

Bringing you the latest news from

Christchurch

www.christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

and the Community

Sunday 19th July 2020

Dear Christchurch family,

This week we move towards what would be the summer holiday season, with school term and the academic year coming to the end. Like most things, the sense of rhythm and cycle has been somewhat swallowed up by the strangeness of recent months. But God is steadfast. God is our rock and our salvation. However changeable and uncertain life and its circumstances are, God can be trusted, for God is faithful. And God is more powerful than any other reality that can ever be encountered.

Today I invite you to turn to Ephesians 6:10-18...

The Bible presents us with a worldview which refuses to see things in merely material terms. We're not just flesh and blood, but spiritual beings. The battles we face are spiritual. Life is more than just what we see and touch – in fact, the deepest realities are precisely those things that we can't see and touch. Everything has a spiritual dimension. And just as God is behind all that is good and true and life-giving, so there are spiritual powers of darkness behind that which is evil and destructive.

Such a worldview might not be fashionable, but I can't see what is to be gained by denying the spiritual realities that Paul talks about in Ephesians 6. To say there is simply no such thing as the demonic is to downplay the spiritual weight of evil and suffering. The call to authentic Christian discipleship is the challenge to see things differently and more profoundly than the limitations of a materialist mindset. To follow Jesus means that we refuse to take things at face value, and we dare to ask what spiritual reality lies behind whatever we are presented with. When Paul writes (in Ephesians 5), 'wake up o sleeper and rise from the dead', it's a clarion call to live a fuller life with a bigger vision of things – one that is energised by a sense of God's Holy Spirit and which therefore has the spiritual confidence to confront the power of evil wherever it lurks.

Let's pray: *Lord, help us to discern the spiritual realities that we face in our daily lives, and give us confidence to trust in you each day, knowing that you are the greatest reality of all. Thank you that although we experience battles, in Christ the victory is won. Amen.*

God bless you,

Russ, Clive and the Christchurch leadership

Praying Together Wherever We Are

Pointers for Prayer - 19th July 2020

*Soldiers of Christ arise!, And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies Through His eternal Son;
Strong in the Lord of hosts, And in His mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts is more than conqueror.
Stand then in His great might, with all his strength endued;
And take to arm you for the fight the panoply of God.
Charles Wesley*

It's interesting the things we can recall from years ago! These words came to me and I decided to look them up in the hymn book I used as a young child - at the back of the Bible I was given by my parents on my 8th birthday. I went straight to number 534 and there it was, Soldiers of Christ arise, just what we're being encouraged to do this week.

For ourselves

- As we pray this week, let us stand firm in the Lord's provision for us in all areas of our lives
- Let us be alert to those little niggles that can so easily become big issues in our relationships
- Let us beware of the temptation to criticise or judge others or their actions
- As we reflect on this whole teaching series on prayer, let us aim to establish a rhythm of prayer that is manageable and sustainable for us

For the Church

- with Churches Together in Clevedon we are praying for Clevedon Care, being conscious that their work is currently suspended because of COVID -19. We pray for wisdom and discernment in future decisions
- for groups and individuals on the church family connecting in ways that are helpful for them whilst 'normal' meeting arrangements are not possible
- give thanks for leaders after God's own heart who feed us with knowledge and understanding. Make us all ready to hear and act

For our community

- for schools now in the summer holidays. Give thanks for all the hard work of teachers, support staff, Head Teachers and governors, and for the patience of parents and resilience of the children. Give them all the rest they need to face the new challenges of a new school year, which will be unlike any other
- give thanks for carefully planned transitions from class to class and school to school albeit in a new way
- give thanks for adults who build the young people up and those who provide activities or space as appropriate to enable them to grow in knowledge and understanding

*Circle our school communities, Lord, keep protection near and danger afar;
keep light near and darkness afar; keep peace within and keep evil out; keep hope within and despair afar.*

For the world

- for all those agencies working in places where poverty, famine, flooding and all sorts of other situations affect people's lives and have had to curtail or significantly adapt their operating procedures during the pandemic. Give thanks for Christian organisations that continue to bring the hope we have in Jesus as well as practical support and relief, even in these very challenging times.
- for places where there have been rises in the number of cases and deaths from the virus that there will be a wise response. Keep fear out and hope in
- for those working towards a fuller understanding of the virus and a way of combating it to alleviate the suffering all over the world
- for food producers and manufacturers of goods where there is a lack of supplies or limited supplies. For those whose livelihoods are affected

News & Information

Christchurch Methodist-Anglican Ecumenical Church, Clevedon is seeking to appoint a youth worker (25 hours per week).

We are a lively, growing church of all ages and stages. We strive to be accessible for everyone, especially 'those who don't do church', equipping people to live out faith in everyday life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are seeking a prayerful person with:

- A passion for the Gospel and a heart for young people;
- A proven ability to build relationships with young people and equip them to grow as disciples of Jesus;
- A commitment to grow the existing links with young people and their parents / carers, schools and other settings within the local community;
- The skills and sensitivity with which to engage issues of mental health and wellbeing among young people;
- A commitment to the vision and mission of Christchurch;
- A sense of fun, creativity, and innovation, with a servant heart, a sense of initiative and the ability to work as part of a team.

For details and application form contact: admin@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

Closing date for applications: Friday 24th July

Interviews by arrangement in August.

Thanks and prayers for Josh Adkins, CEMES Student

In the Autumn of 2019, Josh Adkins joined us at Christchurch as part of the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme.

The scheme is designed for young people to take a 'year out' to engage in some study and experience ministry within a local Church.

In addition to his studies, Josh engaged during the week in several areas of Church life, especially Wednesday morning prayer, Schools ministry with morning assemblies and Rock solid sessions, and pastoral visiting to some older members of our congregation.

Josh has just completed the year which was sadly cut short because of the pandemic.

A huge thank you from us all to Josh for his time with us.

Our prayers and blessings are with him as he commences University in September studying Theology.

Elsie Calderbank

As circulated in last week's newsletter, Elsie died very peacefully at Elm view.

Her funeral will take place at Weston Crematorium on **Monday (20th) at 2.30pm.**

Sadly, it will be restricted numbers for close family due to the current regulations.

However, arrangements have been made for the service to be live-streamed for those in the North of England, France, Jersey and for all those locally who would like to join with us.

Should you wish to access the service, her son Roger would be pleased to provide the on-line access code and a copy of the service sheet for the hymns.

Please contact Roger direct (roger@calderbank88.plus.com) for the necessary link.

Christchurch Summer and Autumn Teaching Series

Thank you to every one of the 200 plus people who join together with our online service each week. We will continue this through the Summer with a teaching series on the 'I am' sayings of Jesus. Details of the weekly themes and Bible readings will be in next week's newsletter.

Looking further ahead, we are excited by the theme of this Autumn's teaching series for home groups, interest groups, individual and home family study:

'Church: what we can learn from Acts', seven studies for groups, by Beki Rogers.

This material is based on the hugely inspiring and timely book, 'Unleashed: the Acts Church today' by Gavin and Anne Calver.

This moment in time with all its struggles gives us the opportunity as a Church, as it did in the time of Acts, to show our community, friends and family what is different when we face uncertainty and the future with Jesus at the centre of our lives.

How does this impact in the way we behave?

What difference should it make to our sense of hopefulness?

We will be using prepared Bible study notes for each week starting on the 13th September.

We pray as a Church that this timely engagement with the experience of the early Church will encourage us, prepare and shape us to serve and reach out to others in new and exciting ways in the later part of what has been a challenging year for so many.

If you are not yet part of a home group and would like to join one, please get in touch with Carolyn, our Home Group Co-ordinator: carolynmwaite@gmail.com / 01275 340689

August Newsletter

There will be one newsletter to cover the month of August (to be emailed out on Friday 31st July).

The subsequent newsletter will be sent out on Friday 4th September.

Any news items for the August newsletter to reach Kathryn (admin@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk) by Wednesday 29th July, please.

Financial expertise? Join the Christchurch Finance Team

Christchurch has a small dedicated team that oversees the many aspects of our Ministry and Outreach.

We give thanks for each member of the team and those who support them with their gifts and skills. The Finance team has identified the need to expand given the growth of the Church. We are prayerfully seeking people to join the team who have a heart for Christchurch's Vision and Mission and our increasing outreach to the community we are called to serve. We are seeking those who possess the necessary gifting, skills and experience in one or all of the following areas:

Strategy, communication and finance planning,

General accounting / Charity law and practice / Gift aid

Support role to our existing team member by gathering information/statistics and figures for funding applications.

If you possess any of these gifts and skills, please prayerfully consider using them to serve the wider Church and community as part of the Christchurch finance team.

Please contact Kathryn at admin@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk who will direct you to the clergy team, John deBorde or a member of the Finance Team.

Here to Help

If you would like some practical or prayer support, please get in touch with either your home group leader, or Carolyn, our Home Groups Co-ordinator (carolynmwaite@gmail.com), or our Church Administrator, Kathryn (admin@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk).

Christchurch– Mini Directory

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Home Groups Co-ordinator Carolyn Waite	340689	carolynmwaite@gmail.com
Safeguarding Margaret Sutherland	07527 988690	safeguarding@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk
Sunday Children and Families Co-ordinator Emy Buxton	871483	sundaychildrenandfamiliescoordinator @christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

Facebook page: [Christchurch Clevedon](#)
 Children's blog: www.christchurch-kids.blogspot.com .
 Prayer requests: prayer@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

Finally,

be strong in the Lord

and in His mighty power.

Put on the full armour of God...

Ephesians 6: 10-11