

Dear Church Family,

Halloween (& light parties), All Saints Day, Guy Fawkes Night, Remembrance Sunday – it's a lot for one week isn't it!

Whilst the 5th Nov is connected to Guy Fawkes's attempt to blow up Parliament, it only occurred to me a few years go that the traditions we've developed for the occasion all suit the start of November well. The evenings are getting longer, it's not yet super cold, it's a good time to burn up pruned branches and eat seasonal foods.

But perhaps there is something deeper going on in all these events at this time of year. Over the centuries, as dark evenings have crept in, communities have gathered to tell stories. Halloween aside, these traditions are about remembering and re-telling the stories which shape us. There is a deep human instinct to tell stories. Stories help us make meaning of our lives and root us in family.

Stories can make us laugh, or cry, they teach us more about people than facts or photos. They can enable us to be more deeply rooted and see life in three dimensions. They are crucial for remembering and they bring truth to life. Think back to a great mealtime conversation you've had with family or friends recently. I propose that it was more likely telling great stories that made your heart sing, rather than winning an argument or sharing your opinion.

Over the past few weeks as we have celebrated the fruit of the Spirit, we have been looking for stories which engage our hearts with the beauty of Christ-like character. When I read the gospels and the many stories about Jesus, even though I have read them hundreds of times, they enable me to know him better. A story plants the truth more deeply in our hearts and brings it to life.

Each of the events in this week's Chads News has the potential to create new stories, because the best stories are the ones where we see God do what we cannot do. In previous years at the memorial services, God has come close and we have had stories of beautiful coincidences arranged by the Holy Spirit to show his love to those who grieve. We have seen the same through Christmas generosity, testimonies of vouchers arriving on the very day someone has desperately cried out to God when unable to celebrate with family, or the perfect coincidence of an item in a hamper being exactly what someone had hoped for. The stories each year of laughter and friendships created through the LifeCentre's Christmas events remind us that building community through hospitality brings people more fully alive. And looking ahead to our worship evening in November and Reset in February, there are thousands of stories of hope renewed, identity restored and God speaking powerfully from previous worship nights and Reset events, as God's people meet with him in worship.

And that is why we begin it all with prayer (the first notice in this edition of Chads News). Because prayer is us inviting God into our lives and events, and asking him to write new stories. Stories which are an example of his great story, the good news of forgiveness and eternal hope.

With love,
Richard.

24hrs of Prayer



Once again, we're setting aside **24 hours to pray together**, from **7.30pm on Monday 16th Nov to 7.30pm on Tues 17th Nov** when we'll gather for our monthly evening prayer event.

You're welcome to pray in the Sanctuary at any point during the 24 hours. While you can pray anywhere, there is something powerful about having a shared space where we can gather, seek God and pray for our church, our community and the year ahead.

We will be using **the WhatsApp poll** in the church WhatsApp group for bookings like previous months.

Come for an hour, come with others, or simply drop in when you can.

November Prayer Events

- Weds 11th Nov - 1.30pm in the church lounge.
- Tues 17th Nov - 7.30pm in the LifeCentre.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sunday 22nd November at 2.30pm

This special service is for all who have been bereaved. It offers a quiet and prayerful space to remember loved ones, to say goodbye, and to seek God's comfort, peace and strength as we navigate the journey of grief.

Members of St Chad's are warmly encouraged to invite family members or friends who may be grieving to join us for this meaningful occasion.

If you would like the name of your loved one to be read aloud during the service, please add their name to the list at the back of church, available from **Sunday 8th November**.

We hope this will be a gentle and comforting opportunity to come together, give thanks for those we have loved, and find support and hope in God's presence.



Joy isn't a luxury only for those who can afford it. Yet for some of our community, Christmas is a source of worry rather than wonder. This year, we want to give the gift of joy to people who are struggling to find it, the same joy the angels brought to ordinary, anxious shepherds.

Your gift to our Christmas Hamper initiative puts food on the table and a voucher in the wallet, and tells local families and individuals that they matter.

Each hamper will include a Christmas treat and a gift voucher for a local supermarket, giving families the freedom to choose what they need most. We distribute hampers through our partnerships with local schools and community organisations, and we also welcome personal nominations. If you know someone who would benefit, please email: office@stchadsromiley.co.uk

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How to Give

Online Donations

Bank: St Chads PCC

Reference: Christmas Generosity

Sort Code: 08-92-99

Account Number: 65874394

Cheque or Card Donations

Cheques: Payable to St Chads PCC (please write Christmas Generosity on the back).

Card donations: The giving machine will be available at the back of church. If you would like to make a donation over £30, please make a direct bank transfer (account details above) so we can claim Gift Aid on your donation.

Please make all donations by Sunday 29th November.



Get into the festive spirit with us! We have lots of exciting Christmas events and activities coming up at the LifeCentre, from creative workshops and festive treats to carols and seasonal celebrations. Take a look at what's coming up and make sure to book your place!

Glass Decoration Workshop - 7.30pm Wed 11th Nov. Tickets £25.

Christmas Menu - from 30th November.

Wreath Workshop - 7.30pm Thu 3rd Dec. Tickets £35.

Gingerbread House Decorating - 2.30pm Sat 12th Dec. Tickets £15.

Café Carols - 2.30pm Thu 17th Dec.

All workshop tickets can be purchased from the LifeCentre.





This year, Women's Reset Days are taking place in 11 locations across the nation, bringing women together for a day of worship, teaching, prayer and encounter with God.

Our theme is Anointed, inspired by Isaiah 61:1-3 and Psalm 133. Together, we'll explore what it means to be filled, empowered and sent by the Holy Spirit, leaving refreshed and equipped to live out God's purposes.

We're delighted that Chads is hosting a Reset Day on Saturday 6th February! Whether you're joining us for the first time or returning, we'd love you to be part of this special day. Come expectant and ready to encounter God!

Visit www.new-wine.org/events/reset-new-wine-womens-day to book your tickets!



www.stchadsromiley.co.uk