

# Together as One

Newsletter of the Methodist Churches in Hungerford, Lambourn, Newbury and Thatcham during Coronavirus Pandemic

## Verses for the week

I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. (Psalm 130: 5+6)

## Why follow the instructions?

It is no secret that I am not always good at reading and following instructions! You know, the sort of thing written in many languages in the paperwork attached to a new gadget or appliance. I am rather more in favour of turning on and seeing what happens! This approach is quicker but by it I miss out on features of the device that would have been helpful to know about. We have had our fridge freezer for nearly eight years and I have only recently learned how you are supposed to collect the melt water when defrosting it. The designer's thought through solution to this problem was lost on me.

Now I know, there is much less water to be mopped up from the kitchen floor. Oh! in case you are worrying, we don't let our freezer get as iced up or as empty as the one in the picture! I have also learned that reading the instructions on packaging can be a good thing too. Often this is designed to make the task of opening easier or to enable the package to be re-sealed.

Impatiently diving in, tearing or cutting may easily destroy this part of the carefully considered design. It takes time to wait and consider, to read the instructions, but experience shows it is beneficial.

Image by Dev Benjamin on Unsplash



We have been thinking about 'worship in the waiting' during Advent which reaches its third week this Sunday. This year has involved a lot more waiting than we are used to or comfortable with. It has been hard to wait for restrictions to be eased and then harder still to see them re-imposed and to have to wait again. The Bible is full of waiting, which the people who fill its pages did not find any easier than we do. The Psalmist's patient injunction to 'wait for the Lord' is matched by the common cry of 'How long, O Lord!' The over-arching storyline of the Bible includes periods of waiting, for freedom from Egypt, return from exile, for God to send his Messiah and for Jesus to come again. Careful consideration of God's plan, his considered design, in these patterns of waiting, of apparent inactivity, will bear much practical benefit. Impatient frustration and over eagerness to move on may mean we miss the benefits the Maker intended for our good, for our flourishing. Moving too quickly to Christmas activities, even in this different and curtailed celebration, may mean we miss something important. That is what Advent encourages us to avoid doing.

With love and prayers, Peter.

## Baby News

Following on from my comments in the newsletter last week, we are pleased to let you know that baby Mabel Rosalie was born shortly after her great great uncle died. We thank God for a safe birth and a healthy baby, and look forward to meeting our great niece, although it may be some time yet.

## Answer to Prayer

During Worship at Home on 15 November my nephew Mark spoke about his work for Wycliffe Bible Translators and we prayed specifically for the launch of the Sangu New Testament in Tanzania in late November. The celebration went well - please [Click Here](#) to watch a video of the event.

The song at the beginning says 'Everything is possible by faith'. The scripture app with the whole New Testament went live in the same week and the recording team were able to complete the recording of the New Testament and Genesis the following week. Thank you so much for your prayers. Perhaps you might consider supporting a specific Christian worker or organisation yourself on a longer term basis. Chris Bennett



## Action for Children Secret Santa

Churches often support Action for Children at Christmas and with fewer services taking place and not everyone able to attend you might like to consider supporting this year's Secret Santa fundraising campaign online.

Every child's Christmas should be full of excitement, warmth and laughter. But for many children, this year will be very different. Before coronavirus hit, more than 4 million children in the UK were locked in poverty. That's the equivalent of nine children in every school class of 30. Now families are growing ever more desperate and parents who've never needed help are struggling. More families are having to choose between paying their bills or feeding their children. By donating and becoming a Secret Santa you could make sure more children and young people have a hot meal, a present or a safe place to sleep. For details [Click Here](#)



## COVID Winter Grant Scheme - Information for you or someone you know

West Berkshire Council has recently launched its COVID Winter Grant Scheme to cover food, energy and other essential items for residents in need due to the pandemic. Through the scheme, the Council will provide families, individuals and vulnerable people in need with financial support for food, utility bills (heating, cooking, lighting), water bills for household purposes (including drinking, washing, cooking, central heating, sewerage and sanitary purposes), or other related essentials. As part of the scheme, the Council will make arrangements for the provision of Free School Meal vouchers for eligible 5 to 16 year olds during the Christmas and February half term school holidays.

Individuals who are in need can make an online application independently on the West Berkshire website or contact the Community Support Hub. Any individuals who need support with the online application process, including those without internet access, are welcome to contact the Community Support Hub by email: [westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk).

## And finally

Many people will stop at 3pm on Christmas Day to listen to Her Majesty's annual address to the nation. But what does the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast? **Answer** The One Show!