



The Stream

December 2024

Message from Mike...

Hello church,

As you are reading this message, we have finished our short series on The Body of Christ and are moving into Advent and dare I say it, Christmas. The Christmas period brings many challenges including how we can be Christians in our community, New Barn Christian Fellowship and our families.

Do we indulge ourselves in all the excesses of the season? Do we get ourselves in debt providing the gifts our families want and expect, or the Christmas society thinks we should provide? Do we wear ourselves out, shopping and going to services? Do we need to make lots of long expensive trips to see our family? Do we involve ourselves in the almost inevitable family arguments? Do we revisit all the resentment caused by Christmas past?

Our hope and wish is that people have matured. That our families have somehow grown up, and those arguments have been left behind. We want to think that we no longer have to go to excess or buy lots of expensive presents. We hope that we have put all those things behind us at last and can have the peaceful, loving Christmas at last.

This is sadly often not the case. The same problems arise Christmas after Christmas. We still compare ourselves with the more wealthy, more successful members of our family. Can we compete? Do we have more fun? Do we spend more?

It is to our shame that these issues are as prevalent in our churches as in society in general. The reason being that we have failed to mature and grow up.

The concept of a mature Christian is often misunderstood. Is maturity defined by how well we know our Bible? Is it by how long and 'holy' our prayers are, how often we attend services, or how many areas of service we give to our church or community?

Christian maturity has elements of all these but also is so much more. Firstly, it is the level of our relationship with Jesus. Not only should we read our Bible and know what God says but we should be applying it to our lives. Not only do we need to pray but to understand that prayer is two way with God doing more of the talking as we listen. That describes our maturity in terms of our relationship with God very simply.

'And He said to them, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Secondly, Christian maturity is identified in our relationship with ourselves. That we know who we are in Christ. That we know what Jesus' death on the cross has secured for us, not just our salvation but also that we are 'heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ' (Romans 8v17) and all the other privileges we enjoy as God's family. We also need to deny ourselves and die to ourselves.



Thirdly, Christian maturity in our relationships with each other. How do we relate to our brothers and sisters? Do we hold a grudge? Do we struggle to forgive when offended by what they say or what they do? Do we think the best of them? Do we believe no wrong but rejoice in the good? Do we weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice.

Mature Christians don't revisit old wrongs. They forgive easily and quickly. Maturity is best described as how we relate to God, how well we guard our hearts and how stable and loving our relationships are with our fellow Christians.

As we prepare our hearts to celebrate Jesus' coming, let us make real effort remind ourselves of Jesus words and act and react this Christmas as Jesus would so we all have a good time and live in peace, joy, hope and love with each other.


God bless you all,

Mike



"For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace".

December's Sunday Service Details

Date	Leader	Speaker	Comments
1 st December	Tunde (CPC)	Rowan Troy	Advent – Hope, Matt 12 v15-21
8 th December	Richard (CPC)	Ron Owen	Advent – Peace, Luke 1 v76-79
15 th December	Beth Collins	Mike Collins	Advent – Joy, Isaiah v35
22 nd December	Mike Collins	Ron Owen	4.30pm Carol Service by candlelight – Advent, Love 1 John v7-19 
25 th December	Mike Collins	Mike Collins	Christmas Day Service – NB: 10am
29 th December	Rowan Troy	Mike Collins	Encouragement for end of year 1 Thess 5 v 1-11

Prayer

We pray for those facing challenges particularly those who are alone or struggling over the Christmas period: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life".

Tom Barnett – Please can we pray for Tom who is going through a very difficult time at the moment. Also for Sarah, Chloe and Andrew as they support him.

Anne Mills – Anne has recently been experiencing poor health and we pray for her during this difficult time.

Jenny Kelly – We continue to lift Jenny to the Lord as she continues to fight cancer.

Dorothy & Ian Hutchinson's Son – We continue to hold Dot and Ian's son in our prayers and pray for strength for him and their family as they support during these difficult times

Fiona Bundell – We pray for Fiona who has been going through health problems recently. Also for Peter and their family as they support each other through these difficult times.



If you have an emergency or particular prayer need please speak to any of the Leadership Team who will be happy to pray with you, or contact Janet for inclusion on the Emergency Prayer Line.

Foodbank – a message from Nicky

"This month for the Foodbank it would lovely to bless them with something for Christmas. Things like Christmas chocolates, Christmas pudding, a cake or perhaps selection boxes.

Thank you for all your donations they really help.

God bless

Nicky"



Welcome Wednesday



A big well done to all at Welcome Wednesday who have donated the contents and made up 16 shoeboxes which will be taken to Romania by the charity AMEN who the Church supports. There is a lot happening at Welcome Wednesday in the run up to Christmas including making Christmas cards. If you would like further details please speak to Ron or Anne Mills.



Current Groups at NBCF (for further details please call Ron Owen - 07850 004696)

Group	Day	Time	Details
Bible Study	1 st Tuesday of the month	1.45pm	At Janet's home – Reflections on the Christmas Story
Dartford Life Group	Wednesday evening	7pm	Edna's home – Varied themes looking at Faith (please check with Edna for further details and dates)
Welcome Wednesday	Wednesday	1-3pm	Longfield Hill Community Hall – a friendly 'pop up' club with refreshments, board games, talks, demonstrations and activities, open to all
Northfleet Life Group	-	-	Suspended for the present time – please speak to Mike or Nicky for further details
New Barn Life Group	Thursday	7.30pm	At Eve and Richard's home: 5 th Dec – Bible Study, pick any Bible story and review 4 ways with Andrew and Annette 12 th Dec – Christmas social, end of term revelry
Weekly Prayer Group	Friday	5pm	Via Zoom – please contact Janet for joining instructions
Monthly Prayer Meeting	Saturday 23 rd Nov	9am	Meeting in the building adjacent to Community Hall and Zoom link also available.

All groups are open to everyone and all are most welcome

For further details, please contact the organiser or email newbarncf@outlook.com

The Leadership Team

Keep in touch and please contact any of the below at newbarncf@outlook.com:

Pastor: Mike Collins

Trustees: Paul Bishop, Ron Owen, Stephen Paddock and Mary Bourne (external Trustee from CPC)

Leadership Team: Lynne Bishop, Paul Bishop and Ron Owen

Safeguarding Lead: Nicky Collins

For further details on any of the above, please see our website at newbarncf.org.uk. If you have ideas that you would like to be included in the next copy of The Stream, please speak to any of the Leadership Team, or email newbarncf@outlook.com by the 25th please

Christmas dates for your diary

23rd November between 11am – 3pm – Christmas Craft Market at Wilmington Community Church, Broad Lane, Wilmington. There will be over 20 artisan stalls and children can book to visit Father Christmas. For tickets and further information please visit wilmingtoncommunitychurch.co.uk

7th December – 7–9pm – The Big Sing At Wilmington Community Church, The BIG Sing Choir bring a groundbreaking modern twist to Christmas carols that we all know and love. For tickets and further information please visit wilmingtoncommunitychurch.co.uk



Big Advent Coffee Morning 10am-12pm – Join others within the local community for a Christmas Coffee Morning at St Mary Magdalene’s Church, Longfield.



9th December – 6.30pm – It’s a Boy! LolBear are coming to the CPC Centre to tell the Nativity Story, as a Christmas-styled comedy musical for kids. A ‘panto’ like no other with improvisation around audience suggestions. Tickets from £2 (with a free bag of popcorn) see CPC website for further details.



11th December – 7 – 9.30pm – Christmas Quiz Night - For tickets and further information please visit wilmingtoncommunitychurch.co.uk



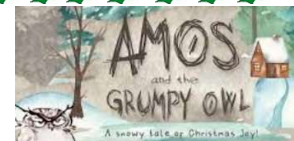
15th December - DVCC Open Air Carol Service at Eynsford Castle – 4.30pm - Join with Darent Valley Community Church for Carols in the Castle followed by mulled wine and mince pies at Eynsford Castle, High Street, Eynsford, DA4 0AA

14th December – Carol singing in Gravesend with Churches Together in Gravesham. Join with other local churches to sing and encourages shoppers in Gravesend town centre. Further details to follow.



14th December – Treasure Hunt in Gravesend town centre with Churches together in Gravesham. Join the fun between (11am-1.30pm) with the annual treasure hunt for children and shoppers as they search for characters from the nativity story through Gravesend town centre. See CTG website for details.

21st December – 6 – 8pm – Amos and the Grumpy Owl At Wilmington Community Church a full scale theatrical feast with lighting effects and puppetry. For tickets and further information please visit wilmingtoncommunitychurch.co.uk



22nd December – NBCF Carol Singing in the Community. Join us at 3.30pm before our carol service singing carols around the village – meeting at the Community Hall.



Traditional Carol Service by candlelight at 4.30pm in the Longfield Hill Community Hall followed by mince pies, refreshments and fellowship.

