

St Christopher's Church

Trenant Road Saffron Lane LE2 6 UA



Memory verse

'Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.'

Isaiah 60:1 (NIV)

January 2023

St Christopher's Church Services January

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| Sunday 1st | 10.00am All Age Morning Worship | Readings Topic Leader Preacher | Matthew 2: 13-23 and Psalm 148 <i>The Son of God, a refugee</i> Mr C Collins Mr C Collins |
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| Sunday 8th | 10.00am Holy Communi on | Readings Topic Leader Preacher | Isaiah 60: 1-6 and Matthew 2: 1: 12 <i>Jesus - Hope of all nations</i> Mr C Collins Mrs C Griffin |
| Tea, chat and pray - 5pm-7pm at the Early's 22 Suffolk Close | | | |

Ephesians series continued

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| Sunday 15th (Groups) | 10.00am Morning Worship | Readings Topic Leader Preacher | John 8: 12 and Ephesians 5: 1-20 <i>Living as children of light</i> Mr C Ndigirwa Mr C Collins |
| Bring and Eat lunch, following Service | | | |

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| Sunday 22nd | 10.00am Holy Communi on | Readings Topic Leader Preacher | Mark 12: 28-31 and Ephesians 5: 21-33 <i>Others ahead of ourselves</i> Mr C Ndigirwa Mr C Ndigirwa |
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| Sunday 29th | 10.00am All Age Morning Worship | Readings Topic Leader Preacher | tbc tbc tbc tbc |
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| Little Angels Mondays and Fridays 9.15-11.15am Restarts Friday 6 th | Scouts (10-14 years) Meeting night Mondays - 5.30-7.00pm Adventurous Activities, also at other times For further details ring Roger on 07766456239 |
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Prayer Topics

Pray for:

- the '**Hope Explored**' evangelistic course in January: that the Lord would draw people to attend and bring people to faith in Jesus through it
- St C's **Warm Space** happening on Wednesday mornings; that it would be effective in serving local people who may struggle to pay heating bills and that it might generate opportunities to talk about Jesus
- the TGSA **Secondary age assemblies** happening in church, hosted and led by Chris and Charles. These are only just restarting, having stopped when the pandemic happened. Please pray that pupils will sense God speaking to them through these
- the delayed St C's replacement sound system, that it might be installed very early in 2023
- our church members unable to worship in person with us - specifically Lou and Stef. That they would sense the Lord's nearness to them and for continuing trust in Jesus.

Vicar's Comment

Last year (2022 I mean) one thing I was really appreciative of was being able to run an Alpha course. Even though it was a very small group, it was brilliant to be able to explore the truths of the gospel with our guests.

As I said in a recent sermon, 'gospel' literally means something akin to 'good news'. This good news concerns Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Word made flesh, and his saving work on our behalf....but each and every person must respond to it for themselves. This good news has been spread around the world for nearly 2 millennia, and yet there are so, so many people who still have not heard. And I'm not talking about countries on the other side of the planet; I'm talking about the majority of people in our own country.

We will be starting a new '**Hope Explored**' course this month. This is a bit like Alpha, but is only 3 sessions long. Why not think about who you might invite to come along and try it?

Because the gospel is indeed good news: *'God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.'* John 3:17 (NIV)

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Mission of the month Arab World Ministries (AWM)

Focus on Morocco

I wonder who you were supporting in the recent World Cup game of Morocco versus Croatia. But as Morocco starts to enter more into the World arena, how is it for Christians in the country? There are currently around 37.5 million people in Morocco, but only around 31,400 Christians – less than 0.1% of the population. **Open Doors** puts Morocco as the 27th most persecuted Country in their World rankings.

How are Christians persecuted in Morocco?

It is illegal in Morocco to '*shake the faith of a Muslim*'. This law puts many Christians, both Moroccan and foreign, who talk to others about their faith at risk of arrest and criminal prosecution. Christians' rights advocates have also been targeted by the Moroccan government for their activities and threatened with violent attacks by Islamic extremists. While the law only punishes proselytising, Moroccan converts to Christianity can be pressured in other ways, such as losing inheritance rights and custody of their children.

Women who become Christians are vulnerable to divorce, house arrest, forced marriage to a non-Christian or expulsion from their homes. Most female Christian converts are alone in their faith, without access to Christian literature or fellowship.

Men are more likely to face government interrogation, imprisonment and beatings. Each year, Christian men are arrested and fined in Morocco for nothing more than having a Bible or discussing Christianity with a Muslim. The unrelenting pressure often leaves Christian men weary and desperate; some choose to leave the country for relief.

Diary dates for January

- Sunday 1st-Wednesday 11th - Charles away in (or returning from) Tanzania
- Friday 6th - 12 to 2pm - **Book Club** at the Pork Pie Library
- Monday 9th - **Standing Committee** (by Zoom) time tbc
- Tuesdays 17th, 24th & 31st - **Hope Explored**: evening, time tbc
- Wednesday 18th - 25th - **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**
- Monday 23rd - 7.15 - **PCC** in church
- Wednesdays 18th, 25th and 1st February - **Hope Explored**: daytime (provisional, depending on interest), time tbc
- Tuesday 24th & Thursday 26th - Chris & Charles leading TGSA **Secondary assemblies** in church