



Link Up!

**‘Clap your hands, all you nations;
shout to God with cries of joy’
Psalm 47:1**

Coming up for the rest of the month

On Sundays 19th & 26th February we will have Rev Derek Stringer, who worships at Christchurch Baptist Church. He will be bringing us a short mini-series of his own choosing.

Looking forward to March

On Sunday 5th March our monthly Prayer Service will include a visit from Sharon Prior from PACE. PACE is a local Christian charity working in schools across Poole & Bournemouth taking Assemblies and R.E. lessons. Janet will be leading the service.

Sunday 12th March will be our Ladies Contact group's Anniversary and they will be helping to lead the service. Ben Lucas will be preaching and continuing our series in Luke's gospel.

Sunday 19th March will be Mothering Sunday and John Good will be leading our worship and preaching that morning.

To draw the month to a close, on 26th March, we have Roger Davis, who worships at Christchurch Baptist Church, leading and preaching.

Annual General Meeting

March also brings our Church Annual General Meeting after the service on 26th March. We will have lunch together in the hall after the service and then return to the church for the meeting.

Our AGM is the opportunity for us to hold Diaconate Elections. Stephen Chaloner comes to the end of his three year term at the AGM and is eligible for re-election. Please don't wait for someone else to nominate Stephen but do talk to him and then come and collect a nomination pack from Janet. We would also like to strengthen our Diaconate as it is quite a challenge with just three deacons, two of whom work full time. Do pray about whether God may be calling you to leadership in the church or laying someone's name on your heart to nominate. Nominations need to be with Janet by Sunday 5th March.



One Church - Many Varieties

Over the last few weeks, I seem to have spent quite a lot of time with Christians from other churches, worshipping together, chatting together and getting to know one another.

First, there was the Unity Service that we held on 22nd January at Mary's RC Church with Oakdale St George's C of E and St Mary's for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. A very different building to our own and a more formal style of service with responsive prayers and liturgy.

Then on Tuesday 24th, I was at the Churches Together Event at St Edwards School. A really interesting evening hearing about various expressions of Christian work and witness in our town and all concluded with an excellent speaker, David Wells, who was humorous, relevant, biblical and managed to draw out some of things that others had said during the evening.

Other Notices

Please make a note of our Day of Prayer date on Wednesday 22nd February, which is the first day of Lent. We will hold two sessions when the Church will be open for prayer, one in the morning between 10am & 12noon, and the second in the evening between 7.30pm and 9.00pm. These sessions will not be formally led but suggestions for prayer topics will be available in the Prayer Area in the Church Sanctuary. You can come at any time between those hours and leave whenever you need to. The prayer topics are included with this newsletter so that anyone unable to get to the church can join in with the prayer at home sometime during the day.

We also talked at the November meeting about holding a Coronation Event to celebrate King Charles III coronation. The Deacons think we might be able to do a Messy Church style event, similar to the ones we have done before, on Sunday 7th May with lunch afterwards. This would be an event we can invite families who attend the Tiddlers Toddler Group, Smile Coffee morning and other adults who attend Speakability etc. Like everything else of this nature, it will need a team of folk who are prepared to plan it and help out before, during and after the event. Janet is prepared to put together a 'working party' (emphasis on the working!) so if you are 'up for this', let Janet know.

Family News

I have been to see Yvonne and Ralph in their respective care homes during January. It was Yvonne's birthday when Delia and I visited so we saw Richard and James as well and the care home staff brought her a birthday cake while we were there.

Ralph seems to be settling in well at Dorset House and his daughter sent me this photo of him after he had been doing some baking. Great British Bake Off look out!



Do keep praying for them and all our housebound members.

Of course, most of us were at Parkstone Baptist the following Sunday to worship with them. Another very different building but the style and content of the service more familiar to us all and its great for us to all be getting to know our 'fellow Baptists' better.

But the event that cheered me up and encouraged me the most was on the following Saturday. Our friends at Parkstone Baptist have a Tamil speaking church called El Shaddai Glorious Church, meeting on their premises on a Sunday afternoon. Tamil is an Asian language used in South-eastern India and Sri Lanka. The ESGC are made up of people who were born in India or are second generation Tamil speakers. They wanted a venue to celebrate their 10th Anniversary and Parkstone couldn't accommodate them on a Saturday so they asked if we could help them.

They held a service and followed this with an Indian meal cooked in advance and served in our hall. I was invited to join them and was curious to find out more about them, so I went along in the afternoon to join the service. They were joined by fellow Tamil speakers from churches as far away as London and the church and parlour were full of people of all ages, though predominantly under 50's. All the ladies were dressed in beautiful sarees and the men were dressed in their lounge suits. There were lots of children and young people and several of the children and young adults performed Indian dances to Christian worship music. The worship was vibrant and lively, and I discovered that Tamil seems to have way more syllables than most of our English words and is spoken really fast. The service was conducted in a mix of English and Tamil, so I was able to join in with most of it and just clap along to the Tamil bits.

As I sat there in this congregation where people looked very different to me I thought 'This is what heaven is going to be like- a great multitude of people from every nation who have different styles of worship and different languages but are all worshipping God and praising Jesus!'

I'm really looking forward to that day – aren't you?

Janet Matterface