



## DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



# IVYBRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

**HAIL**, thou ever blessed morn  
**HAIL**, redemption's happy dawn  
**SING** through all Jerusalem  
**CHRIST** is born in Bethlehem.

*(Hymn Chorus from See Amid the Winter's Snow)*

**Sharing Life**  
**Sharing Faith**



## Dear Magazine Reader

Someone sent this to Carolyn recently! You may have seen it too!



*No Nativity this year because the 3 Wise Men face a travel ban.*

*The Shepherds have been furloughed.*

*The Inn Keeper has shut under tier 3 regulations and had a slump in bookings.*

*Santa won't be working as he would break the rule of 6 with Dasher, Comet, Cupid, Prancer, Vixen, Donner and Blitzen.*

*As for Rudolph, with the **red nose**, he should be isolating and taking a test.*

That sums up 2020 for a lot of us! The so-called 'mood-music' hasn't been particularly upbeat this year has it?

However, what a relief it is to know that Christmas is a reminder of the wonderful presence of **God** in our midst, for those who have faith in His Son, **Jesus Christ**. That's what the true meaning of Christmas is all about. In the Bible we're told that **Jesus** came at a difficult time in the history of the Jewish people. Many of the population were desperately poor, they had various Government edicts to obey (sound familiar?) – even worse than a lockdown, it was a command to return back to your home town as you had to register in person to the authorities – what a nightmare! If you're living locally – all well and good, but, if like me, you're not from this area, (a Yorkshireman living in exile ☺) you'd have to go back to wherever you came from to fulfil the illogical regulations (sound familiar again?) so you wouldn't get in to trouble. This is what Mary & Joseph had to face. Not only that, but she was expecting. Not only that, they had to travel 90 miles on foot, not only that, when they got there, there was nowhere to stay! Gah! A right old Palestinian muddle! And then to cap it all an angelic visitor rocks up with news from the Throne-room of Heaven to announce the fact that Mary's baby was going to be none other than the mighty Son of God! Whaaaaaaat?



But wait a minute...the baby was to have various special names. One of which is especially amazing as it concerns a 700 year old prophecy... ***"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel (which means "God with us")." (Matthew 1:23)***

Despite all the trials and tribulations of 2020 and the continuation of more to come may we know the wonderful reality, even in the confusion and challenges, that **God** really is with us. As we trust Him He alone will guide us through and give us light in the darkness and replace our despair with hope.

Yours in Immanuel  
*Rev Mark*

**P.S.** If you want to discuss any of the above further (apart from the Covid bit at the beginning) please feel free to get in touch.  
**[revmark@live.co.uk](mailto:revmark@live.co.uk)** (full contact details on the back page)



## December/ Christmas Worship



**Due to the current restrictions and any possible extension of these restrictions, all services are liable to change. As I write this all services are via Zoom but this could change, so please check if you are unsure.**

## **A new minister for Ivybridge**

As most people will be aware, **Mark and Carolyn** will be moving to a new appointment in 2021 and we wish them all the best in their new churches.

The Circuit has therefore been in the 'stationing' process by which churches where there are ministerial vacancies are 'matched' to ministers who are due to move. In these unusual times, rather than the normal visits and face to face discussions this has all taken place via virtual on-line discussions. It was always possible that we might not get a minister as there are more vacancies than ministers to be stationed, but I am pleased to say that we have been matched and, subject to formal ratification by the Methodist Conference next year, the **Rev. Amanda Roper** will be the new minister **for Ivybridge, Bittaford and Yealmpton**.

**Amanda** will be moving to Ivybridge with her husband **Mark** next summer and will take up post from **September 2021**. She comes from Cornwall and has two daughters aged 23 and 19. Her original background is as a nursery nurse and a family worker before going into ministerial training. Within the church she has worked in the Bury Circuit (2009 – 2014) before moving to her current post in Sussex.

Ministers prepare a synopsis about themselves for the stationing process and the following is brief extract from how she currently exercises her ministry and sees her skills gifts and strengths.

*“• seek to follow a biblical, Jesus-centred, Holy Spirit inspired pattern of ministry.*

- love preaching, especially in the open air, and regularly speak at large gatherings of worship/witness events in public/town settings*
- naturally creative – art/craft/music*



- *experienced ministering in Local Ecumenical Partnerships; and have recently brought two congregations together - Methodist and URC- to form new LEP in current appointment*
- *skilled with ministry alongside children and families – Messy Church, Holiday Clubs and have overseen several church-based toddler groups*
- *primary school chaplaincy – enjoy leading assemblies, engaging with school visits to church and have run ‘Journey to Christmas’ and ‘Journey to Easter’ experiences*
- *Intergenerational Worship, Café Worship and Multi-Sensory Worship”*

We believe that **Amanda** will be able to build on the work that **Mark & Carolyn** have undertaken to help us grow as a church and I am sure that we would all wish to pray for her in this role and for **Mark & Carolyn** in their new churches.

*Reg & Alison*  
**Joint Senior Stewards**



A huge thank you to our friends who were kind enough to send us cards and presents for our  
**50th Wedding Anniversary**  
**on 24th October**

Unfortunately, as with many others this year, it was another occasion in which we were unable to share with our friends and family.

But we really value having friends who remembered this special time.

**50 years is a very, very long time!!**  
*Yvonne and David*

# IMC Youth Work News : ZOOM! ZOOM! ZOOM!



## Hi Church

**Thank you** so much for all your support whether in volunteering or praying. We do value everything this church does especially, personally, those involved in the youth work. Sorry it has been a while since I have written one of these. Although this has been a challenging few months we have some exciting things to share, from internships to zoom Bible studies, Youtube clips to parent visits, Alpha course to talking Jesus, we have kept busy trying to do our best for these amazing young people and even some adult work.

## Our Youth Worker Internship : Harry

We are super excited to have Harry join the team to work along side me with all the groups that we are currently running, while also having training with **South West Youth Ministries**. Harry is really enjoying the course and I am working with him closely to empower him to achieve his full potential. I believe God has amazing plans for Harry and he and I would value your prayers. I am also getting coaching myself from an expert in the field of managing teams, Robin Duckering, who has given me so much wealth of knowledge and is equipping me to be a good line manager for Harry and hopefully enabling Harry to take up the same tools to use in his future. So a **BIG** thankyou to **Robin** in this and for his dedication and time. Also a **MASSIVE THANKYOU** to everyone who has donated to Harrys course fees.



## Kids

Thank you for all your prayers in this time. As for everyone, this has been a very strange time and many things have had to cancel.



We have been able to prepare **Kingdom Kids** videos for a lot of lockdown and have transitioned to **Kingdom Kids LIVE on ZOOM** for the rest of the year. This has proven to be a success with the church children, however it has been a challenge to reach out to those outside of the church circles. Harry and I have been out visiting the families when it was possible and it was great to see young people in 3D again. All the Schools work unfortunately cannot go ahead due to the schools not being allowed visitors from outside. Hopefully this will change in the new year.

### **Youth**

Both **Wired (Youth Group)** and **Youth Fellowship (Discipleship group)** couldn't meet in person so we have been successful in running Youth Fellowship on zoom. We have found some very creative ways to engage the young people and teach them the Bible on zoom. However, with the dynamic of **Wired** this could not be run. For most of September and October we managed to get permission to run **Wired** under covid guidelines with limits of 10 allowed in at a time and it was great to see young people coming back. Unfortunately we have had to close **Wired** again for the time being in lockdown 2. We do hope we will be able to do more mentoring in this time and engage 1:1 as is possible within the new guidelines. A **BIG THANKYOU** to the team who has helped this happen, especially **Tony and Jenny Merriman** for your mentoring and support at this time.

### **Alpha and Talking Jesus**

As you will know I am doing a degree in theology and mission which the church has kindly released me for my development for 8 hours a week. One of the modules was on evangelism and mission, and the assignment was to do a project and write a reflection on it. At the same time Mark and I were talking about running an Alpha Course online. He phoned up a few hours after the conversation not knowing I had to do a assignment on this, to say, would I be up for heading this up and leading it. Due to the lockdown at the time I was struggling to fill my hours so this was a

great opportunity. We had an average attendance of 15 although we had over 20 sign up. Harry had just finished an Alpha Course so he joined me as co-host and we had a great time on zoom running this course and seeing people growing in their faith and really grasping some of the message of Jesus. God taught me a lot through it and I really learned to rely on him a little bit more rather than my confidence in technology. We have now continued with a few of them and are running a talking Jesus course on how we can share this with others. We plan on running another **Alpha Course STARTING 2nd February 2021.**

Please email me on [phil\\_blunti4e@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:phil_blunti4e@hotmail.co.uk) to signup and please invite your friends and family as we would really like to see more and more people coming to know Jesus through these courses.

Thankyou again for all your prayer and support.

*Phil*

### **Prayer requests**



Harry to continue to grow and me to enable him to fulfil his potential



We will find new creative ways to do youth work online



The Young people who come to find Jesus for themselves



People will sign up to our next Alpha course and will be enabled to talk Jesus for themselves

**If you feel God calling you to join our team for a term or volunteer for one of the events above, you might not even have to leave your sofa (you can be aged between 18-110), we will be able to find a place for your gifts, from just listening to leading, serving in the tuck shop to washing up.**

**Please do chat to Phil on 07816 910 152  
or email [phil\\_blunti4e@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:phil_blunti4e@hotmail.co.uk)**



## Church Property Team

Nigel finds his work for the property committee brings him closer to Heaven especially when recently repairing the Beacon Block roof.

The church building is where in normal times we worship but it is also a valuable community resource hosting groups as diverse as Veterans Support to karate lessons. It is a big place and it takes a lot of work to keep it usable and as the numbers on the property committee shrink costs will rise. Even in lock-down the building has to be maintained. We have a monthly work-day supplemented by a few of us who do jobs most weeks. **If you don't want to commit to once a month perhaps we can discuss how you can help.**



We have just had the five year building survey and this will produce a lengthy list of jobs to do.

We are seeing the benefits of the new LED lighting throughout the church. In the new year we are replacing three heaters in the main church. The Treasurer has been looking at our energy suppliers and has found one that improves our carbon footprint and is competitively priced.

**Thanks to the team that maintain, clean and manage church lettings.**

*Chris Phillips*



## DECEMBER/CHRISTMAS NEWS

If you have anything you would like to include in the **Church News** please let Judy Jago know by ringing her on 01752 894829

Regular readers of this piece will know what joy we have in being able to begin with new birth and this month has this happy news - which is to celebrate the birth of a longed for baby girl **Sophie Daphne** to **Becky and Ben Swanwick**. Many will remember **Becky Gadd** from the time before University when she was a part of a great group of young people, many of whom are still in touch. Sophie is a new Granddaughter for **Penny and Daphne Gadd** and we know her cousins both here and abroad will so look forward to meeting her. We send many congratulations to **Ben and Becky** as they enjoy getting to know their new little one and hope it won't be too long before **Penny and Daphne** can travel to meet **Sophie**.



Many people have commented on the beautiful Remembrance flower display in the porch of the church and asked that grateful thanks be passed on to **Yvonne Bithell** for her wonderful creation which we are delighted to do.

Speaking of flowers - **Lindsey Reid** has just become Chair of the Ivybridge Flower Club and we wish you much enjoyment and success in that role **Lindsey** and take this opportunity to thank all the "**Flower Ladies**" for the way they give of their time and talents to make the Church look beautiful.





Congratulations to **Dawn Martin** who has recently taken up a post in the Admin team at Bidwell Brook school at Dartington. We wish you every success **Dawn** and hope all continues to go well.

Birthday congratulations and very best wishes to **Treve Mitchell** as he celebrates a special birthday at the end of December. We hope you get to celebrate and enjoy this birthday (are you still counting??) with all your family.



### **IMC Sunday School Banner - Do You Have Photographs?**

Those with long memories of **IMC** will recall the **Sunday School banner**, which was designed to be carried in processions. On one side was a picture of John Wesley, and on the other side a picture of Jesus with children. The banner was rolled up in its box and stowed away. Eventually, it was sandwiched between two glass sheets, and mounted in the middle of the old grey partition, so that both sides could be seen. The partition divided the church, roughly where the glass partition is now.

**I am looking for photographs of the banner, either close ups, or photographs of it in the grey partition. If you have any, please give me a ring on 892858.**

*Many thanks, David Moulder*

*Visit our website at*

**[www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk](http://www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk)**

where you can see a **colour version** of this Newsletter.

If you wish to contact Tony regarding the website you can do so at

**[mrmerrit@icloud.com](mailto:mrmerrit@icloud.com)**

## Church Contacts

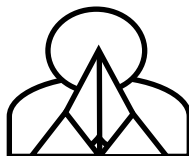
### IMC Prayer Line

#### Minister:

**Rev Mark Lawrence**

**Tel: 01752 651910**

**email: [revmark@live.co.uk](mailto:revmark@live.co.uk)**



**Prayer Line**

**07801 956695**

#### Senior Stewards:

**Reg Marriott**

**Tel: 01752 893614**

**Alison White**

**Tel: 01752 691039**

#### Room Bookings:

**Pam and John Montgomery**

**Tel: 01752 894083**

**email: [imcbookings@gmail.com](mailto:imcbookings@gmail.com)**

#### House Group Information:

**Helen Maddaford Tel: 01752 892810**

#### Youth Work:

**Phil Blunt Tel: 07816 910152**

### ***From the Editor***

If you would like to include anything in the **January Newsletter**, please let me have details by Friday 11 December (I understand this might be too early to decide anything for the new year, but if you have anything just let me have it, when you know) in any of the following ways:-

- ◆ send it by email to: **[imc33chris@gmail.com](mailto:imc33chris@gmail.com)**
- ◆ ring me on: **01752 892341**
- ◆ post it through my letterbox at: **33 Julian Road, Ivybridge PL21 9BU**

