

**Hello** and welcome to the first edition of our newsletter sent by *Mailchimp* - a format Christ Church has decided to use to send information to you in your home should you wish to sign up to it.

We are just over half way through the summer holidays, so this is a good way just to touch base with you and to share a few updates about things scheduled for the end of summer and the beginning of autumn.



### **Harvest Weekend: Fri 15 – Sun 17 Sept**

This year harvest is intended to be a whole church focus.

Some members of the church have been working together on an exciting programme which runs from 6pm on Friday, including Saturday through to the Harvest Festival Service and lunch on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September.

The Friday evening will include a short act of worship, a short key note address and a faith supper; it will finish by approximately 8.30pm.

Church members will then re-gather on the Saturday morning at 10am. The morning will include workshops which look at Christ Church as a faith community. Some or all of this is appropriate for young people; and some of it is very much accessible to smaller children under supervision especially the “making” activities. The afternoon is made up of a 2 to 3 mile hike, or if you would prefer, a ‘mindfulness walk’ which may take place in an outdoor space. It does not involve a great deal of walking at all. (This activity is not suitable for those under 12 years old). Or, you may prefer to stay in church and make soup and bread for the Harvest Service. All will be finished by 4pm. The evening begins again 6pm and includes a pizza supper, a quiz and entertainment. The entertainment is home-spun so if you could offer a song, poem, joke or indeed any other act please let Rev’ds Sean or Evelyne know. We aim to finish for approximately 8pm.

Sunday will see us (depending on the weather) either praising God in the Community Garden or in Church at 11am. The service will be followed by Soup and Roll, hopefully served in the Garden.

Loosely, the aims of the weekend are: to come together in fellowship socially, to consider some aspects of our church life, how we are growing and to consider any changes we need to make. So there is a clear point to the activities and you will be canvassed on your opinions and thoughts about church and church life.

It is a packed programme but you are free to choose to dip into some or all of what is offered. Please watch out for the sign-up sheets in church. The key aim is to have an enjoyable time together. Really it would be good if every member of the church could come to part of the weekend. Everyone matters.

## Worship



Beyond the regular Sunday worship there are other opportunities throughout the weeks, months and during the year to experience worship, especially at the Festival times.

Are you aware that Christ Church has started a service for healing? This presently takes place four times in the year on a weekday evening. The next one is at 7.30 on 12<sup>th</sup> October. The service is a Eucharist with the laying on of hands

for healing and anointing with oil. It has quite a formal feel to it at present.

Each month usually on a Wednesday evening at 7pm at Christ Church “**BE STILL**” takes place. This is essentially a led quiet time which lasts between 30 and 45 mins. Included in the service are mindfulness activities, prayers, music and silence. There is a discernible beginning and end to the service. It is linked to the healing services, and invites one’s mind to be occupied in a spiritual activity. Why not give it a go? The feedback has been positive - it would be good to grow this service.

Each Tuesday at 6.30 - 7 pm there is a short service of Celtic Evening Prayer in Church. The venue moves to Bob and Joan Newsome’s house (125 Royds Ave, New Mill) after Christmas until Easter. This is a formal service dedicated particularly to intercessory prayer for those with specific needs. The small group of between 5 and 7 people meet from both Christ Church and St Thomas’ to pray for individuals, community, global issues and also for the team clergy and wider Diocese. If you would like anything praying for, or if you would like to come along and try the regular ritual of prayers you are welcome.

On Wednesdays there is an informal service of Holy Communion in the Gallery Room at 10am followed by coffee; the congregation usually leaves at about 11am. Again all are welcome.

## Youth Group and Junior Church & Junior Choir

Weavers youth group will recommence on 10<sup>th</sup> September at Church 6pm. We are looking forward to welcoming the youngsters back and hearing about summer.



Junior Church commences 1<sup>st</sup> Oct – it is hoped that a crèche will begin during the next few months. If you are interested in that, can you please speak to Sally Robertshaw.

Choir has continued over the summer; however it is noted that the youngsters who sing in the choir make a major commitment to rehearsals and to performance in service. Many of

them have worked hard or will be working hard to achieve awards - we are thankful for their commitment and ever improving skills.

Christ Church is keen to maintain a focus upon ministry to and with young children and youth people. Parental support with that is very much appreciated.

### Stewardship



This is never an easy topic but one that the PCC has been busy considering. The plain reality is our bills are increasing and our income is not. In 2014 we had a fantastic campaign that yielded an improved level of financial support. Since then we have not had to ask for increased giving. However, some people have moved away, others have passed on, and new people have started coming.

Beginning on Sun Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> Christ Church will start a low key giving campaign asking every member of the church to respond. There will be a pack for you in church, or one will be posted to your home outlining the need and asking you to consider the request.

Jo Beacroft-Mitchell, the diocesan giving advisor, will be the guest preacher at the regular morning service on Sept 10<sup>th</sup> at 11am. Please give her a warm welcome.

The pledges of support for the work of Christ Church will be collected in at the Harvest Service on the 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. Thank you for your support with this.

### The Christmas Tree Project



The Christmas Tree Community Project is our main effort planned for Advent and Christmas. It aims to make and display Christmas trees using recycled wood, off-cuts, natural wood /branches, logs, cones etc. to explore the theme of Christmas.

Different activities will be planned concurrently to maximise the impact of the project and its outreach locally as we celebrate Advent and Christmas together.

A Christmas Tree Festival, a key part of the project, is aimed at drawing different community groups together to create a Christmas focus and theme for the village. Part of the festival will be discussing the theme of gift and gifts. So the recycled trees will need to be made, and be available to community groups to decorate at the Church by December. Volunteers for making are needed.

Also working with Sarah Branson, Christ Church will host family and children's workshops to make decorative Christmas Trees and explore the theme of 'gift'. Some trees have already been made by a small group; they will be available for sale at the Christmas market. The workshops will be hosted to decorate these trees.

Many churches fill up with people at Christmas; often folks are looking for something spiritual, or connecting with a past memory or feeling. In John's Gospel Jesus comes as 'Light to the world,' to a dark world, so that those who see him and know him might become the children of God, and be free to walk in the light. The lights on the Christmas tree invite imagination and joy into the midst of the darkness of November and December. This gives rise to questions about light and life. There quite a lot to look forward to as we journey on together.

### Epilogue

So, that's our first newsletter! Share it liberally. If you have any suggestions please let a member of the church staff have them. Both I and my colleagues sincerely hope that you are enjoying the summer holidays whatever you are doing. We look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Thank you for your support.

*Sean*