

December 2021 to February 2022

**WARMINSTER UNITED
CHURCH**

(Methodist/URC)

George Street, Warminster BA12 8QA

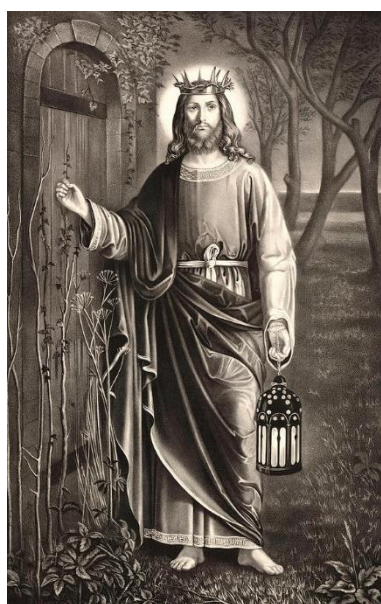


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Dear Friends

Compiling these thoughts next to a scented candle I cannot but keep watching the flame. For me there is something powerful about a candle flame, symbolising light in the darkness and let us be honest there remains far too much darkness within the still present horror that is Covid.



Many will be familiar with William Holman Hunts painting, *The Light of the World* representing the figure of Jesus preparing to knock on an overgrown and long-unopened door. Those words from John 8 are probably the best-known reference to light in the Gospels and particularly in the here and now of where we find ourselves it is important to be reminded that no matter how bleak or difficult or frightening the world might appear, Christ is the light of the world and the darkness shall not overcome it! However, Jesus challenges us to be light bearers: “you are the light of the world, don’t hide that light under a basket but rather put it on a stand so the whole house can see.” (Matthew 5v14-16). Now that is the question: How might you let

God’s light shine through you to others? And then very poignantly in what ways have you hidden God’s light under a basket in your life?

One of my favourite contemporary hymns is by Bernadette Farrell with the rousing chorus:

**Christ, be our Light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your Church gathered today.**

As we approach Advent, journey into Christmas and likewise Epiphany and the New Year may we celebrate the Light that is Christ who comes among us to be one with us. May we likewise be one with him and shine forth his light to a world so desperately in need.

Peace

Rev David Coppard



CAROL SERVICE

12th December 3.30 p.m.

There will be items by the choir, lessons from “The Message” Bible and popular carols for everyone to sing (wearing masks)

Collection for “Crisis at Christmas”

Tea/coffee and mince pies after the service

Offers of help & mince pies would be greatly appreciated

Thanks



CHRISTMAS EVE

10.30 a.m.

Communion Service

Led by Rev David Coppard

Also includes welcoming Anita into membership



CHRISTMAS DAY

10.00 a.m.

**At The Baptist Church
North Row**

The Wiltshire United Area

The Rev David Coppard MTh
Superintendent Minister
26 Brabant Way
Westbury
Wiltshire BA13 3UW

Tel:01373 858805

Email david.coppard@methodist.org.uk

Advent Sunday 2021

Dear Everyone

This letter is being read to the congregations of each of the four churches in the section, it comes as always with my gratitude for all that you do in the life of the church and the assurance of my continuing prayers.

You will be aware that I am involved one day a week in hospital chaplaincy, what you may not know is how many times I have been asked to become full-time. After much thought and discernment, I have accepted a permanent hospital chaplaincy post within the NHS based at Taunton. Permission to accept this has been granted by the national Methodist Church.

This means that I will leaving Wiltshire in the latter part of January. It has meant so much to share in ministry with everyone since September 2012 – over 9 years ago, thank you for allowing me that privilege. The Area Executive will be arranging ministerial cover for each church.

I look forward very much to sharing in Advent and Christmas with you and likewise leading us into the New Year as we hold our Covenant Services.

In the words of a verse from Sydney Carter's hymn:

***One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go,
From the old things to the new
Keep me travelling along with you.***

May God's richest blessings rest upon each of you.

David



**DRIVE (or walk) IN
OPEN AIR
CAROL SERVICE**
In the car park by Civic
Centre



Led by Christchurch December 19th 6p.m.

This year's theme will be "**Because you're Loved**". If anyone wants to help out, get in touch with Rev Lorraine at Christ Church. Lorraine would like to carry 'Because you're Loved' through Easter and Summer too.

1,000 Wooden hearts will be distributed. There is also a 'Because you're Loved' website.

Also, a nativity trail will be in the Christ Church grounds, QR code will open the readings.



SERVICES - 10.30 a.m. unless otherwise stated

December 5th: Rev Heather Morgan

December 12th: CAROL SERVICE 3.30p.m.

December 19th: Rev Susan Holden

December 24th (Friday) Christmas Eve Communion led by Rev David Coppard. Including welcoming Anita into membership

December 25th (Saturday) Christmas Day at the Baptist Church, North Row.

December 26th: No service

January 2nd: Karen Woollard

January 9th: Rev Susan Holden

January 16th: COVENANT SERVICE led by Rev David Coppard

January 23rd: Rev A Ward Jones

January 30th: Sector Service at Westbury

February 6th: Mrs Margaret White

February 13th: To be confirmed

February 20th: To be confirmed

February 27th: Rev Heather Morgan

Coffee/tea and biscuits will be served after the services, in the Cameo room
(Please continue to follow Covid safety guideline)

ROTAS

Now that Sunday services are getting back to nearer normal, we need to re-establish rotas to make sure things run smoothly and people feel welcome. We need to ensure there is someone to open up the church, to greet people as they arrive and to welcome the preacher, give out any notices etc. Also, to serve coffee. It would also be nice to have flowers in the church each week again. There will be three lists: "Door Stewards", "Church Flowers" and "Coffee", in the foyer or Cameo Room before and after the services. If you are willing to do one of these things, please put your name against the date you can do. Any queries to Joan Jones who is coordinating these lists at the moment. For the Door Stewards list it ideally needs 2 people each week so one can stay at the door and the other attend to other matter. Please also let it be known if you are willing to help at communion services or in any other way.



CHRISTMAS CARD

SHARE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS WITH YOU CHURCH FRIENDS AND

GIVE A HOMELESS FAMILY A REASON TO CELEBRATE!



Our traditional, large Communal Christmas Card will be making an appearance again this year. You are invited to write your Christmas Greetings in it, to your friends at Church.

There will also be a collection box in which you can put a donation to Shelter.

Writing your Christmas greetings in this card saves you the cost of buying cards. Why not give this money to Shelter to help Homeless people over Christmas so they may know they too are important to God and to us?

And do remember to look in it later to see other people's greetings.

Shelter

The housing and homelessness charity



USED POSTAGE STAMPS

There is a box in the Foyer for the collection of used postage stamps. These will go to Royal National Institute for the Blind. Please save the stamps you receive over the Christmas period and put them in this box



FROM PASTORAL CO-ORDINATOR

Sadly, because of Covid-19, many in the Church family have felt unable to attend Sunday worship. We have missed you and hope that having received a booster jab, you may feel more confident in joining us for worship. The Carol Service is on Sunday 12th December at 3.30pm: I hope you will feel able to join us to sing your favourite carols. The Church Council has decided that we will once again be able to serve coffee & biscuits after the service, which will help to build up a sense of community as we share in fellowship together.

On Sunday 21st November, at an “extra” morning service held in Church, some of us were able to join in at home on zoom. This was an experiment well worth trying, as there are some who really appreciate being able to participate in worship in this way from the comfort and safety of their own home. It enables them to feel that they are an important part of the Church family and grow in faith and knowledge.

On a sad note, we remember in our prayers Helen and Kevin Dawson and their family on the death of Helen’s mother, Mrs Betty Whiting. Her funeral is at Semington Crematorium on Wednesday 1st December at 12.15pm.

Heather Morgan



Warminster Action Group now have a “community space” in Chinn’s Court. As well as continuing with the help in collecting prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and chatting, they run some activity groups:

Wednesdays 10.30a.m. to 1 p.m. “Crafty Chinn Wag”, take your own arts and crafts or use their stash. Tea and biscuits provided

Wednesdays 1.30p.m. to 4 p.m. “Digital Drop in”, Get help with your digital devices

Fridays 10.30a.m to 1p.m. “Games Group”, Chess, Dominos, Backgammon or try something new. Fun and Friendship

Call 01985 250081 to book a place or enquire – or pop into 1b Chinn’s Court. It is an amazing, welcoming place.

They also have a collection box to recycle blister packs from medication tablets and run a school uniform swap.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

This year it has been prepared by the churches from the Middle East and their theme is **“We saw His Star in the East”**

Zoom details for Norton Bavant will be on the Churches Together Website.

All meetings at 12 noon for liturgy and soup.

Tuesday 18 th January	Baptists
Wednesday 19 th January	Foundation Christian Fellowship
Thursday 20 th January	St John’s Church
Friday 21 st January	United Church
Saturday 22 nd January	St George’s
Sunday Service on 23 rd	Norton Bavant Zoom (Pimms and Hymns) 6pm
Monday 24 th January	Christ Church
Tuesday 25 th January	The Minster

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES

102 Shoeboxes were packed and are now on their way to Bulgaria and Serbia to be distributed to orphanages, poor Roma communities, refugee camps and other needy people. For many this will be the only gift that they receive this Christmas. A big thank you to all who have contributed to this effort in any way. Hopefully we can do even better next year! Brenda is happy to receive empty boxes and donated items at any time in the year.

To find out more about FCSI (Foundation for change and social inclusion) who distribute these boxes their website is www.fscinet.org

We are also packing 12 large boxes for Afghan refugee families who have settled in Wiltshire.

CHURCH COUNCIL

At the Full Church meeting in October the new Church Council (Trustees) were appointed as below:

To serve for 3 years: John Alpin, Erica Castle, Karen Woollard and Anita Silk

To serve for 1 year: Marion Barton, Marion Hornby, Mary Treadwell, Joan Jones, Joan Stephens and Margaret Edwards.

At the first church council meeting Karen took on the post of Church Secretary, which John had held for around 40 years! Hilary Reynolds stepped down as Treasurer, having held the post for 14 years, her successor has not been confirmed but Anita is considering taking on the role. Many thanks to John and Hilary for their long service. These are the 2 roles that have to have a named person. Other tasks and duties were taken on by various council members.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN WARMINSTER - Reports from our Joint Projects

Christian Aid – a difficult year but we raised £4,091.80 including a sponsored walk from a member.

Food Bank. Jean Colgrave is leading now. If a person needs food, they can phone Food Bank number and delivery will be arranged or food can be collected.

Cornerstone – the office reception has been open for a few months now. We are seeing a lot of need (homeless, second language speakers, form filling, phoning on behalf). We are well funded but we need more volunteers. The Social Prescribers at the Avenue Surgery has been an excellent link. Marion Barton has set up the Chat Cafe which is very valuable.

Street Pastors – every Friday night in the town and Sunday afternoons in the park area– this is a very effective service to the community where loving, spiritual conversations take place on the Streets but we are very short of volunteers. (Friday night 10pm meet at Baptist Church and the Pastors stay till the last train leaves Warminster, 3am ish). There is training available for new volunteers.

Refugee Support – Three families had settled in Warminster. Now members are supporting Westbury, because there is a housing shortage in Warminster. It was a very nice initiative and we learnt a lot through it. If anyone knows of a house that could be for rent in Warminster, please get in touch so that another family can be homed. Have you got bikes for kids and one for an adult male (for the Westbury family).

Youth Work – this is being done in individual churches now. Talk for Warminster School every Monday morning as Chaplain and pastoral work is being done by Christ Church with the boarders. A lot of the primary schools are church schools. The clergy and Open the Book teams do collective worship in schools. A lot of resources (e.g. digital prayer maps) are offered to the schools because the children do not come into church. The ministry has to go to where the children are. Relationships with the schools and the children need to be developed so that the Message of God's love can be shared successfully. Open the Book was Zoomed into Princecroft during Covid and the staff are attending now. Rev Mags Collings is heading up the Mentoring Scheme in Kingdown School.

Against Modern Slavery – We have connected with the police and Salvation Army looking at the prevalence of exploitation and county lines in our rural community. Leaflets were distributed to be shared with congregations to raise awareness and give the Crimestoppers number so anyone can report anything that doesn't look right.

Karen

May God Bless us all as we move into 2022

One more step
along the world I go,
one more step
along the world I go,
from the old things to the new,
keep me travelling
along with you.



**As I travel through the
bad and good,
Keep me traveling
the way I should;
Where I see no way to go
You'll be telling me the way,
I know:**