



## Christ Church West Wimbledon Michael's Messages Edition 12

January 12 2021

Dear Members and Friends of Christ Church,

**Coronavirus:** What a difficult start to 2021 we are all going through. Is it a case of more 'doom and gloom and zoom' as one of my Christmas correspondents put it!? The good news is that the vaccine is beginning to roll out but we know we are in for a hard few weeks ahead. Sadly, the infection rates are still growing and the new form of the virus is considered to be much more contagious. You will know that we have been told only to leave home if we have to and that the Mayor of London has now declared a major emergency. **THEREFORE, I HAVE NOW DECIDED THAT CHRIST CHURCH WILL CLOSE FOR SERVICES IN THE CHURCH BUILDING WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT.** For the time being, the church building will remain open on a Wednesday morning from 10am to 12 noon for quiet prayer but this is also under review. It goes without saying that no-one must visit the church if they feel at all unwell. Your personal safety, health and well-being is my top priority.

**EVERY SUNDAY:**

**8am – Holy Communion Service (Book of Common Prayer) is suspended**

**10am – Morning Service with hymns online only by Zoom.**

**6.30pm – Service of Evening Prayer is suspended.**

**EVERY WEDNESDAY:**

**10am till 12 noon – the Church will continue to be open as usual for quiet prayer**

**Christmas:** Although this past Christmas was extremely difficult for many, at Christ Church I think we managed to celebrate it in as appropriately as we could. It was good to be able to deliver an Advent Calendar to each family and to post everyone else a copy of 'Comfort and Joy'. There were many appreciative messages from you – and thank you to the Archdeacon of Lambeth who funded this expenditure. It was sad that we had to cancel the Carol Service with only 24 hours' notice – but it was right not to have to put our musicians at any unnecessary risk during their rehearsal and performance time. The two said services held in church on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were much appreciated by those who felt able to attend. There was a quiet stillness to them both.

Then the two online services – well, they were wonderful! The highlight was the Junior Church Nativity Play film which was the result of the hard work of our leaders who coordinated and discovered film production gifts they never knew they had! Thank you too to our wonderful children and their families who all took part. There were some real gems. Many messages of appreciation were received; one person put it like this: *"Thank you so very much for the excellent Christmas production you enabled our children to put on. It was nothing less than superb. So often kids doing nativity scenes becomes tedious and we all sit there thinking 'how sweet'. Yet this was just gripping. It showed the nativity message clearly and made it real. It was a really professional performance. The children were obviously enjoying themselves and no doubt picked up something of the Christmas message as they did it!"* We plan to reshow this film on **Sunday 7 February at 10am** (when we will celebrate Candlemas which is the official end of the Christmas celebrations).

**Christmas online** meant that we could sing our carols at home – thank you Tom and we are very glad your voice held out – and thank you to the Coulber family who spoke part of the voiceover in the Churches Together prayer. It was also really good to be able to see each other face to face! This was particularly appreciated on Christmas Day when families were able to be together online wherever they were – especially those who zoomed in from abroad – and to show what they had for Christmas: amongst them some great gifts received from Father Christmas as well as delicious pastries in Brussels and real snow in Lithuania! It was particularly appropriate to be linked to that village in Lithuania where our crib figures were made. Here is a photo of this year's crib scene:



**What now lies ahead?** I do hope that you will be able to feel connected and linked to Christ Church even though we cannot physically meet together? Although I can't visit, I will be available by telephone (8946 5954) or email (ccww.vicar@gmail.com) and I anticipate being at home for much of the time. Do give me a ring if you need something or you would just welcome a chat over the phone – leave a message if I happen to be out and I will call you back. We are a very friendly and sociable congregation and it is very hard not to meet each other week by week, so do keep in touch with those you know in the congregation. There will be a time when we can all meet together again in person but now isn't it. Here is our parish prayer you might like to use:

***Eternal Father, look with love on your people of Christ Church and pour upon us the gifts of your Spirit. Although we are apart, draw us to you and to one another, so that by our growing love and unity we may bring healing and life to all. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**May God give us the wisdom to do the right thing and the clarity to know what that right thing is. Amen.**

With my prayers and best wishes to you all, *Michael Burns*