



January 23rd 2022
WELCOME TO ST. PETER'S
In this time of uncertainty,
we declare: Jesus is Lord!

Christian Unity

Once a year Christians around the globe are invited to join together in a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year the week runs from Tuesday 18th to Tuesday 25th January, and the theme has been chosen by the Middle East Council of Churches: "*We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him.*" (Mt 2:2) More than ever, in these difficult times, we need a light that shines in the darkness and that light, Christians proclaim, has been manifested in Jesus Christ.

Christmas and Epiphany are powerful reminders of the light of Jesus which shines in our world – the light shining in the darkness, which the darkness has not overcome. Sadly though, in the Middle East and throughout the world, the light of Jesus is dimmed and overshadowed by disunity and division within the body of Christ.

Christians are called to seek the new-born king, the king of gentleness, peace and love. But where is the star that leads the way to him? It is the mission of the Church to be the star that lights the way to Christ who is the light of the world. By word and through action the Christian people are called to light the way so that Christ might be revealed, once again, to the nations. Yet divisions dim the light of Christian witness and obscure the way, preventing others from finding their way to Christ. Conversely, Christians united in their worship of Christ, and opening their treasures in an exchange of gifts, become a sign of the unity that God desires for all of creation. (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022 Resource).

Of course, Christian Unity isn't something we should just be praying for once a year. It should be the heartbeat of our life and witness all the year round. And although we may want to pray for particular places of conflict and division, we also need to be praying for our own community of Christians here in Derby, made up of different traditions and denominations but united in the love of Christ.

There is much to be thankful for in our city. Christians are serving together as Street Pastors, as Chaplains, with Derby City Mission and in local food banks and other projects. Here at St. Peter's we represent a range of different backgrounds and traditions, drawn together by a calling to serve Christ in the City Centre. But we mustn't take that for granted. As Psalm 133 says: "*How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard.*" And John 13: 35 says "*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*"

This week of Prayer for Christian Unity may we be thankful for all our sisters and brothers in Christ and commit again to becoming a sign of the unity that God desires for all of creation.

With my prayers and love, *Anita*

A Prayer for Christian Unity

Lord Jesus, who prayed that we might all be one,
we pray to you for the unity of Christians,
according to your will,
according to your means.
May your Spirit enable us
to experience the suffering caused by division,
to see our sin
and to hope beyond all hope.
Amen.

“Believers are never told to become one; we already are one and are expected to act like it.” – Joni Eareckson Tada

A New Year Reflection From Bishop Libby

I am trying to practice a discipline of gratitude as we enter this new year. I'm all too aware of the continuing pressures we face and conscious of the burdens we carry. Being intentionally thankful does not deny or diminish those realities but recognises that, still, God is good and at work even in the most difficult of circumstances. So, at the end of each day, I try to name in prayer those things that have revealed the goodness of God to me and thank God for them. And, at the start of each day, I pray that God will remind me to say 'thank you' and be appreciative to those people who offer care, love, support – any good contribution to my day.

I'm finding that practicing the discipline of being grateful reminds that I am not alone. Being dependent on God and recognising my interdependence with others is good news. It gives me hope and so helps me be less anxious and impatient – to be more generous of spirit and therefore more generous in action.

Baptism and Confirmation

Are you interested in being baptized or confirmed in 2022? If you would be, or would like to find out more, please speak to Nick or Anita.

Afternoon Teas at St. Peter's: Tuesdays 1st February, 1st March, 5th April, 4rd May, 7th June

On Tuesday afternoon we enjoyed a New Year Tea, and look forward to many more as the year progresses! See above for the dates. Sandwiches and cakes will be served in the church at 2.15pm, followed by a short service of Evening Prayer. All are welcome – please call Margaret on 01332 239134 if you're planning to come for catering purposes. Hope to see you there!

Praying for the Persecuted Church: Ethiopia

Almost 60 per cent of Ethiopians are Christian – that's 67.5 million people. Sadly, though, many Ethiopian Christians are persecuted by fellow Christians, if they belong to a different denomination.

In Ethiopia, persecution is often dependent on what *kind* of Christian you are or where you live. Because of the government's special relationship with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, other denominations – especially Evangelical and Pentecostal Protestants – are persecuted by the state and Orthodox Church. Christians who change denominations and leave the Orthodox Church are subject to family and community pressure and can face significant mistreatment. Additionally, churches can be restricted from holding religious gatherings.

The other major factor for persecution in Ethiopia is Islamic extremism. Particularly in the eastern and south eastern parts of the country, converts to Christianity from Islam can be harassed and oppressed by their families and surrounding communities. In some regions, Christians are denied access to community resources and experience ostracism and discrimination. Additionally, some Christians are vulnerable to violence when Islamic extremists attack churches and homes.

Christian women face the additional risk of being forced to marry non-Christians and then expected to follow the religion of their husband. And if a woman converts to Christianity in a non-Christian area, it is likely she will be divorced by her husband and possibly lose custody of her children.

Manayesh grew up in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, but without really knowing Jesus. When Manayesh's mother became a Protestant, she shared the gospel with Manayesh – who accepted Jesus as her Saviour. "After I received Jesus, my burdens left me. Suffering had been my life, but it all became easier."

Her suffering became easier because Jesus helped carry her burdens – but Manayesh was also harassed by the Orthodox Church, who threatened her. When her husband died, they told her she must leave the Protestant church or leave the area. Thankfully, local Open Doors partners were able to support Manayesh, giving money for her farming livelihood. "I praise the Lord's name, for He prepared this support for me. If I did not receive this help, my life would have been in danger. My children and I would not have survived."

Ethiopia rose three spots in the 2021 World Watch List, largely because of an increase in violence against Christians. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Christians have been overlooked in the distribution of government aid. (Open Doors website)

Prayer Meeting

Don't forget our weekly prayer meeting every Tuesday at 11am via Zoom! Please do come along if you can. For more details, please contact Geoff

Prayer ...

In this testing time, do not hesitate to ask for prayer for any concern you have. We all face difficulties and challenges, but prayer makes a difference. In an emergency, call Bren (07967 183601), and she will ask those on the prayer chain to pray for you.

Zoom Joining Details for the 10.45am Service:

On a Computer, Laptop, Smart Phone or Tablet: Click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/450891605?pwd=czNCTTJuaUJpQ3VlOVlnUm1zS0tKQT09>

Alternatively:

1. Open Zoom and select 'Join' or 'Join a Meeting'
2. Enter the Meeting ID: **450 891 605**
3. Select 'Join'
4. When prompted for the Meeting Password, enter **73837**
5. Select 'Continue' or 'Join Meeting' and you will be connected

By Phone – these are the numbers you must now use:

1. Pick any one of the numbers below (doesn't matter which), if one doesn't work, pick another: 0330 088 5830; 0131 460 1196; 0203 481 5237; 0203 481 5240; 0203 901 7895; 0208 080 6591; 0208 080 6592
 2. Dial the number and when prompted for the Meeting ID press: **450 891 605#**
 3. You will then be prompted for a Participant ID, just press **#**
 4. Finally, you will be prompted for the Meeting Password, press: **73837#**
- You will be connected and able to hear everything that is happening.

St. Peter's in the City Staff

Acting Vicar/Associate Priest: Revd. Anita Matthews anita@stpetersderby.org.uk

Curate: Revd. Nick Parish nick@stpetersderby.org.uk

Vicar's PA and Church Administrator: Hilary Streek office@stpetersderby.org.uk

Inside Out Project Workers:

Wayne Summers wayne@insideoutderby.org.uk **Revd Jo Honour** jo@insideoutderby.org.uk

Revd Alan Griggs alan@insideoutderby.org.uk

Building Manager: Melvyn Wood

Church Wardens:

Tim Benson, Liz Runcorn

Kitchen Supervisor: Gillian Wood

We are a community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city

Follow us on Twitter: @stpetersderby; www.stpetersderby.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Officer: 07828 280455

Please note that copies of the Safeguarding Policy are available in the Church Office or at www.derby.anglican.org/safeguarding

The church office is currently open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday between 9.30am and 1.30pm. Telephone: 01332 360790, office@stpetersderby.org.uk