

ST LUKE'S NEWS *January 2022*

St Luke's website:

www.stlukeschurchbuckfastleigh.org.uk

St Luke's Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/StLukesBuckfastleigh

Dart & Avon Mission Community website:

www.dartandavonmissioncommunity.org.uk

CHURCH SERVICES IN JANUARY		
Sunday January 2nd	<i>9.30am</i>	No service at St Luke's <i>Family Service at St Petroc's, South Brent</i>
	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Holy Communion at St Paul de Leon, Staverton</i>
Sunday January 9th	11.00am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Compline and Homily
Sunday January 16th	<i>9.30am</i>	No service at St Luke's <i>Morning Worship at St Petroc's, South Brent</i>
	<i>11.00am</i>	<i>Holy Communion at St John the Baptist, Littlehempston</i>
Sunday January 23rd	11.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday January 30th	11.00am	Holy Communion

The original plan had been to only do a brief supplement for January, but various things arising suggest the need for a full January edition of St Luke's News.

SUNDAY SERVICES IN JANUARY

It has been agreed by the PCC that for the time being we should go down to morning services on 2 Sundays a month, (with possibly an extra when there is a 5th Sunday in the month, as is the case this month). We shall continue the monthly Compline service – currently on the 2nd Sunday of the month, but changing to the 1st Sunday in February.

There are two reasons for this. First, with Laura on adoption leave during this year, we are very reduced in clergy staffing, and Gina is half-time and George is retired. In addition, the numbers attending services have been very low since lockdown, with many people not returning to church on a regular basis. This means that all the time most of the villages only have one service per month we cannot justify having a service here each Sunday.

So, in the table above, you will see there are communion services here on the 2nd and 4th Sundays (in bold) and there will also be a service on the 5th Sunday.

On the Sundays when there is no service here, we want to very strongly encourage people to go to one of the other services being held elsewhere in the Mission Community, and so these services are in italics in the table above.

There is also the possibility of watching the service from St Petroc's, South Brent on Zoom – go to <https://www.stpetrocsandstmarys.org.uk/worship/> and a little way down the page you will find details for doing this. Or a recording of the service, together with a service from elsewhere in the Church of England, will normally appear on the MEDIA page of our own St Luke's website during Sunday afternoon.

Family Church will move to 4pm, (previously 5pm), normally on the 1st Sunday of the month, but 2nd Sunday in January, i.e. January 9th.

(All the above could possibly be affected if further Covid restrictions are announced for January).

Continued on next page

The reduction in numbers attending our Sunday services is partly due to very natural and understandable caution in the face of the pandemic, and also some who are unwell and therefore unable to attend, but even so it does raise the question of what priority we give to regular Sunday worship – do we see it as a vital time to open our hearts in worship to the Lord, and also to meet together with fellow Christians? – or is it simply something to do when it feels convenient? It equally raises the question of how we view church membership – do we see ourselves simply as members of our local church, or as part of something much bigger, Christ's church, not just in Buckfastleigh, but much wider?

It is wrong of course if we just go to church out of duty or habit, but it is very definitely right when we are deeply conscious of our relationship with the Lord and with his people, and when this leads to a delight in being together with our fellow Christians in Sunday worship, whether here or in another church.

There can of course be practical issues such as getting to other churches, and we probably need to find ways to car share. Perhaps you might like to talk to George or to Lyn with your thoughts and needs in that area.

OUR THANKS AND BEST WISHES TO LAURA

As Laura now starts her adoption leave and becomes mother to a little boy, we thank her for the tremendous amount of work she has done, particularly since Tom left in the summer. We wish her all the best for the coming months, and we pray for God's blessing on this new family!

SEEKING A NEW TEAM RECTOR

Just to remind you that we hope to interview for a new Team Rector on January 11th.

NO TOM, NO LAURA – SO WHERE DO I GO FOR HELP?

Gina Radford is in overall charge of the Mission Community, and will sometimes be the first port of call. Lyn and George will cover much of the running of St Luke's. Elaine Day is leading the Pastoral Care Team. So it all depends really on what the issue is, but all of us are available to you. And if we aren't the right people to help, we can pass you on to the right person.

SAFETY IN CHURCH

It has been suggested that it would be good to have a simple reminder about such practical issues as fire safety.

Should there be an emergency such as a fire breaking out in church during a service, it will be the responsibility of the service leader(s) and the church warden to direct people to leave the building. (Fire extinguishers should only be used to fight a fire if it is safe to do so, and even then, everybody other than those using the extinguishers should leave).

Everybody should move quietly and calmly. Almost always the obvious fire exit is the front door, and everybody should then assemble in the car park behind The Globe. Should that exit be blocked, then the exit is via the stairs in the far corner of the church, and people go out through the doors at the bottom. Assembly would then be on the grass or the car parking area at the back of the church.

It would be sensible if those who use the church lounge were also aware of the exit via the stairs, as an alternative to the more obvious exit via the front door of the church.

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

Around 30 people, in 3 groups of about 10 each, from the parishes in the Mission Community, took part in the 5-session Living in Love and Faith course during the autumn period. This course from the Church of England gave the opportunity to explore issues of sexuality, relationships and marriage.

Some of these can be contentious issues, but the groups all experienced good, helpful, open discussion, and all appreciated the variety and honesty of the story films that gave an insight into people in various different situations, some very conventional and some not. The prevailing feeling in the groups was that the Church of England does need to find some way forward in providing for those of its members who are personally affected by these issues, and some way of resolving the deadlock between those who want no change in doctrine or policy and those who desperately long for change.

Members of the groups were however divided as to how to view same-sex marriage, as opposed to partnership.

It is now possible for groups or individuals to make a response to the discussions, most easily by using an online questionnaire. This will help to inform the bishops and then the General Synod as the discussions go forward in 2022.

If this raises issues or questions for you, then do speak to George Day.

SAFEGUARDING AND DBS CHECKING

Alasdair and Anne James are taking over as our Safeguarding Officers and their phone numbers are 07496 124854 and 07966 820640 respectively. Elaine Day is taking over the DBS checking. Our aim is to make sure all is fully covered, and that St Luke's is a truly safe environment.

MOTHERS' UNION

Our Thursday, 6th January meeting is on 'Belonging and Believing' by Heather Sayle in the Coffee Lounge at St Luke's from 2.30 pm. Visitors welcome to join our friendly group.

A Quiz lunch will be held in St Luke's on Saturday 22 January from 12.00 to 2.00 pm to raise funds for Mothers' Union projects. Tickets available from Janet Jones in advance at £5 to include a soup and cheese and biscuits or fresh fruit. For more information about Mothers' Union please contact Janet Jones on 643627.

KEEPING SAFE WITH COVID'S OMICRON VARIANT

Prof Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer, has advised us all of the need for caution given the current situation with Omicron. Whilst our services are going ahead at present, we do all need to be cautious and careful.

Please think carefully about whether to attend in person. Alternatively, you may wish to join services online - please check the local, diocesan and national Church of England websites for details of various services available virtually. (*See also the information about this on page 1 of this newsletter*).

If you are intending to come to services in person, you may want to consider taking a lateral flow test before attending.

For the time being we will not be serving coffee after the service and we encourage all conversations to be suitably distanced and preferably outside the building.

Adapted from a message about the Christmas services sent by Gina.