



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 2019

Message from the Manse

Waiting. Watching and waiting. Preparing for The Light of the World.

Waiting, whether for a visit from family or friends, a new addition to the family, awaiting hospital test results or even a holiday, doesn't come easily to many of us. Somehow time seems to pass especially slowly when we're waiting for something.

Have you caught yourself singing 'Jingle Bells' under your breath yet?! Have you heard your first carol playing through a supermarket sound-system?! What about Christmas trees – how many have you seen already decorated?! The season of Advent – traditionally a time of reflective, watchful waiting – can be difficult to keep in a society that is, perhaps understandably, eager to grasp onto the joy of the Christmas season.

If we choose not to wait, but simply dive head first into the festivities, we miss out on that sense of expectation and, more importantly, risk missing



the opportunity to fully recognise Jesus as The Light of the World breaking into our lives.

It seems to me that, when it comes to opening Christmas presents, there are two different types of people. There are those who throw themselves straight into it. No time to waste. Wrapping paper everywhere. One gift out then on to the next. Then there are those who take their time, savour the moment, enjoy that sense of expectancy. Maybe they even spread the opening of the presents over several days in order to make the experience last.

In the context of unwrapping presents that's a case of 'each to their own!'

When it comes to this time of year we're called to take things slowly; knowing, hoping, believing that something wonderful is coming. Dreaming dreams of the joy and excitement that is to come as we prepare to meet again with the God who is always among us.

This year the theme of our Advent Liturgy and activities is 'The Light of the World', remembering that God, present in both light and darkness, was born among us and is with us in the 'light' moments and the 'dark' moments of our own lives.

Whether you spend your Advent waiting in excitement, trepidation, delight, sorrow or a mixture of them all, I wish you Light and life this Christmas and always.

Laura



Advent Antics: Craft Morning and Faith in Film

They say nothing ever happens at the usual time around Christmas, and our monthly film is no exception!

If you've had a copy of 'The Light of the World: What's on this December' you may have noticed that we're holding a day of family-friendly activities in the Pastoral Centre on **Monday 23rd December**.

From 10.30am – 12.30pm Sandra and I will be making table decorations and 'Nordic Gnomes' (they're fantastic – if you want to know more you'll have to come along and see!).

At 1.30pm there will be a family-friendly Christmas film with popcorn and other goodies to enjoy. At time of writing I'm not sure exactly which film it will be but I'm sure I don't have to tell you that the theme will be Christmassy!

If you've got young family members staying, or know of anyone looking for something to do with the children that day, please let them know about this free event. All we ask is that children are accompanied, and everyone has lots of fun!

Laura, Mandy and Sandra

A Sacred Space

You don't need us to tell you that the weeks before Christmas are very busy indeed for many people.

With this in mind we are running a 'Sacred Space' on Wednesday 4th 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 afternoon will follow our Advent theme of 'The Light of the World'.

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.

Laura and Bill

Advent Wednesdays at St James

Would you value an opportunity to slow down from our hectic lifestyles? For 4 Wednesdays, starting on 27th November, we invite you to step aside for an hour from the busy lead-up to Christmas, from 6 -7pm in the Parish Office led by James Mant and Patricia Claxton. The time will include prayer, sacred readings, music and silence.

Christmas Coffee Morning

An invitation to all at Emsworth Methodist Church

Saturday 21st December from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
At the home of David and Margaret Sawyer
(Please ask for details)



Bible Study

Tuesday 10th December at 10.00am
in the Wesley Room

Please join us for our monthly Bible Study, based around the readings for Café Church. Everyone is welcome.

We'll be discussing what to do about future dates for our monthly Tuesday Bible Study at our meeting on 10th December. There will be further details in the notices and January News Sheet.

Bill and Laura

Christian Aid Carols in the Square
Friday 13th December

We will be singing Carols to raise money for Christian Aid from 10am until 12 noon. Please come and sing with us and help us raise much needed funds.

Thank you for your continued support.
Gill Cooper, Margaret Sawyer and Marian Hughes



Carols and Mince Pies in the Pastoral Centre
Tuesday 17th December at 2.00pm

Come along and join the singing.
All are welcome - no tickets needed



'Boxing Day Bash'

If you're going to be on your own on Boxing Day, or just looking for something fun to do, why not join us for a Christmas get-together between 2 – 4pm in International Hall?

There will be tea, coffee, snacks, crackers and company plus a relaxed and friendly atmosphere in which to chat.

All are welcome, so feel free to bring anyone you might have staying with you.

Even if you're not able to come I would be very grateful if you could hold it in your prayers. Every year this outreach provides an opportunity to cut through the commercialism of the season and offer something for nothing. From time to time this sparks a conversation that hopefully results in someone going away with a very different image of God, and the church, from that which they held previously.

As one of the volunteers put it last year 'There's something special about the Boxing Day Bash!'

Laura



The United Choir

It is with great sadness, but also a sense of realism, that I write this to let you know that the United Choir will be coming to an end fairly soon.

Sue Ingram, who has led the choir over its whole life, has written these words:

The time has come to acknowledge that after 45 years, the choir must retire gracefully and before it becomes too difficult to sustain. It has been a great focus for our churches together and we have had many adventures along the way.

We will be in action for the Carol Service on 22nd December in the evening, and for the CTiE service in the evening of 26th January, to mark the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This is a very appropriate service on which to finish!

It is hoped that a few of us will be able to continue singing with the choir at St James' for the monthly Second Sunday morning United Communion service.

We will also hope to be doing our usual singing in Lent, with members of St James' and Warblington choirs, and others who like to join us, culminating in our offering on Good Friday.

Dot



Traidcraft Stall Update

Back in the September Newssheet I wrote about the future of the monthly Sunday Traidcraft Stall. I have sadly come to the decision that this really does have to stop, and the stall after the morning service on 1st December will be the last. As I said before, this will not affect our status as a Fairtrade Church, because this is only a small part of what we do to support Fairtrade. Mandy will continue to source as many fairly traded items as possible for use in the Pastoral Centre and Church. I would also urge you all to look out for the Fairtrade symbol on products when you are shopping in the supermarket, to ensure we do our best to support, rather than exploit, producers around the world.

This has been a big and difficult decision for me after nearly 40 years. Thank you to those of you who have so loyally supported Traidcraft over all this time.

Dot

Salient Points from the recent Church Council Meeting

This was our meeting to focus on Finance and Property matters. We received the Financial Report and Accounts for the year. We also received various Property and Health and Safety Checklists and Documents. I am pleased to report that all is well in hand in all these areas.

We expressed our grateful thanks to Peter Gregory, our Treasurer, Pamela and Geoffrey Eardley for Property matters, and David Harris our Health and Safety officer. All these people do an enormous amount of work behind the scenes to keep these aspects of our church life in good order.

We heard from Laura about all the exciting plans for worship and activities for Advent, Christmas and the New Year – watch out for the publicity for further information.

We heard about the decision on the future of the United Choir – please see page 7 for further information.

Dot

Would you like some company for Sunday Lunch?

After a successful lunch in November a further lunch is being held on December 1st. There are a few tickets (£10) still available if anyone would like to join us.

The menu is a choice of meat or vegetarian lasagne followed by sticky toffee pudding or fruit salad, tea/coffee and mints.

Profits after expenses will be donated to Christian Aid.

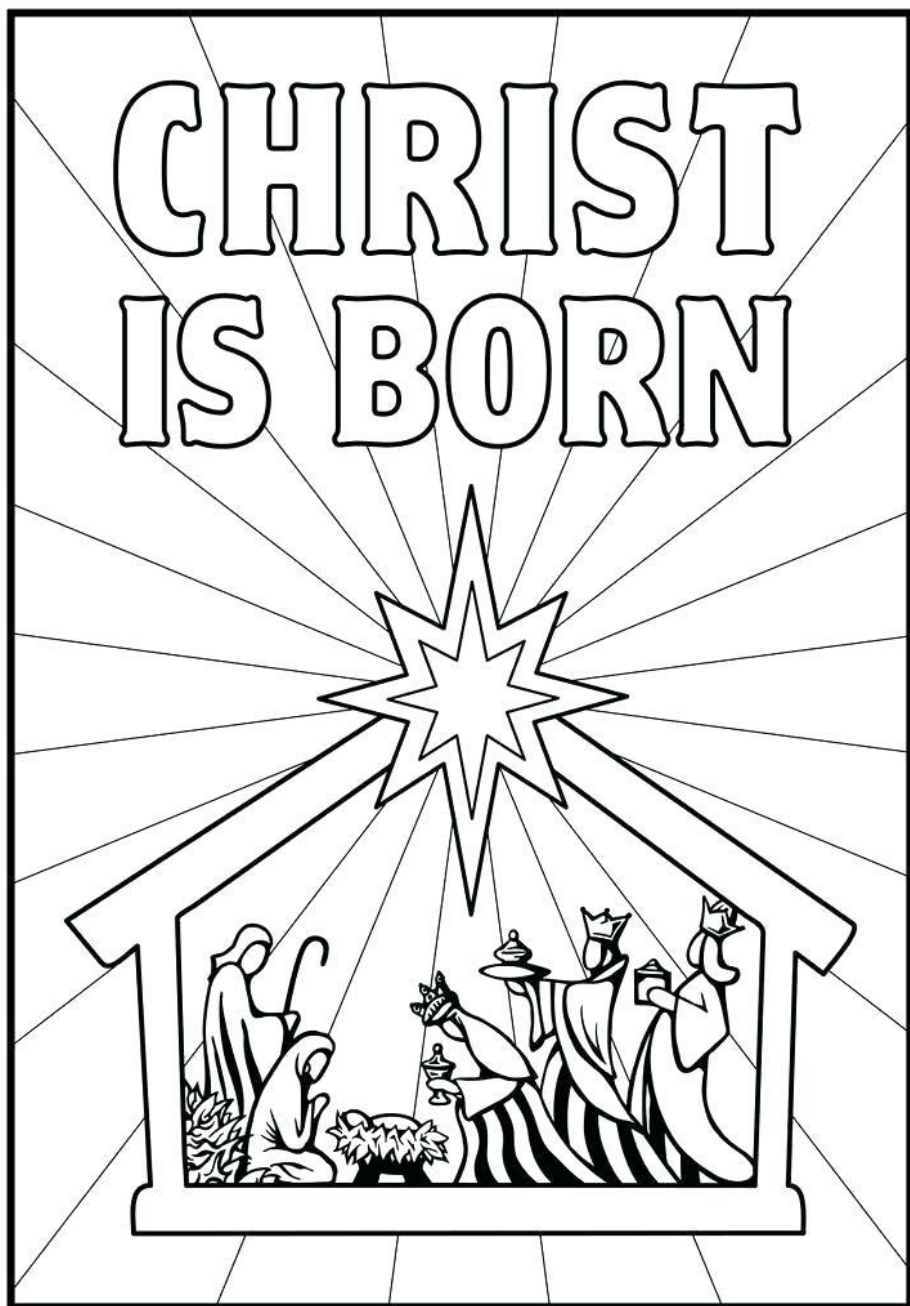
Greetings from Chislehurst

to all our friends at EMC.

Every blessing for Christmas and Peace in the New Year.

Remembering you all,

Don and Gill



Christmas Colouring – a calm half hour for you or the children!

Save the Date(s)!

The following new activities are coming soon:

Sending Ripples

Informal Worship: Discover and share more about God, like a ripple in a pond, with free-and-easy worship. If you don't take to formal things, this could be for you!

The Second Wednesday of the month, 10.00 – 10.45am in The Wesley Room (Starting 12th February).

What Matters?

Discussion Group: Do you want to 'put the world to rights'? Why not start here, with an open conversation about anything and everything.

The third Wednesday of the month, 10.00 – 11.00am in the Wesley Room (starting 15th January).

Emsworth AllSorts

A 'Holiday at Home' style day of activities suitable for older adults. Something different every time, including games, talks, crafts and cooking. £5 per person. Includes a hot lunch.

The last Wednesday of the month, 10.30 – 3.00pm in International Hall (starting 29th January).

More on all these in the January news sheet!

January News sheet

If you have any items for the January News Sheet, please send them by **Saturday 14th December**. This is a little earlier than usual, to ensure those of us who compile, check and print the News Sheet can complete it before the Christmas holiday period.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our monthly news during the year. We wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas.



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.

First, sit quietly and recall how much **God loves YOU**, and how the light of Christ dwells in you.

Please pray for:

Advent: that the message of Christ may reach every person in Emsworth. For every service of worship, every witness to God's love through the Pastoral Centre – 'Christmas Tea', 'Carols & Mince Pies', 'Advent Antics'.

Pray for: **the light of Christ in Emsworth.**

Those alone at Christmas: in our own Church family, those who find this time of year brings difficult memories; during dark evenings, those afraid of darkness; the homeless, sleeping on cold and dark streets. Pray for: **the presence of Christ in darkness as well as light.**

The world: those affected by climate change, natural disasters; the many places (or just think of one place) where there is war and unrest; refugees, families torn apart, children traumatised; peace in the Holy Land, especially Bethlehem. Pray for: **the light and hope of Christ in the whole world.**

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

Church Calendar continued

Tuesday	24	Christmas Eve 9.00pm Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service led by Rev Bill Stillwell and Deacon Laura Evans
Wednesday	25	Christmas Day 10.00am Christmas Celebration! Morning Worship led by Deacon Laura Evans
Thursday	26	Boxing Day 2.00pm Boxing Day Party (IH) (see page 6)
Sunday	29	10.00am Morning worship led by Miss Jean Hooper No Evening Service
Tuesday	31	New Year's Eve Pastoral Centre open 10.00- 12 Noon No Activity Afternoon



CHURCH CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2019

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

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

Sunday	1		Advent Sunday
		10.00am	Morning Worship led by The Revd Canon Dr Andrew Wood, Chair of Southampton District Followed by Traidcraft Stall Sunday Lunch (see page 8)
		6.30pm	United Holy Communion at St James' Preacher Rev Bill Stillwell
Tuesday	3	2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Knit for Charity (IH)
		7.30pm	Alpha Course
Wednesday	4	2.00pm	A Sacred Space (IH) (see page 3)
Thursday	5	7.30pm	Wesley Guild. 'Friends Without Borders in the Portsmouth Area' Michael Woolley (IH)
Sunday	8	10.00am	CarolFest! Café church led by Deacon Laura Evans
		10.00am	United Holy Communion at St James'
		6.30pm	United Evening Worship led by Deacon Laura Evans
Tuesday	10	10.00am	Bible Study Discussion Group (Wesley Room) (see page 4)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Christmas Tea – see Mandy for tickets
		7.30pm	Alpha Course
Wednesday	11	7.30pm	Ladies Group. Christmas Evening
Friday	13	10.00am	Christian Aid Carols in the Square (see page 5)
Sunday	15	10.00am	Holy Communion led by Rev Bill Stillwell
		6.30pm	United Carols by Candlelight at St James
Tuesday	17	2.00pm	Carols and Mince Pies in the Pastoral Centre (see page 5)
Thursday	19	7.30pm	Wesley Guild. A Christmas Evening (IH) Christmas Thoughts and Readings. Bring a surprise Christmas present to the value of £1.00.
Sunday	22	10.00am	Nativity Service A family service led by Deacon Laura Evans
		6.30pm	Carol Service led by Rev Bill Stillwell and Deacon Laura Evans
Monday	23		Advent Antics
		10.30am	Craft Morning: activities for children and adults (see page 3))
		1.30pm	Film show (see page 3)



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 newsheet@emsworthmethodistchurch.org by **Sat 14 December**