



## CHEAP STREET CHURCH

To know the love of God through the power of the Holy Spirit and with Jesus as our teacher to show and share our faith.

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## NEWSLETTER

**27<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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This week we have news of Barbara Porter in hospital and of Kate and Kevin Fisher's move. Martin Heal reminds us that not everyone is online. Duncan looks forward to Advent and Lynn Heaton reflects on 30 years worshipping at Cheap Street.

If you are reading this on Wednesday there are just 4 sleeps to Advent and 30 to Christmas.  
**George Faris**

### Duncan's Message

Lectionary Readings for Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November Advent 1

Psalm 80:1-7 & 17-19, Isaiah 64:1-9, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37

The beginning of Advent and our time of preparation for our celebration of the birth of Jesus feels just a little different this year, with churches being closed on the first Sunday due to Covid-19 restrictions. Advent is about looking forward to the future with hope even in difficult situations, because of what God has done and promised to do and this is reflected in this week's lectionary readings.

At the moment it is not only Christians that are looking forward to the promise of future events as hope is being invested in the effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines to end the social isolation that has been required to contain the spread of the virus. It is to be hoped that the vaccines fulfil their promise on a worldwide basis and we can return to the social contact that is so important to us and to the activities we enjoy together such as sport, concerts and the arts.

Advent is not just our preparation for the celebration of the coming Christmas and the fulfilment of God's promise to send God's Son but also the promise that one day Jesus will return again at a time we do not know or cannot predict but that we need to be ready for it whenever it happens. The natural question to ask is when will be the date of Jesus' return but Jesus warns against this and asks us to seek to live lives that constantly are ready to meet with Jesus in person and in Spirit.

Hymn: *Singing The Faith 180* O come, O come, Immanuel ([click for the choir of Clare College Cambridge](#))

### Pastoral News

**Barbara Porter** continues to be treated in hospital for her back and for Covid symptoms. The physios have her up walking and she is part of a Covid trial. Barbara and Dennis greatly appreciate the support, concern and messages from their friends. However, they are being overwhelmed. **Please do not try to contact Barbara or Dennis for the time being.** Dennis will keep us informed. Please continue to pray for Barbara & the family.

## Fellowship of Prayer

Whenever and wherever we pray in the silence of our hearts, we are part of a rich and powerful fellowship, which serves to sustain everyone in our Church Family. Anyone can join the prayer group by just praying.

We hold in special prayer Barbara and Dennis Porter; Eileen Higgins's son Robert and his wife Dawn; Clive and Jill Turner and Ellie and Sophie.

We continue to pray for Sheila Green and her family; Yve and Ken Ackroyd and all the family; John Hunt and his family; Carol Hooper and her family; Janet Baker; Martin Heal; Phyllis Batchelor; Duncan's mother; Kathy Crew; Janet Dolling and her family; Judith Hayward and her family; Eileen Higgins; Alex Palmer; Peter and Marjorie Kett; Christina Le Moignan.

*The Prayer Ring is available for an urgent need or situation.*

*Call any of these numbers and the circle of prayer will begin:*

*Eirwen Cox 01935 815960, Penny Gardner 01935 389153, Janet Le Moignan 01935 389662.*

## Lynn Heaton's Thought for the Day

In October, 30 years ago, I started coming to Cheap Street Church. How young we ALL were then! How old were you?

Some of the people who were there for me at the beginning are still here now. They did a wonderful job, helping me get on board, out of the water, and wrapping me in the warmth of God's love. Thank you to you all from those times, and to those who have supported me along the way. I can't imagine what my life would have been like if I had never stepped through our church door in 1990. I really believe it is the church I was guided to, and I know others have had that feeling for themselves. We are all here for a reason, and we are all here to be co-workers with God, co-operating with the Holy Spirit.

A few years ago, I was in a session at the "New Wine" Christian Gathering, where those not used to praying with others were encouraged to do so. A woman, who felt completely out of her comfort zone in this area, stepped up to pray with me. I closed my eyes as she gently laid her hand on my arm, and she began to pray out loud. Lots of people were praying with others around me, and I stopped trying to listen for the words she was saying, as I started to get a picture in my mind.

I was in the sea, and lots of others were in the sea too, all around me. It was dark. But there was a boat, with lights, and a golden lifeline was thrown towards me. I held on to it and I was pulled in. I was helped, by people on the boat, to clamber on, and Jesus was there, welcoming me on board. I was relieved to be rescued and I sat back for a while to recover. Then I looked around at the others in the water, in the dark. How could I just sit there and not do something to reach out to them? Obviously, I had to at least try.

Through a woman who thought she couldn't pray with anyone, Jesus had spoken to me, because she took a brave step forward. We need to keep the light shining, but it is not enough just to sit in the light. There are people all around us in various types and levels of darkness, and they need our help. They need you and me to act, to really give of ourselves, urgently. Now.

Loving God, I pray that your will be done, here in our church and in our town. That we will each play our part. That we will constantly remind ourselves of your amazing love for each one of us. And, loving you, we will give ourselves to you, and to others in the way you want us to. Amen.

Bible Reading: Romans 12 v 1-5

Hymn: Come Let us Sing of a Wonderful Love 443 *Singing the Faith* ([click for YouTube version](#))

## Prayers for the persecuted church

Armenia and Azerbaijan

Christians are among thousands of people recently tragically killed in six weeks' fighting between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Many Christians in Azerbaijan from Muslim backgrounds have been killed. In Armenia, Orthodox and Protestant Christians have been killed, as have believers from Yezidi backgrounds. Several churches in the two countries have been bombed and seriously damaged. There is also concern that 1,600 historic Armenian Christian monuments, chapels and artefacts in areas now held by Azeri soldiers and Syrian Islamic militants will be destroyed.

Let us pray: That grieving and hurting believers will truly know the 'God of all comfort' (2 Corinthians 1:3) at this tremendously difficult time; for permanent peace between the two nations; that Christians will be models of grace, forgiveness and joy who powerfully impact their communities, and for the preservation of the rich Christian heritage in the disputed region. Amen

### Letter from Kevin Fisher

To my dear friends at Cheap Street

What a wonderful surprise to get a letter from Janet as Secretary for the Church Meeting thanking me for things I've done. That is typical of your Fellowship and I count my Blessings in The Lord that I've been able to be a part of your worship & outreach for the last 8 years. There have been so many uplifting moments and, of course, that powerful prayer support which you constantly give & which I felt so strongly when my grandson was stillborn 3 years ago. I will carry many happy memories from this place once we eventually move up to the Midlands.

2020 has not been a good time for most of us but moving house in a pandemic is a little fraught! Our first sale fell through after the first lockdown ended and our second has taken a seeming eternity. The conveyancing system is overwhelmed at the moment & we haven't yet exchanged on our sale. Mid January is now our target date & we remain ever hopeful. In between lockdowns we have been able to see our grandchildren regularly, which has been brilliant & the whole reason for moving. I look forward to seeing less of the M5 next year!

When this crisis is over I look forward to seeing you all again at worship one day & sharing the Blessings we've been given.

### Letter from Martin Heal

Congratulations to Sherborne Churches Together on this year's Christmas card. It looks good and has a great theme: **Follow the star - find the King**. The poem inside is amusing and thought provoking. In the circumstances it will prove a talking point. But it makes the assumption that everyone is on the internet and each of the individual churches, except for the Quakers, publishes its website for further information about festive services. Not everybody is online and those who aren't might feel left out with some justification.

### Ways of worshipping on Sunday

Radio 4: 8.10 am – *Cities of Promise - A place for good news* -on the eve of St Andrew's Day theologian and scholar of Celtic Christianity, Gilbert Markus, sees the spiritual pilgrim's vision of a heavenly city. This is the first of a series of services for Advent.

Methodist resources: [click here](#). URC resources: [click here](#).

URC: [daily devotions and a Sunday service \(click here to subscribe\)](#).

### Contributions to future newsletters

Please send contributions by midday Wednesday to:  
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George Faris [gfaris48@gmail.com](mailto:gfaris48@gmail.com) 01935 420258.