



# Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre



a serving and worshipping Christian church in the heart of Emsworth,  
working closely with other churches and with the local community

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**Monthly news sheet**

**December 2017**

## Message from the Manse



I wonder what is the first thing you think of when you hear the word 'Advent'. Or 'Christmas' for that matter. Does it appear in this picture?

Maybe it evokes an image of an Advent wreath; candles waiting expectantly for their turn to be lit. Maybe there's one church service in the season that's particularly special to you. Perhaps it brings thoughts of decorations or preparations for visiting family. Maybe the first image that comes to mind is a memory of a previous Christmas.

Whatever it makes you think of, it seems difficult to get away from all things Christmas-related. Some of the shops seem to have been playing Christmas songs for months and the earliest recorded sighting of a Christmas tree was August!

The word that first comes into my mind this year sits at the very centre of the picture.

Hope.

As you may well have seen from leaflets and posters that are all around the building this year we are taking 'A Journey of Hope' as the theme for Advent. Advent is a time of watching and waiting; a time of gathering excitement, when we anticipate a celebration of the hope that was fulfilled in the coming of God incarnate into the world. As Christians we take a journey alongside billions of others worldwide and down the ages; a journey that began before time itself. A journey that does not end in Bethlehem. For many of us it's a journey we have undertaken many times and yet, as we hear again the familiar and yet hugely challenging words of The Greatest Story Ever Told, there is always something new and exciting to discover.

This Advent I hope that every person reading this, whether you are in the habit of singing 'Once in Royal David's City' in September, or putting up your Christmas tree on Christmas Eve (or are somewhere in the middle) will have the time and space to step back and marvel at the glorious, surprising and varied journey we travel with one another and with God.

Enjoy the journey.

I wish you a joyous Advent and a very merry Christmas!

Every blessing  
Laura



## Sacred Space

The next 'Sacred Space' event will take place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December in International Hall. The space will be open 2 – 4pm and it is perfectly okay to come for as long or short a time as you wish. You don't need to stay for the whole time. The theme for the afternoon will be 'Hope in Uncertain Times'.



There are many different ways to pray. Not all of them involve sitting in silence. Not all of them involve saying words.

There will be prayer stations available and most will have a practical element – nothing artistic, energetic or scary – just an opportunity to pray in ways that perhaps you haven't done before! You will not be asked to pray out loud or do anything you do not wish to do.

*Bill and Laura*

## Advent Antics!

As I suspect most of you already know, following the success of the knitted angels over Easter, we have once again joined forces with our Anglican friends this time in a quest to **decorate pebbles** with words and pictures that relate to the Christmas season. The plan is put them out around the village, a few at a time, all through Advent. Julie and I have put together some really simple designs using special pens (no paint required!) so don't worry if art isn't your strong point!

Almost every Wednesday morning in November a number of people came to join the 'Let's Do It' group, 10am – 12 noon, and had a great time laughing and sharing together (and decorating pebbles!) In fact we had so much fun that we're going to have a further session:

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December: 10am – 12 noon in the Pastoral Centre.**

If you can't make this date, or would like to have a go at home, let me know and I will provide pebbles and pens. The more pebbles we have, the more we can spread something of the true meaning of Christmas.

*Laura*

## Faith in Film



You are invited to a new initiative!

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December we will be showing **a well-loved feature film** starring James Stewart, in the Pastoral Centre.

Unfortunately licensing laws prevent us from advertising the title of the film here, but please see the fliers and

church posters - it's a good one! The film will start at about 1.30pm, ending at about 3.30pm, and the Coffee Bar will remain open as normal.

Do come along and revel in black-and-white, Christmas-related nostalgia! Why not bring a friend (or two!).

The film is certified 'U' so accompanied children are welcome. Oh, and there will also be popcorn!

This is intended to be a very relaxed time of fellowship. It's also an opportunity to gently introduce people to Christian themes in a way that is friendly and unthreatening. As such, there will be some film-related 'points to ponder' on each of the tables for people to engage with (or not) as they see fit.

This is the first time something like this has been tried in the Pastoral Centre and even if you can't come along we would be very grateful for your prayers.

*Laura and Mandy*

## Church Flowers

I shall be planning the Flower Rota for 2018 very soon.

I would like to thank Dot, Margaret, Janet, Veronica and Thelma, and all who have given donations and help in the past year.

It fills my heart with JOY for the appreciation of the flowers, and the pleasure they bring to all. A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL.

If anyone wishes to be added to the rota, please let me know.

*Vivien*

## **Pastoral Centre – Special Christmas Tea Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00pm**

All who use the Pastoral Centre, volunteers in the Coffee Bar, those who might be on their own at Christmas are welcome.... DO COME and JOIN US for turkey and savoury sandwiches, sausage rolls, trifle, Christmas cake etc. and pull crackers! Bring a neighbour who might be on their own.

**Tickets** (free, but limited) are available now from Mandy, on a 'first come first served basis' so that we know how many are coming. A voluntary contribution is welcome after the tea.

## **Christian Aid Carols in the Square Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December**

Christian Aid will be singing carols in the Square to raise funds for combating world poverty on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December from 10am to 12 noon. We need all the voices available to make our message loud and clear. If you are able to do so for part or all of the morning, please join us. Thanks.

*Gill Cooper*

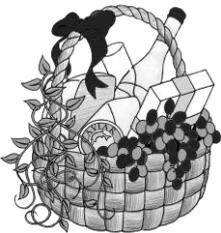
## **Churches Homeless Action Voucher Scheme**

On Sundays 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December there will be an opportunity to make donations to the Churches Homeless Action Voucher Scheme. Please can £5 gift cards such as Tesco's, Asda, Sainsbury's and Argos be donated; the Organisers suggest £5 gift cards so that they can be shared out fairly.

You can write a card to go with the voucher which personalizes the gift. However, please do not give your name or address and do not seal the envelope. These vouchers will be delivered before 13<sup>th</sup> December therefore the last opportunity to donate is on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December.

*David Sawyer*

## **Christmas Donations to Southern Domestic Abuse Service**



**Thank you very much** for all your many generous donations – a wonderful variety of gifts and food items. I will be handing them over to SDAS during the first week in December, so there's still chance to tuck something into the box.... (but *please* check that food items have a long enough date to last until Christmas!)

*Diana Harris*

## Fire Safety

You may have noticed the new Fire Action Notices displayed in all parts of the building. If you haven't seen them yet, do take a moment to look at one. As we know from recent events, building fires do occasionally happen and we all need to be aware of what we should do if the fire alarm sounds.

Testing the fire alarm system is an important weekly safety check carried out by a small team of volunteers on Monday mornings at 9.30am. We urgently need two or three more people to join that team, so that regular checks can continue even when team members are indisposed or away. The test takes just ten minutes or so and is not scary or difficult, and with a full team your commitment would be for one morning a month or less. If you are able-bodied and would like to help, please contact any of the current team: Diana Harris, David Harris or David Sawyer.

*David Harris*

## Away Day 2018: a date for your diaries

We're planning another Away Day for the church family, at Nutbourne Bible School on **Saturday 17th February** from 10am-4pm. Do put the date in your diaries.

## Exercise Classes

Trudy is having a well-deserved break, so please note there will be NO classes on 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of January.

## January News Sheet

Sharp-eyed readers will see that our copy deadline for January's News Sheet is 23<sup>rd</sup> December!! As I'm sure you'll understand, I'd rather not compile it over Christmas..... so, **if you have anything for the January news sheet, please could you let me have it as early as possible?** Many thanks.

My grateful thanks to everyone who has contributed items throughout the year and to all who regularly help with proof reading, photocopying and general support. And a big thank you for all the appreciative comments – it means a lot to know that you read and enjoy the News Sheet.

*Wishing you peace and happiness at Christmas  
from the News Sheet Team*



## Prayer Prompts - December

You are invited to use the suggestions listed below in your prayer times. The monthly diary is also an aid for our prayers.

**Season of Advent:** local Community as *Christmas lights* are switched on in the Square; **Carol Fest Café Church**, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>; **Christmas Tea** in the Pastoral Centre Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>; **Carol Singing in the Square** for Christian Aid; **Carols & Mince pies** in the Pastoral Centre Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>; all *Carol services* - that we may find time to prepare ourselves for the coming King, born in a manger.

**World Aids Day** Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> prayer and understanding for all who suffer; *all Refugees* - families, children separated; places of unrest like *Zimbabwe*, war in the *Yemen*, the hungry and starving.

**Christmas in Emsworth:** *celebration services* at all the churches on Monday 25<sup>th</sup>; *Church leaders* at this busy time; *those who will be alone* this Christmas when the pressure of advertising is about families and merry times together, and the reality so different. **Boxing Day Special** afternoon, when we welcome all who are on their own, and all who pass by, with tea and cake.

Recall names and faces of **all who need our prayers:** the dying, those who mourn, those who find the darkness of December difficult. **Give thanks** for all friends and family, for friends who keep in touch from years ago; for all who work at Christmas, in hospital and homes.

We have a small **Prayer Chain** working within the church. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayer please do contact Chris Walters on 01243 379254 or email [c.walters5@homecall.co.uk](mailto:c.walters5@homecall.co.uk)

### Church Calendar continued:

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b> 10.00am Morning worship led by Janet Baker 9.00pm Holy Communion a reflective service for Christmas Eve led by Rev Bill Stillwell and Deacon Laura Evans	
<b>Monday</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b> 10.00am Christmas Morning Worship, a celebration for all ages led by Deacon Laura Evans	
Tuesday	26	<b>Boxing Day</b> <i>Pastoral Centre Closed today</i> 2.30pm <b>Boxing Day Special: Tea and Cake</b> (IH) See Laura for details. <i>Lifts are available - please ask!</i>	
Wednesday	27	10.30am `Let's Do It!' NO Ladies Group.	
Thursday	28	NO Cake Stall NO Wesley Guild.	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>New Year's Eve</b> 10.00am Morning Worship led by Wendy Corney 6.30pm No Service	

# CHURCH CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2017

*All events in Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre unless stated otherwise*

IH = International Hall, URC = United Reformed Church, Bath Road

Friday	1	5.15pm	Switching on of Emsworth Christmas Lights in the Square
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>3</b>	10.00am	Holy Communion led by Rev Bill Stillwell, followed by Traidcraft stall
		6.30pm	United Holy Communion at St James' led by Rev Damon Draisey, Preacher Rev David Muskett
Monday	4	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	5	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Knit for Charity (IH)
Wednesday	6	10.00am	Police Surgery
		10.30am	'Let's Do It!' (see Advent Antics, page 3)
		6.15pm	Ecumenical Prayer Fellowship (URC Hall)
Thursday	7	2.00pm	Sacred Space: Hope in Uncertain Times (IH) (see page 3)
		7.30pm	Wesley Guild. An Evening with the Poetry Group (IH)
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10</b>	10.00am	Second Sunday at the Centre
			<b>Carol Fest!</b> Led by Deacon Laura Evans
		10.00am	United Holy Communion at St James' led by Rev John Pilkington, Preacher Rev Alison Rice
		6.30pm	<b>Carol Service</b> at St James'
Monday	11	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	12	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: <b>Christmas Special Tea*</b> (see page 5)
			<i>*Tickets needed - please ask Mandy</i>
		3.00pm	Bible Study Group (Wesley Room)
Wednesday	13	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
		7.30pm	Ladies Group. 'Christmas with Christine' and Supper
Thursday	14	7.30pm	Wesley Guild. Carols and Readings for Christmas with Bring and Share Supper (IH)
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17</b>	10.00am	All Age Worship led by Deacon Laura Evans A <b>Nativity service</b> for all the family followed by Traidcraft stall
		6.30pm	<b>Carol Service</b> led by Rev Bill Stillwell
Monday	18	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	19	10.30am	Standing Exercises
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: <b>Carols &amp; Mince Pies</b> in the Pastoral Centre
Wednesday	20	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
Thursday	21		NO Wesley Guild



*Church calendar continued on inside back page*

Items for the January news-sheet should be in the folder in the post rack or  
emailed to dianaharris@btinternet.com by **Saturday 23 December**