

Cullompton Baptist Church

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The Network

Hello, and welcome to the December & January issue of "The Network".

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

Isaiah 7: 14

Christmas is about true hope being born in our hearts and the world. This is the big theme for our services this advent: "Hope is born at Christmas".

You have just read a promise given to God's people some 600 years before Jesus came. Israel was in a terrible state in every respect and largely of their own making. Yet God had not finished with them. He always promised to come to earth in person as a person. So here is that announcement. And when the time was right, an angel appeared to Joseph amid his confusion and despair with these instructions, called the boy Immanuel which means God with us.

Look at that name again, God with us. What comfort, hope and joy are in those. We see God with all those involved in the Christmas story in all their diverse circumstances.

And the same is true for all of us as well. God is certainly in the world, yet thanks to the gift of the Holy Spirit, God is with us in our hearts and lives, in every circumstance and from every angle. Allow the Spirit to whisper that wonderful name "Immanuel" into your ear and let it sink into your heart.

If things get stressful, why not try a simple breath prayer exercise.

Sit in a chair and take 4 or 5 deep breaths. Then on the inbreath say in your heart the word Immanuel. Then on the outbreath say God with us. Repeat for a minute or so and then carry on with what you are doing. It is simple and can be done as little or as often as you like throughout the day. It will calm you down and remind you who God is to you.

Here is some more hope for the new year in our motto verse.

"Fear not little flock. It is God's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Luke 12-32.

The Church is facing uncertain times yet the God of power and love rules over us. As God said do not be afraid to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds so he says it to us. Let us as Peter says cast your burdens on Jesus because he cares for you.

Next year's theme is "From fear to faith". May the Word and Spirit give us all we need to make that journey from fear to faith together.

May our hopes and fears be met in Jesus this Christmas time.

A happy Christmas and a faith filled 2024 to you and your loved ones.

In Christ.

Glen and Rowan Graham

Sunday Services - 10:30 am

3rd December - Advent communion - Rev. Glen Graham

10th December - Family service followed by Christmas social event - Rev. Glen Graham

17th December - Traditional Carol service - Rev. Glen Graham

24th December - Short Christmas service - Rev. Glen Graham

31st December - Mince pie service in the school room - Rev. Glen Graham

7th January - Sunday Morning Service - Rev. Glen Graham - "What is a covenant?"

14th January - Annual Covenant Service - Rev. Glen Graham - Luke 12-32.

21st January - Communion service - David Powell.

28th January - Sunday Morning Service - Rev. Glen Graham - "Who am I"

Other dates for your diaries

Deacons' meetings: 6th December, January date to be confirmed.

Re-launch of Bible study and prayer meeting: Wednesday 17th January, 10.30am;
Venue to be announced. Meeting fortnightly. Watch this space and let me know if you want to be a part of it.

Any contributions for the next "Network" need to be with Camille by 23rd January; email at mrs.camille.harrison@gmail.com or pass them on at Church on Sunday.