

church family matters

December 2017

Godsays
HTCD

“You will find me when you search for me with all your heart”

Jeremiah 29:13

Holy Trinity
Combe Down
HTCD

St Andrew's
Community Church
HTCD




This year our Christmas services focus on the theme of journeys: Mary and Joseph's journey, the shepherds' journey, the wise men's journey, and our own personal journey.

THE ROUGH GUIDE to


CHRISTMAS

Journey with us to Christmas Day

As we start the journey to Christmas, please join us in the following:

 **DELIVERING FLYERS**
Please sign up to deliver a bundle of flyers to your street or to friends and family. (But please don't put flyers through doors outside the parish—we got into trouble for doing this last year!)

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

 As in previous years, Amanda will be delivering hampers to CAP clients. Please drop off any donations to StACC or the church office by Fri 8 Dec. Suggested items: children's toys, chocolates/biscuits, toiletries, jam, unperishable foods, scarves, Christmas card packs, gloves, candles (no alcohol).


CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**Main HT events below
(see flyer for full list of services):**

Sunday 17 December,
2.30 pm Dementia-Friendly Carol Service
7 pm Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve
5 pm Nativity Service
11 pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day
10 am Christmas Celebration

 **MINCE PIES**
Donations of mini mince pies would be gratefully received for refreshments at our services.

Vacancy Update

We are really encouraged that during the vacancy, we are welcoming many new people to church. The newcomers group is thriving and has 10-15 people there each week.

David and Christine are working hard putting our benefice profile together. The first draft was presented to the PCC in November, and our PCC is meeting again in December when the final version will be agreed.

In January we will be ready to advertise the role. We are planning to have a parish walk on Saturday 20 January between the different parishes, starting off with bacon butties at St Michael's Monkton Combe. Details to follow.

As part of Esther's role here she has been asked by the Diocese to look at the 'wellbeing' of the church during the vacancy and would value some input from anyone who would be happy to complete a short survey. Surveys will be available at the back of church, or contact Esther by email (esther@htcd.church).

PRAYER

Sunday 10 Dec

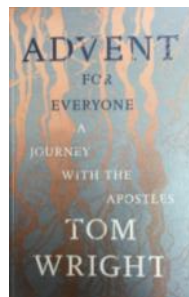
7 pm, HT

We will gather on the 2nd Sunday of the month to pray for the vacancy and to pray for our next vicar.

This week's prayer request:

Praise God that the profile is nearing completion and pray for those who will be reading it.

Advent



An invitation from Esther to set aside some time during Advent to use this book to prepare for Christmas.

Tom Wright invites us on an Advent journey with the apostles Peter, Paul and John, reflecting on the themes of thanksgiving, patience, humility and joy.

PCC News

The PCC met on Saturday 11 November. The staff and ministry heads joined the PCC in the morning. Some of the items discussed are included on other pages in this December edition, other items are below:

Setting a 2018 bible verse
The PCC and ministry heads have selected a bible verse to give focus to the coming year on the theme of being God's image bearers. This was agreed unanimously - come to church on Sunday 7 January to find out what it is!

2018 Goals and Priorities

We are carrying forward our 2017 goals and priorities into the new year while adapting how to reach these goals:



Developing a culture of invitation



Building a presence on Mulberry Park



Nurturing a hunger for God, & resourcing and equipping people on their frontline



Developing a sense of belonging by investing in families



Developing young leaders

Staffing

The **pastoral minister** post has been extended for a further year until Feb 2019.

We have received a grant from St John's (praise God!) for one year for a part time **Centre Manager for St Andrew's**, covering pastoral, outreach and administrative duties. This post is being advertised from this week in the notice sheet.

Finances

Our 2017 income is higher (at £439k) and our expenditure is lower (at £513k) than originally budgeted, resulting in a lower than budgeted deficit for the year (of £74k).

We expect our undesignated reserves at 31 Dec 2017 will be £307k, which is £97k higher than our target reserves level of £210k. We plan to continue to spend this higher than needed amount of reserves over the coming years - hence the 2018 budget has income of £419k and expenditure of £482k.

This includes the Benefice Ministry Allowance from the Diocese of £36k in 2018, in recognition of the fact that we have a large paid staff and invest a lot in mission.

Daniel Fast

For the past 2 years, many people in church have followed the Daniel Fast in January.



The Daniel Fast (following Daniel Chapter 10) traditionally means giving up luxuries and living on the basics for 21 days: no desserts, no meat and no alcohol. However, it may well be that for you, the Daniel Fast means giving up other habits or things that distract us from our relationship with God and our focus on God. Watching television? Facebook? Mobile phone use?

In previous years, this fast has been found to be very beneficial, both spiritually and physically. It is essentially, giving the first part of the year to the Lord. The timing in

January 2018 is particularly significant as this will be the time that the vicar job is advertised and that people are reading our parish profile.

This is an invitation to join others in the Daniel Fast—each person can choose to fast or not fast as they feel appropriate. The choice is yours and there is no need to be slavish about it.

One of our goals and priorities for 2018 is 'developing a hunger for God'. Let's make it our prayer that as we fast from some of the things we usually enjoy, our hunger for God will grow and we will grow closer to Him.

People can choose to start whenever they want, but you may wish to start on 7th January, when we will be launching the new term in church and also launching our new bible verse for 2018.



Missions Weekend Review

Mission is right there on our doorsteps.....from the church fence, to our neighbourhood, to our place of work and into our hobby/leisure interactions....across the city and nation and across the world. We are all involved.

At our recent Mission Weekend, we were exposed on the Sunday to our four links (Mim, the Rays, Sharlands and Alkazrajis) and stimulated by our own Bridget Carroll's experiences in some of her challenging spiritual environments.

But what was surely the biggest surprise for us all was the Saturday Mission Marketplace at which 17 different people in the church, ordinary people doing some extraordinary things, showed what they are personally doing from our church fence to the ends of the Earth: what a range of ministries and people, from the familiar (Jon and Penny Williams—People



against Poverty, Romania, Patricia Corcoran - 'FEBA' (Far East Broadcasting Association and Sue Crookes—Bath Youth for Christ, to name but 3)



Tom and Dan S-D (aged 12 and 10):

We really enjoyed the treasure hunt - going around each stall to answer some questions in a 'passport' we got at the entrance. I (Tom) enjoyed looking at all the stalls, and Dan really enjoyed dressing up the soldier and trying the bible quiz with Mary Porter.


Never too young, never too old, so on Sunday the young ones were excited by our support for the Alkazrajis in Albania: do consider a short-term (2 weeks), mid-term (3-12 months) or even long term assignment....contact any IMT member and you could launch out on a life-changing adventure for The Lord.


Richard Meryon

Alpha


 We are running an Alpha course starting Weds 10th Jan at StACC for ALL the parish. We will have wine and tasty food produced each week by a different home group and are using the great new HTB Alpha films.

How can I be involved

 **PRAYER** is the most valuable thing we can do to enlarge God's kingdom. We need everyone to PRAY from NOW for each evening and about who to invite. We also need a group of volunteers to pray together (or at home) each Wednesday evening.

 **TEAM** Being on an Alpha team is one of the most exciting things that we can do as Christians because we see

people coming to Christ. Contact Sharon/Steve if you would like to be part of the team either as a team member or a group host to lead the group discussion about the issues raised from the alpha film topic each week.

 **CATERING** We need homegroups to prepare, cook and serve the wine and meal for one Wednesday.

Please invite your friends to the appropriate Christmas services which should prompt chats about Jesus. This will hopefully encourage them to be positive when you invite them to Alpha.

Let's be on our knees and expect God to do His stuff and bring people to experience His love and know Him as Saviour.

**Wednesday
evenings at StACC
From 10 Jan.
Invitations available
soon**



Interview with Annie and Rohan



Rohan



Annie

Rohan Clay & Annie Buchanan are both 16 and have been coming to church for as long as they can remember!

What goes on for young people at HT? How does it help you grow in your faith?

Rohan: There's 'Ignite' on Friday evenings. The group has grown a lot recently with lots of kids from Foxhill. There's social time with table tennis, play station, cooking/baking, table football, then a half hour chat on a Christian theme.

Annie: Also there's 'Going Deeper' after church on Sunday where we do Bible studies. I have made great friendships with people I wouldn't otherwise know, especially people younger than me. I think Stuart has done a great job as Youth leader over the last few years.

R: We also have a 'what's app' group where we can send each other prayer needs and keep in touch during the week. It's great to connect with people from different schools and to have a supportive group of

Christian friends.

What sort of things do you enjoy outside of church?

R: Playing keyboard and guitar, composing things using recording software on the laptop, hanging out with friends.

A: I sing all the time at home and I like reading & cooking.

How did you get involved in worship?

R: My Mum was leading worship, then one Christmas I got an electric guitar then started playing. Stuart, Dan and Lydia have been really encouraging and helped us to grow in confidence.

A: I have always enjoyed worship and was encouraged by Rohan and Stuart as well as Dan and Lydia to sing at Open Space.

What's been your best moment in your time at HTCD/StACC?

R: Open Space – especially when Mark Aldridge visited. We'd planned to do a new song which totally fitted with what he was saying.

A: One of my favourite things is the great relationships at church between everyone. I talk to people older than myself and younger and I've really enjoyed helping at the holiday clubs and light parties.

Sun **10** Dec,
**Prayer for
the
Vacancy**

7 pm, HT

Monthly prayer as we seek the Lord's will for our next vicar



Sun **17** Dec
**Carol
Services**

2.30 pm

Dementia Friendly Service

7.30 pm

Carol Service for all



Wed **10** Jan
**Alpha
Starts**

7.30 pm

St Andrew's

Details on page 5



Key Dates

Sun **31** Dec
HT, 10 am
Parish Service
(for StACC and HT)

Sun **7** Jan
HT, 10 am
Joint Service
(9&10.30
together)

Sun **4** Feb
HT, 10 am
Joint Service
(9&10.30
together)

24-25
Mar

**Women's
Weekend**
Ammerdown

Speaker: Jo Swinney.
Contact the church office for more information.



Sun **20** May
**Love
Combe
Down**

**Firs Field, time
TBC**

Following the success of last year, get this date in your diary for Love Combe Down 2018

