

# Christ Church News Christmas 2022



***"The story of Christmas is the story of  
God's relentless love for us."***

Christ Church Anglican Congregation Vision Statement  
"Through our worship, mission, nurture and service we want to enable all  
people to enter into a living relationship with Jesus Christ"

## ***In this edition of the Parish News:***

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## ***Dates for the diary***

- *Carols by Candlelight- 18<sup>th</sup> December 6.30pm*
- *Carols for Kids- 24<sup>th</sup> December 6.30pm*
- *Christmas Communion- 24<sup>th</sup> December 11.30pm*
- *Lent Begins Ash Wednesday- 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023*

## ***Greetings to – and from! – Christ Church***

Hello everyone! Our super-sized Christmas Card says it all; Greetings TO us all, FROM us all!



We have been a church family without a Rector since September; we are still here and fully alive! Paul and Glyn have (we hear) made a good start on “retirement” and the next chapter for them, in their new home in Suffolk. We continue to give thanks for them, and to pray for them and all that God plans for them in this new part of their lives. We said farewell to them with worship and a big lunch in September. (See the website for all the photos)

And in OUR new chapter, here we are as a church family, centred

around Jesus Christ and looking to one another in support and thanks, as we continue to be the Body of Christ in this place. We are blessed to have one another, and the good friendship of many to lead our worship (special thanks to Revd John Chandler, Revd Pat Prestney, and Revd David Thomas). And what a refreshment to have visitors too to preach and minister with different voices!

A small group including our Church Wardens has been working very hard with friends at St Botolph’s to prepare the “Parish Profile” – a “who we are” document addressed to possible new leaders at Christ Church and St Botolph’s. It has recently been completed. The Church Wardens will keep us all up to date as and when there is news about a new appointment.

Meanwhile, let’s live in the present! (Do you think there’s a Christmas pun there? Hmm...) We have been talking about Christmas Presents and Christmas Presence with hundreds of Hamilton Children, in church this week for their Christmas Carols!

But, puns and wordplay apart, it is in the present moment that we hear Jesus saying, “I am the light of the

world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12). Here, in the present moment, is where we see the encouragement of someone else, or the gift for kindness, or the moment for rest and reflection, or the welcome of a stranger, or the time to rejoice and be thankful. The

moment when we catch sight of Jesus Christ, and his love for each of us. A gift to be treasured, and shared as widely as we can!  
Peace and joy for Christmas, and in the new year to come.

*From the Ministry Team at Christ Church: Clive, Sara, Sheila, Paul W, Jean and Rod.*

## ***A New Vicar sorted***

I duly interviewed two young parishioners George and Alice. I thought you might be interested in what they said, without any prompting from me and the opinions are given *verbatim*:

- Kind of funny
- Respectful
- Cares about both communities of Christ Church and St Botolph's
- Support people in sad times throughout the world
- Be there for the person to ensure their well being
- Understanding and sympathetic
- Spread good news not bad news
- Goes to meeting of clubs sometimes (like the gardening

club) but gives reasons for any absences

- Listens to children as well as adults
- Talk about the latest news to help people
- Eager to know what children do in 'FLAMES' and other activities
- Cares about Eco promotion
- Not set themselves up; no favourites
- Not worried about the length of services
- Open to new ideas
- Likes nice coffee and chats openly with people
- Woman, stand up for rights, change for the congregation
- Smiley welcome to church especially to new people
- Able to make up speeches on the spot

This all came out in about ten minutes with absolutely no prompting from me. Shall we put them on the interview panel? On reflection that's not such a silly idea as it sounds.

*RG*

## **NATIVITY 2022**

'A cold coming we had of it,' someone once said.' Well, we had, two months across Europe, me and my pregnant wife, Mariam. Finally we reached the Channel. We were promised a cross channel ferry. We had paid a lot and the ferry turned out to be a black slug like dinghy. I doubt it could cross the river near our home. But we had to go on packed in with forty others. No choice. Off we paddled. Sea very calm, praise to God. The shores of our promised land came into view. On the beach burly men in uniforms dragged us unceremoniously along the beach and bundled us into buses.

We stopped in the middle of a huge city. I never realised such a place existed. London, the locals call it. Everybody out shouted the driver. Where do we go now? Not my problem was the reply. We walked the streets. Mariam was weakening.

We knocked at inns, hostels, houses. Nothing doing. No foreigners allowed. Go back to where you came from. The hostility was horrible.

At one door a fat slovenly man said nothing doing. But my wife will give birth soon. All right there's a shed in the back garden. One hundred quid for the night. Go down the side of the house. At least we were under a roof.

During the night I had a dream; more like a nightmare. A dark woman with long hair, expensively dressed, carrying a red folder proclaimed, I have a dream. Send all migrants to Rwanda. I awakened. Wake up Mariam. We must go. I found an old bike in the shed so poor Mariam could sit on it. I wheeled her eastwards in this enormous city. In the east we saw a blue light with white letters on it.



This sign was fixed to a building all glass and light. At the door stood a woman adorned in a long white gown. She saw Mariam. Welcome to our Natal Heavenly Support. It's a mouthful, I know, so we are usually known by its initials.

Mariam gave birth surrounded by these kind people. A little boy. I fell on my knees and thanked God that we had made it to safety. My name? Iosef. In English, Joseph, I think.

RG



For peace in the world there must be peace in the nations,  
For peace in the nations there must be peace in the cities,  
For peace in the cities there must be peace between neighbours,  
For peace between neighbours there must be peace in the home,  
For peace in the home there must be peace in the heart.  
Let us bring peace in the home, peace between neighbours,  
Peace in the cities and peace in the nations.

*Aon, attributed to Lao-Tsu, 6th Century BCE.*

## ***Ecochurch at Christ Church – where are we now?***

### ***Update November 2022***

Everybody will, I expect, have heard discussions and reports on the news about the recent COP27 meeting. World leaders were working together to agree ways to reduce our climate-damaging activities such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation, so humankind can live sustainably with a rich and biodiverse natural world around us.

Here at Christ Church our contribution to sustainable living really matters too. As Christians we regard the natural world as God's creation, something unique and of unique value. We try to promote sustainable living – reducing waste, recycling, using water and energy wisely, making informed ethical choices about food, clothes, transport and finance, for example.

The 'a Rocha' Ecochurch Scheme encourages us to look at every aspect of the church's life with a view to increasing our sustainability and awareness of the environmental impact we have.

In March 2020 Christ Church signed up to start the Ecochurch program. By taking a survey of five areas of church life: Buildings, Lifestyle,

Worship and Teaching, Land and Community and Local Engagement, we could identify our strengths and weaknesses.

We achieved the 'Bronze' award level last year, meaning we had made measurable progress since starting! This resulted from improvements such as LED lightbulbs and automatic lighting which cut energy use; improving recycling facilities by the addition of the 'Terracycling' box for plastics that cannot be recycled kerb-side. Service Leaders are bringing environmental themes into worship, prayer and teaching on a more regular basis, and community involvement in gardening and cleaning Cambridge Walk continues.

Following further moves towards sustainability, we are now pleased to have reached 'Silver' in the awards! This has been possible through additional use of ethical and Fair Trade materials in church, events such as the Gardeners Question Time evening, the Prayer Space for COP26 last year, encouraging the use of an online carbon calculator and other events and actions that raise the awareness and practice of sustainability. This summer, Christ

Church had a visit from Essex Wildlife Trust's 'Urban Wildlife Champion', and we feature on their website, do take a look! Scroll down and click on 'Meet our Champions'

<https://www.essexwt.org.uk/get-involved/team-wilder/urban-wildlife-champions>

We are pleased and grateful for the efforts everyone has made to help Christ Church move towards a fairer and more ethical way of being that acknowledges our respect for God's creation.

The forthcoming building project will enable us, as a church, to improve our building by measures such as dual-flush loos that save water, bike parking to encourage more people to cycle/walk together to church events and having more and better spaces for community use. Solar panels to generate electricity are also in the plans.

In the meantime, here are some ideas for us all to look into – as ways to be more sustainable in the coming months:

- Try an online carbon calculator – see what your own strengths and areas for improvement are!

<https://www.carbonindependent.org>

/ or

<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/questionnaire>

- Join us in sharing a communal Christmas card this year – we will put up one big card, so everyone who wants to can sign it and add a Christmas message to friends at church.

- Think about food – how much can we reduce our carbon footprints by moving from animal to plant-based food? The carbon differences are really surprising.

- Host a clothes swap – or help organise one for the New Year – after all, other peoples' unwanted clothes are always more interesting than your own!

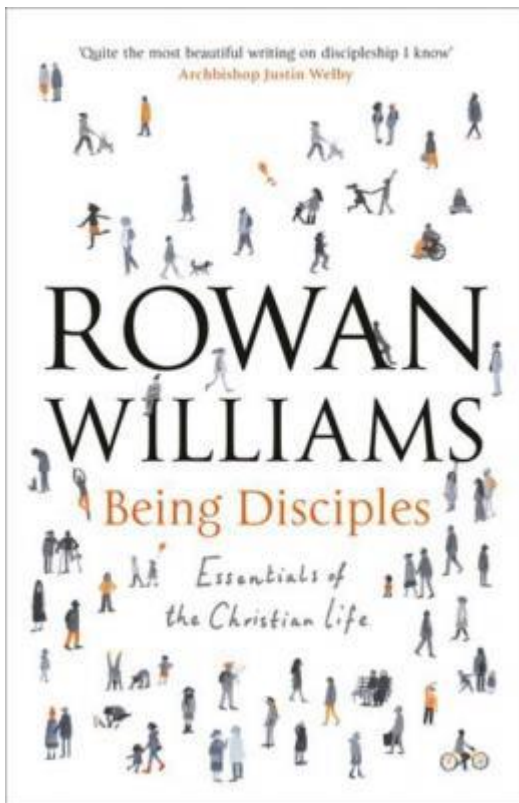
- Think ahead about other ideas (New Year resolutions?!) to walk instead of drive; use more local, organic or fair-trade food when you can; look into ethical banking and pension funds ... or any other sustainability ideas you'd like to share with us.

Please continue to pray for our beautiful planet and thank God for the good things we have. If you'd like to talk about any of the ideas in this article, please talk to Kate, Jean or Carolyn. We may not know the answers but we will always be happy to learn more and find out!

*Kate*



## ***Book review “Eighty pages of gold dust”: “Being Disciples” by Rowan Williams***



Would you like to have gold dust on your hands? Setting out to review a book of which the Church Times said, “Eighty pages of gold dust” but also “it is impossible for any review to do it justice” does seem a futile exercise! Ha ha! Here goes...

“Being Disciples; The Essentials of the Christian life” by Rowan Williams has been our Small Group book since September. We have loved it. We have (very occasionally) struggled with it. We have marvelled at the way it puts into clear language things we sort of knew, but had not been able to identify. Most of all, we have felt encouraged and enlivened by it.

In six readably short chapters (around 15 pages each, in a good-sized type) the author sets us on the road; then examines and lays out Faith, Hope and Love (yes, all three in chapter two; keep up!) looks at Forgiveness; then Holiness (I liked that chapter especially – it sounds remote and daunting, but emerges as welcoming and practical); Chapter 5 is Faith in Society; finally Life in the Spirit.

I have just finished reading Chapter 5. It traces the history of Christianity’s fall from “state power” after the wars of religion and the Enlightenment, and the rise of the recognition of the dignity of each human person; it does this lightly and invitingly and clearly, and in less than two pages. It sets me up to understand what the author offers to us – based on St Paul’s teaching on the Body of Christ – about the value of every person, and about our dependence on one another.

Finally, he asks, “How can Christians make a difference?” You’ll need to read it to find his answer! ...But be encouraged – the state should not be a Church, in Rowan Williams’ view; but the actions that speak just as

loudly as words bear witness to Christian influence in society, from the initial abolition of slavery, through the hospice movement, to fair trade and the Christian ecological movement.

There will soon be several copies of this lovely book in the Church

Library. Do borrow one! A great start to 2023 to read this slim and rather inspiring handbook for Discipleship.

*Sara Humphreys*

## ***Austerity Britain? More beggars on the streets of Colchester!***



*Photo credit to Rod Green*

## ***Operation Christmas Child***

Once again Thank You All very much for contributing to this Charity. We collected 34 boxes which were taken from the Church on their journey to children abroad. I don't know the exact destination, but I believe children in Eastern Europe will benefit.

A vote of thanks is due to Jill Dyer for the expert and colourful knitting which was displayed on the Foyer notice board, and also to Emily for

making such an inventive and fun arrangement on the board.

Two carrier bags of tennis balls, knitted items and various other gifts were handed over with the boxes. The organisers are pleased to receive such "surplus" items, as some boxes are packed by volunteers at the depots. Nothing is wasted!

I wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Healthy New Year.

*Angela Ennals*

## Transform Trade

As many of you will know, Traidcraft Exchange has worked alongside Traidcraft Plc as the charitable and campaigning arm for fairer trade throughout the world.

They have decided that a change of name might make their purpose clearer.

They are now known as

### TRANSFORM TRADE

“As a global community of farmers, workers, collectives, campaigners, donors and supporters we fight together for trade that values people over profit so everybody benefits”

If you would like to know how your favourite chocolate bar is performing in relation to Living incomes for workers, Child labour, Deforestation, and Agrochemical management among other markers, log onto [www.transform-trade.org](http://www.transform-trade.org) and scroll down to The Injustice Advent calendar, and click on Day 4. Scroll down and click on the link “check out the Chocolate Scorecard”.

The logo for Transform Trade features the word "Transform" in a light teal color above the word "Trade" in a darker teal color. A vertical teal bar is positioned to the left of the text, and a horizontal teal line extends from the end of "Trade".

## Traidcraft Stalls 2023

JANUARY 22ND  
FEBRUARY 26TH  
MARCH 26TH  
APRIL 23RD  
MAY 28TH  
JUNE 25TH  
JULY 23RD  
AUGUST 27TH  
SEPTEMBER 24TH  
OCTOBER 22ND  
NOVEMBER 19TH  
DECEMBER 10TH





DOWNLOAD PRINT-FRIENDLY VERSION

# Vegan Sweet Potato and Lentil Curry Recipe

If you're looking for a tasty, vegan, tea time treat, this easy to follow, fair trade recipe from our friends at JTS is an excellent, ethical option.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 diced onion
- 1 diced clove of garlic
- 1 large, chopped carrot
- 1 chopped sweet potato
- ½ can of Ma's Kitchen Organic Coconut Milk
- ½ jar Eswatini Kitchen Medium Curry Sauce
- 340g lentils
- 600ml vegetable stock
- 400g Kilombero Brown Rice

*Add some fair trade flavour!*



## METHOD

- 1 Heat onion and garlic, stirring until browned
- 2 Add ½ jar of Eswatini Kitchen Medium Curry Sauce
- 3 Add the chopped carrot and sweet potato
- 4 Add 340g of lentils and 600ml vegetable stock. Bring to the boil and simmer for 25 minutes
- 5 Cook 400g Kilombero Brown Rice
- 6 When lentils and sweet potato are tender, mix and stir in 200ml of Ma's Organic Coconut milk, then serve with rice...

## Shopping list



Ma's Kitchen Organic Coconut Milk



Eswatini Kitchen Medium Curry Sauce



Kilombero Brown Rice

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG FOR MORE FAIR TRADE RECIPES

Get to know us better...



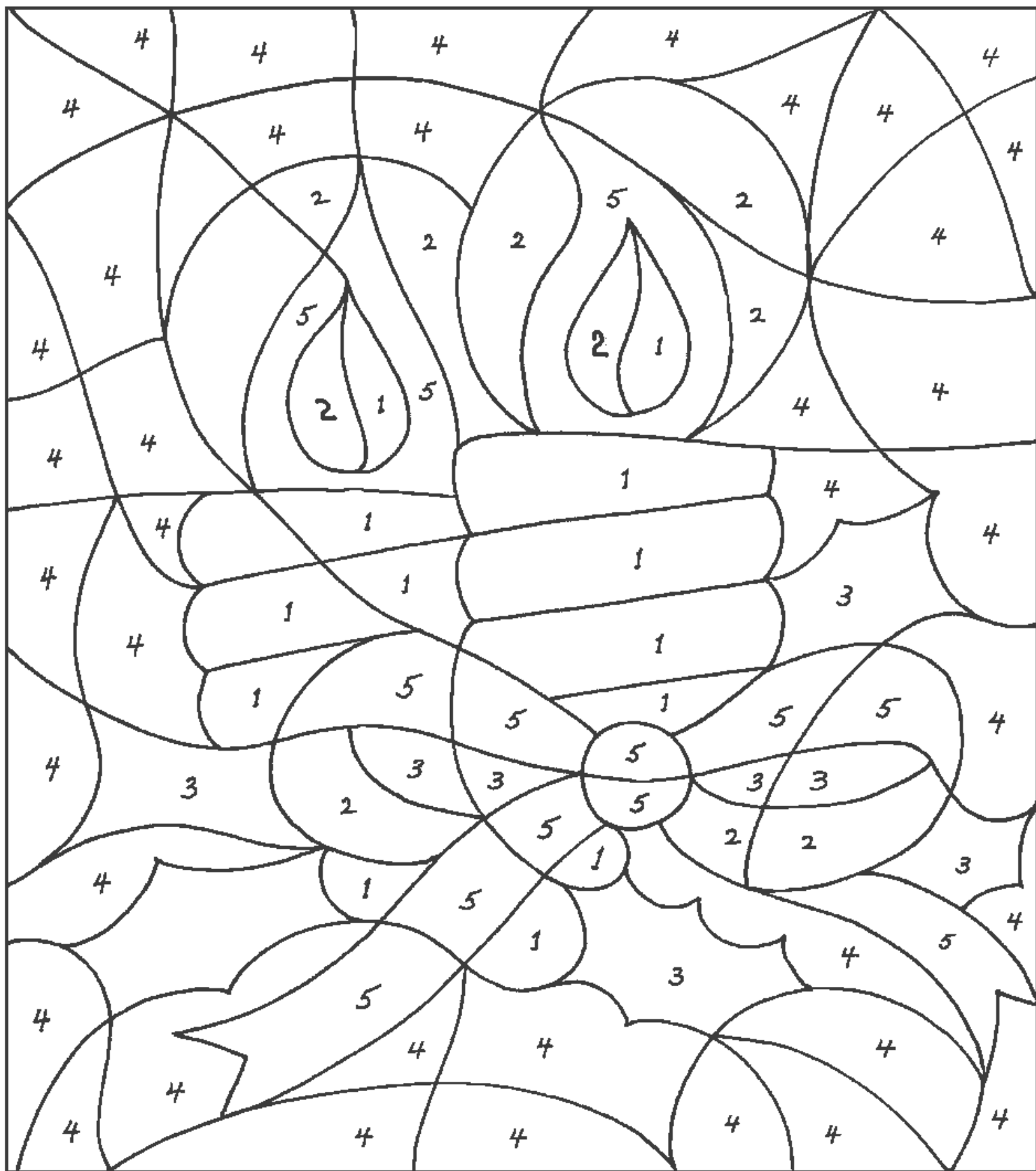
# Nativity Word Search

C A N O I T A V L A S D N S H S  
Q S H E P H E R D S R F A L L U  
R A T S A M T S I R H C T E J S  
N E M E S I W S H E E P I G O E  
J G N I K M A R Y G I U V N S J  
M O S Y I H X Q U R Q W I A E T  
D O N K E Y R E G N A M T D P M  
Z I L I N N K E E P E R Y O H F



angels  
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donkey  
innkeeper  
Jesus  
Joseph  
king  
manger  
Mary  
nativity  
salvation  
sheep  
shepherds  
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wisemen





**1=Orange 2=Yellow 3=Green 4=Blue 5=Red**

## Regular activities at Christ Church

### *time together*

Meets every Tuesday morning in term time from 10am to 12 noon,  
Our aim is to provide a welcoming environment for little ones (0-4yr) to play and for parents, grandparents and carers to chat and relax over a cup of coffee.

We close our morning together with a Bible story, some nursery rhymes, Christian songs and celebrate any family occasions e.g birthdays.

Please feel free to drop in for a short visit or stay for the morning.

Email:  
[timetogether@colchesterchristchurch.org.uk](mailto:timetogether@colchesterchristchurch.org.uk)

### *the* **BREAKFAST CAFÉ**

Thursdays from 9am to 11.30 ish.

A café for all ages held in the main church space, a safe space for little ones to play, adults young and old to meet over cake, breakfast quiche, tea coffee and other goodies.

Pop in for a short time or stay longer.  
All ages welcome

### **FLAMES**

(for all those aged 4-11)  
On Sunday mornings

**Bible stories, games,  
crafts and prayers**

more information contact Sheila

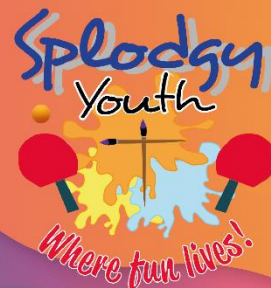


An after school club for primary school age children, on Tuesdays 3pm till 4.30pm. Parents and Carers stay in the building with the children, pre-school children are also welcome (toys provided).

Activities include Craft, Stories, Videos, Lego and Games.

There are refreshments during the afternoon for children and adults.

FrOG club has a relaxed atmosphere for children and adults to enjoy.



**Join us at  
Splodgy on the  
2nd Friday of the Month  
7:30pm till 9pm  
School Years 6 - 10**



COVID19

We will have relevant COVID safety measures in place in line with the government guidance in place.

To see visit [www.colchesterchristchurch.org.uk/splodgy](http://www.colchesterchristchurch.org.uk/splodgy)



Christ Church  
Colchester



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Jean Taylor  
(01206) 827207

**Church Treasurer:**

Nigel Humphreys  
(01206) 579379

**Church Office:**

Emily Gooch  
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The Church of England  
in Essex and East London  

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Diocese of Chelmsford