

Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 15th January

Good morning and a warm welcome to our Morning Worship. Our service today should have been led by Mr David Webb, but unfortunately he is unwell and unable to be with us, so we are most grateful to Mrs Joyce Wild for stepping in to lead our worship this morning.

The stewards today are John Cornish and Jean Peck. After the service, please join us in the hall for refreshments.

Dates for your diary:

Sunday 22 nd January	10.45 am	Morning worship led by Mr Brian Sturtridge
Sunday 29 th January	10.30 am	Ecumenical Service at the Parish Church – there will be NO service at our own church
Saturday 4 th February	8.30 am	Monthly prayer meeting, Holtwood Methodist
Tuesday 7 th February	7.00 pm	Church Council meeting
Sunday 14 th May	10.45 am	Church Anniversary led by Reverend Gwyneth Owen, followed by lunch in the hall

Bible in a year: 15th – 21st January: Genesis 36 – Exodus 3 and Matthew 10:21 – Matthew 14:21

New Year message from Reverend Pauline Crispin: this can be found on the Circuit's website at <https://www.candwmc.org.uk>.

Prayer for Christian Unity: At least once a year, Christians are reminded of Jesus' prayer for his disciples that "they may be one so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Hearts are touched and Christians come together to pray for their unity. The Parish Church will celebrate this week of prayer on Wednesday 18th January at the Parish Centre at 7.45 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Church Council Meeting, 7th February: The Church Council is due to meet on the 7th February at 7.00 pm in the Okeford Room. All members of the church and congregation are welcome to attend, but only Trustees are permitted to vote.

Helpers for Presbyteral Synod meeting: On Saturday 4th March the Presbyteral Synod will be held at Wimborne Methodist Church and help is needed to cater for the 90 attendees. There are three sessions:

9.00 am -11.00 am to serve refreshments, collect in empty cups, wipe tables down and wash and dry up

12.00 noon -2.00 pm to serve refreshments, collect in empty cups, wipe tables, and wash and dry up

3.30 pm – 5.00 pm to serve refreshments, collect in empty cups, wipe tables, wash and dry up and tidy away tables.

Those who volunteer will only be asked to undertake one session. Is this something you feel able to help with? If it is please email joyce.wild156@gmail.com or ring Joyce Wild on 07817 505543 by Friday 24th February.

Joyce Wild

Circuit Concert: On the afternoon of either Saturday March 11th or 25th (date to be confirmed) we shall hold a Circuit Concert at Ringwood Trinity.

You might be musical, love drama, can recite poetry, juggle, tell jokes, be a ventriloquist or offer something I have never even thought of, but please come and share your gift with others. An audience, too, will be most appreciated. If you are interested speak to either Joyce or John. This will be an excellent way to showcase the talent around our Circuit of which I am sure there is much. Dates of any rehearsals will follow shortly. I look forward to hearing from as many folk as possible.

Joyce Wild

Circuit Steward's Report January 2023: "I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope in the future". *Jeremiah Ch29 v 11.*

The beginning of January saw the church celebrating Epiphany, that time when the wise men came to worship Jesus and offer him their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This gentile visitation to the Christ child enables each of us to look back on the past and appreciate the sacrifices the magi were prepared to make so they too could worship the King of the Jews. It cost them the time it took to study the stars and then prepare for what would be an epic journey. They had to leave behind family, friends, and home and head to a foreign land following a star by night. Equally the gifts they carried to present to the king were of great value.

As I look back on Advent and Christmas 2022 what do I see in the Christchurch and Wimborne Circuit? I see the cost in time, treasure, and talents of all our congregations as they brought the true message of Christmas to the people around them.

It began with a coming together for the Circuit Advent Service at Ringwood with pudding and continued with love and dedication throughout the season. There was a Christmas Tree Festival, a Children's holiday club, Carol Services, Christingles, a Holiday at Home for the elderly, services in Care Homes, generosity in giving to various Foodbanks, coffee mornings, concerts, support, too, for those who struggled and much, much more. That Christian spirit abounded in all areas, and it was a pleasure and a privilege to witness. The light of Christ was brightly lit and shining in so many darkened places.

My prayer for this New Year is for that light which shone so vividly in November and December will continue to shine as our Circuit faces the challenges and joys that 2023 may bring. Let's not hide Christ's light under a bushel as the song tell us. Rather, let us hold onto the symbolism of the gifts that the men from the east gave. You see, wrapped together gold, frankincense and myrrh encourage each of us to offer our entire being to God using heart, head, and hands to serve him. We can only do that when we are united in Christ, when we remember who we serve, and when we give him all the honour and glory.

I feel certain that we will continue to have our Bible studies, prayer meetings such as the one at Holtwood held on the first Saturday in the month at 8.30am, our ladies' groups, toddler groups, and the many other numerous outreach activities that take place throughout the year as well as our weekly services. But my heartfelt plea is that as a Circuit we will listen to God, obey his calling, and rise to the challenges that being servants of the most high God bring, doing that with excitement and enthusiasm, embracing new things and perhaps setting aside others that have come to an end.

For our Circuit, change is on the horizon this year. Reverends Pauline Crispin and Phillip Dixon move to pastures new whilst Reverend Andrew Pottage, his wife Laura, their young son, Alfred, and new baby join us in September. There will be an update via the Circuit Administrator about a Minister for Wimborne, Colehill and Blandford once there is definite news.

I want us to actively encourage each other by coming together as much as possible. With this in mind, on the afternoon of either Saturday March 11th or 25th (date to be confirmed) we shall hold a Circuit Concert at Ringwood Trinity. Using the words from the poster that Lord Kitchener used to rally the troops in World War 1, I am saying to everyone 'Your Circuit Needs You'. You might be musical, love drama, can recite poetry, juggle, tell jokes, be a ventriloquist or offer something I have never even thought of, but please come and share your gift with others. An audience, too, will be most appreciated. If you are interested speak to your lead steward who in turn will contact your Circuit Steward.

On March 1st the Presbyterial Synod of the Southampton District will be held at Wimborne. Following this, Reverend Pauline Crispin begins her three month sabbatical so Pauline will be back amongst us by Sunday June 4th. Pauline's last working day in this Circuit will be 16th July. Arrangements are underway to cover the pastoral care of Pauline's three churches during her absence.

I leave you with a prayer for those who have big plans this year and that, my friends, is all of us in the Christchurch and Wimborne Circuit.

*Almighty God, Lord of heaven and earth,
as we bring our plans to You,
we take a moment to remember that every breath in our lungs is Yours;
every moment of life is Your gift.
Who are we that You care for us so intimately?
As we put our plans in place for this year,
show Your hand at work that we may follow where you lead and set our hearts after Yours.
We belong to you alone, Lord.
May our every breath, our every moment, bring you glory. Amen.*

Every blessing, Joyce Wild

Blandford Foodbank is urgently in need of -

- Deodorant
- Tinned fruit
- Tinned vegetables

The following items are also running low and need restocking -

- Porridge
- Tinned Meat
- Tinned soup
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Bars of soap
- Cleaning products such as washing up liquid, surface cleaner, cleaning sponges

For those able to support the Foodbank with items, a box has been placed in the Narthex as a collection point.

John Cornish

Prayer: Please can we continue to uphold in prayer those members of our congregation who we know are ill or suffering in some way.

If you know of anyone who would like prayer and be mentioned by name in The Link, please let me know (having obtained their permission first to mention them by name).

Minister:

Reverend Pauline Crispin

(Tel: 01202 883461)

Email: paulinecrispin@yahoo.co.uk

Pastoral Support:

Joyce Wild: (Tel: 01258 454091)