men. **CHRIST CHURCH NETWORKS:** Earwicker Life Group and Faith and Cake Life Group **CHRIST CHURCH FRONTLINES:** Vicky Russell, Healthcare

SATURDAY 09 JANUARY: News from Peter and Jane Dunn (Mission Partners, Biglife, Sheffield) "We give thanks to God for the training sessions now completed in Wakefield, Doncaster and Bradford. Two women started a discovery Bible study with some friends from a mother and toddler group as a result and led three of them to faith in Jesus after a few weeks together. Another woman who we have trained has seen four of her family come to faith in her home country in Central Asia as a result of prayer and starting a group online with them. As training finishes, please pray for the ongoing relationships with people to support and encourage them in being disciple makers where the Lord has placed them. Please also pray for wisdom in taking the new opportunities emerging to share the vision of disciple making across the UK. Pray for our own personal opportunities to share faith in our community and as we continue to meet with friends from India studying in the UK but keen to find out more about Jesus. It is exciting to see the Lord help us in building relationships with neighbours and in sharing faith."