

Connecting @Christmas



Sunday 22nd December 2024

Victoria Baptist Church News

She will
bear a Son;
and you shall call
His name
JESUS
for He will save
His people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21



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VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH
to see Jesus Christ honoured in Eastbourne and beyond

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Dan Fairhead**

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ABOUT US



Connected

Connected – the advent series Connecting@Christmas comes to its fourth and concluding part this morning.

We've had "waiting", "searching", "sending" and this Sunday morning we are "connected"! We will be looking at how Jesus came to save us from our sin to restore our connection with God (Matthew 1:20-23) and how we are to remain connected to Jesus through obedience to Him and love for one another (John 15:4-12). I pray that you will be blessed by this message as we approach Christmas.



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT -The Miracle of Christmas

I hope you'll be able to join us and invite your friends and family to Carols by Candlelight as we celebrate Christmas together. It promises to be another great evening and opportunity to share with those near and dear to us the miracle of Christmas: Jesus, the King of Kings, who came to serve us and save us. I hope it will be the beginning of a very happy Christmas for you all.

More Mince Pies!

Thank you to those of you who have contributed mince-pies for our Christmas events. Following this evening's Carols by Candlelight, we still have need for mince-pies for our **Christingle** service on Christmas Eve at 4pm. Last year, we had over 400 people attending so we need to be well prepared!



CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE - 10am

Please encourage your young children to bring one of their new toys to show to Chris during the service. This will be a short celebration of the birth of our Saviour and an opportunity to give Him thanks for all He has done for us.

STAFF/OFFICE MATTERS

The church office will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day plus a skeleton staff on Fri 27th. Staff movements over this holiday period are as follows:

Chris will be on annual leave on Fri 27th and the following week.

Colin is off the same week (from Mon 30th, back on Sun 5th)

Phil is off from Dec 24th-31st

Simon is only in on Mon 30th

Other than that, it's the usual pattern of days off for staff.

Senior Minister

Chris Short

PA to Senior Minister

Sandra Taylor

Family Ministries

Simon Grimes - Children

Church Administrator

Colin McMahon

Caretaker

Kevin Virgo

CAP Debt Centre Manager

Phil Papps

CAP Debt Coach

Nadine Crawford-Piper

Treasurer

Mark Evason

Finance Assistant

Julie Hanks

Ministry Assistants

Tim Nunn (Discipleship)

Lucy Craggs (Women)

Life Group Coordinator and interim Youth Leader

Jez Taylor

Staff contact details:

firstname@victoriabaptist.org.uk

(eg chris@victoriabaptist.org.uk)

VBC Bank Details

Account Name:

Victoria Baptist Church Trust

Account Number: 00010297

Sort Code: 40-52-40

01323 737974

Eldon Road, Eastbourne BN21 1UE

helpdesk@victoriabaptist.org.uk

www.victoriabaptist.org.uk

NEXT WEEK (29TH Dec)

Lucy Craggs will be speaking at the 10am service for this last Sunday of the year. She will be focusing on Luke 17:22-35 - "Remember Lot's wife"!

Sun 22 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' Office
 10.00am Live @ 10 with Dan Fairhead
 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight with Chris Short

Mon 23

Tue 24 4.00pm Christingle

Wed 25 10.00am Christmas Morning Service - OFFICE CLOSED

Thu 26 OFFICE CLOSED

Fri 27

Sat 28

Sun 29 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' Office
 10.00am Live @ 10 with Lucy Craggs

Mon 30

Tue 31

Wed 1 OFFICE CLOSED

Thu 2 Prayer Meeting (men only)

Fri 3 10.00am Outreach Prayer Meeting

Sat 4

Sun 5 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' Office
 10.00am Live @ 10 with Jez Taylor, including Communion
 6.30pm Prayer Meeting
 7.00pm Xcav8!

Mon 6 6.00pm Girls Brigade
 7.30pm CLT meeting

Tue 7 Soaking in the Spirit - next meeting 14th Jan

Wed 8 7.00am Prayer Meeting
 8.30am Community Fridge
 10.00am Vicky Bees
 6.30pm Boys Brigade

Thu 9 7.30am Prayer Meeting (men only)
 Men's Fellowship - next meeting 16th Jan
 2.30pm Women's Fellowship with Francis Bates
 7.30pm Ukraine Prayer Meeting

The Weeks Ahead

- Fri 10 10.00am Outreach Prayer Meeting
 10.00am Vicky Bees
 5.00pm Kids Club
 7.00pm Xpect
- Sat 11 10.00am Flow Cafe
 10.30am Creative Writing
 10.30am Book Club
- Sun 12 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' Office
 10.00am All-Age Service with Simon Grimes
 6.00pm Evening Service (see page 9 for details)
 7.00pm Xcav8!

Please note there will be no more news sheets before the next **Flow Café** (Jan 11th) so make sure you transfer this date to any new diaries you may receive for Christmas!

Creative Writing and **Book Club** will also be taking place on the same morning as Flow, at 10.30am in the Hive and the Snug.

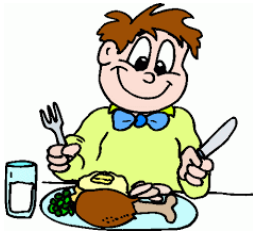


OFFERINGS



You will be aware that we don't have offerings during services but have offering boxes at the back of the church. However, we are going to make an exception to this over Christmas by having a retiring offering for Hope Lebedyn at our Carols by Candlelight service today (22nd) (6.30pm) and an offering during the service on Christmas Day. Cash can be placed in the plates/bags available, or you may prefer to use a debit/credit card to make your gift. We will have card machines available for this. Alternatively, you may pay directly via the bank with a reference of Lebedyn.

All proceeds from these offerings will be donated to **Hope Lebedyn** to contribute to the amazing work our brothers and sisters have undertaken in Ukraine since the Russian invasion, nearly 3 years ago. We never cease to be amazed and are truly humbled by the work they are doing, and by the depth of their faith in the most trying of circumstances. Your support would be greatly appreciated.



FRIENDS, FOOD & FELLOWSHIP

The first lunch of 2025 will be on Friday 17th January, same time as usual 12.30pm.

Sign-up sheets are now available in the Welcome Centre so please sign up as soon as possible - not because they will run out of spaces but because you might otherwise forget in the midst of all the Christmas activity!

News Sheet

Please remember there will be NO news sheet on either Sun 29th Dec or Sun 5th Jan - a two-week break in production! The next edition will be produced for Sun 12th Jan.



LADIES' BREAKFAST

Please note that our next Saturday morning Ladies' Breakfast will be held on January 18th at the usual time of 9am -10.30 am. Our speaker will be Frances Hall.

PREACHING ENGAGEMENTS *Please remember in prayer*

Francis Bates Jan 5 South Street Free Church. 10.30am





English not your first language?

Would you benefit from reading the sermon in your chosen language?

If so, we have a solution for you!

Breeze Translate

On Sunday morning, scan the QR code on posters at the door and you will be able to choose a language for the sermon to be translated into.

As our preacher talks, you will get the translation on your phone or tablet in real time!



PRAYER DIARY 1: 23RD - 29TH Dec

“For to 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. “. Isaiah 9:6

Monday Father, we lift up to You the people of Lebedyn who, this Christmas, are suffering terrible hardship as the war with Russia rages around them. We thank You for everyone involved with the Hope Lebedyn charity and with the money and supplies raised, which have helped Bohdan and his team deliver Your Good News practically to so many people throughout the year. We pray that our donation baskets will be well supported on Christmas Day so that Bohdan can deliver all his planned Christmas activities.

Christmas Eve Pray for the children and their families attending the Christingle service this afternoon. May they hear the message of the Christingle which symbolises the light of Christ bringing hope to the world’s people living in darkness.

Christmas Day “For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given“. Almighty Father, we thank You for giving us the most precious gift of all, Your son born in a stable, the Word made flesh in a little child. As we celebrate Christ’s birth this morning, pray that the light of His love will bring shining peace and brilliant joy to everyone who takes Him as their Saviour.

Thursday Loving Father, we pray that Your Holy Spirit will reach out to all those feeling lonely or finding Christmas a difficult time. Father, hold them in Your loving arms. Stir our hearts, Lord, to think of someone who would appreciate a call or a visit and encourage us to share with them God’s message of love and hope this Christmas.

Friday Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, we lift up to You the situation in the Middle East, the place of Your birth which is at war with itself. We thank You, Lord, for giving the people of Syria the opportunity to live in peace. We pray for the military leaders of the HTS army to show humility, mercy and allow reconciliation to progress so that the country can be reunited in peace. Father, we ask for Your intervention in Gaza and Lebanon to persuade the politicians and their leaders to negotiate a peaceful settlement to end the destruction and heartache suffered by so many.

FUEL FOR PRAYER

Saturday Lord, we bring before You in prayer our church family members who are spending Christmas in hospital, struggling with poor health at home, and those waiting for test results and appointments. Let them know Your presence, Father, feel Your deep love for them, and know that their futures are safe in Your hands.

Bless them Father, and fill them with Your Holy Spirit so that even in the most difficult of times they can still experience the joy and wonder of the birth of the Christ Child.

Sunday Father, as we gather this morning we thank You for the freedom we have to worship together. We lift up to You those less fortunate who live in countries where they are persecuted for their faith and have to worship in secret.

Pray for the monthly evening services starting in January to be well attended and for the new format to encourage the younger generation to come and be spiritually enriched with the good news of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.



TRIAL Sunday Evening Service

We will be having three trial, 6pm, Sunday Evening Services on the second Sunday of each month from January 2025 – 12th January, 9th February and 9th March.

The idea of having a Sunday evening service at VBC is not a new one: they have taken place in the past and the idea of starting them again has been talked about for the last few years. The issue of actually starting one has come down to, 'Is this God's timing?' These thoughts have also been influenced by the Church Holy Spirit Day on 6th April 2024 and the desire to create an environment where there is more opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit to work freely.

The style of the service has been influenced by a group in their twenties and we hope to see young adults enjoying the evening service followed by hotdogs and drinks. The service is open to all ages.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



"The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world" Jn 1:9. The apse ceiling in Cefalu Cathedral, Sicily (1160). The words on the page of the open Bible read, ***"I am the "light of the world."*** Jn. 9:5

**To: Members and Friends at VBC
Happy Christmas and Blessed New Year**

John and Ingelore Demetriou



***Sending all our friends at VBC lots of love and
blessings for Christmas and the New Year.
From Alice and family***



***Happy Christmas to my church family. May joy
and peace be with you all.***

Deirdre Dean



***To our church friends and family – we wish
you a very blessed Christmas and a peaceful
New Year. Pete & Karen***



Warm greetings to all my friends.
Beryl.



Very best wishes
to you all this
Christmas and
many blessings
for the new year.
Colin & Chris



My best wishes to all my many friends at Victoria. May
this Christmas be a time of great blessing. My many
thanks for all your prayers during my time in hospital.
John G



Wishing all our church family at VBC a
happy and peaceful Christmas. May God
bless you richly. Much love from sisters
Frances Hall and Janet Edwards.



Sending all my love and wishing a very happy Christmas to
all at VBC - Lorraine Bell

PRAYER DIARY 2: 30TH Dec - 5TH Jan

FUEL FOR PRAYER

Monday As we continue to reflect on the miracle of Christmas, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude. Thank You for the joy and peace that the birth of Jesus has brought into our lives. As the celebrations quieten down, let us not forget the real meaning of Christmas. It's not about the children, it's about the one child. Guide us through this week, that we may find new ways to serve and love others, just as You have loved us. May our actions and words reflect Your grace and bring hope to those around us.

New Year's Eve As we stand on the brink of a new year, we come before You with thankful hearts. Thank You for Your presence with us through all the joys and challenges of this past year. As we prepare to step into a new year, we seek Your guidance and wisdom. Help us to let go of any past regrets and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead with hope and faith. Bless our endeavours and fill our hearts with love, kindness, and generosity. May we grow closer to You and become more like Christ in our thoughts, words, and actions. Grant us the courage to face the unknown and the strength to persevere through any difficulties. May Your peace and joy be with us and our loved ones throughout the coming year.

New Year's Day As we step into this new year, we thank You for the gift of a fresh start. Help us to leave behind what is past and look forward with hope and trust in Your guidance. May this year be filled with Your blessings, bringing peace and joy to our hearts and homes. Grant us the wisdom to make decisions that honour You and the strength to face any challenges that come our way. Lead us to walk in Your love, showing kindness and compassion to those we meet. May our lives reflect Your light, spreading hope and encouragement to others.

Thursday This is the first working day of 2025 for many. Doctors' surgeries are open, many NHS staff return to work. We ask You, Lord, to bless them as they think of other members of their family still enjoying the holiday. We remember and thank You for the many doctors and nurses who have worked through the Christmas and New year celebrations. May they also be blessed as they return to their families for a belated celebration of Your birth.

Friday As we come to the end of another week, we pause to give You thanks for Your guidance and blessings. We are grateful for the moments of joy, the lessons learned, and the strength You have given us to overcome challenges. Help us to reflect on the week with a heart of gratitude and to see Your hand at work in our lives. As we look forward to the weekend, may we find rest and renewal in Your presence. Grant us the peace that surpasses all understanding and help us to carry Your love and light into the days ahead. May we use this time to reconnect with You and with those we love.

Saturday On this Saturday, help us to find rest and renewal in Your grace. May we take this time to recharge and reconnect with You, and with our loved ones. Grant us the peace that comes from trusting in Your plan. Help us to release any worries or burdens we carry, and to embrace the beauty of this day. Fill our hearts with Your love and our minds with Your wisdom. May we use this day to reflect on Your goodness and to prepare our hearts for the week ahead. In Jesus' name, we pray.

Sunday We ask for Your guidance in the coming year, that we may carry the spirit of Christmas into our daily lives. Help us to live with generosity, kindness, and compassion towards all. Grant us the strength to face any challenges ahead with faith and trust in Your divine plan. May our actions reflect Your love and grace, bringing light to the world around us. In Jesus' name, we pray.



**Wishing you a wonderful
Christmas and a Happy New
Year! Thanks be to God for
His indescribable gift!**

**Much love
Chris, Claire, Callum and Toby
xxx**



Wishing all at VBC a very Happy Christmas and Blessed 2025.
Love from the Simmons'



Happy Christmas from all at 3rd
Eastbourne Boys Brigade
Picture taken at their end of
term Christmas event last week



And a happy Christmas from
the Girls Brigade too!

Picture taken at their
awards evening on Monday



christians
against
poverty

CAP

This week we are celebrating 2 more clients who have gone debt free! For them to hear this news just before Christmas is fantastic! Thank you for all your prayers and support of the work of CAP at VBC, it is making a real difference.

Once again, a huge thank you to you all for your donations to the CAP Hamper fund appeal. We collected over £2,400 in total and the total cost of the gifts came to just under £2,400. God is good, God is amazing! 40 or so families will benefit from your generosity - and the generosity of over 30 volunteers who are sacrificing their time and energy in packing the hampers and distributing them.





With love for a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. **Sandra & Jez T xx**



To all our friends at Victoria Baptist Church we wish you a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. Love Nigel & Sue



Light, Peace, Joy, Faith,
Peace & Love to you all.
Happy Christmas
Stephanie Ng



May the blessings of this Christmas surround you
all in His perfect peace. As He gives we give.
With love from Chris W



And Christmas Greetings FROM Lebedyn



Greetings to you all! Thank you so much for your love, support and prayers through this past year. It has been such a blessing to have a sister church caring so much for us. We wish you all a merry Christmas and we hope for a peaceful New Year.

With our love

Pastor Bohdan, Alla, Ratmir, Miroslav, Lyubomir and Zoryana



PRAYER DIARY 3: 6TH - 12TH Jan

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. Eccles 3:11 - As we enter a new year it is a good time to reflect on our blessing from last year and pray for God to continue to grow His Kingdom in 2025

Monday: Look back to 2024 and Thank God for the blessings in your life, the way God has provided. Whatever your circumstance, God has been active. Seek out the blessings and thank Him. Thank God too for the blessings we have had at VBC. Church growth, conversions, baptisms. Spend time praising God for His many blessings to our community of VBC.

Tuesday: As schools return after the holiday please pray for our school teachers in the local schools. Pray that our Christian brothers and sisters working in schools are able to shine the light of Christ to children and colleagues. Pray too for the children. Some find school a fearful place full of anxiety and stress. For others it is a lonely place as friends are thin on the ground. Finally for some it is a place of refuge, a safe place where the problems at home can be forgotten for a short time. Pray that Christ will shine on them and reveal His love to them all.

Wednesday: Our Church is a busy place. Today pray for the ministries that go on here. For example Community Fridge, CAP, the Brigades, youth and children's work, Women's and Men's Fellowship. the prayer meetings, Life Groups, Omega, Alpha ... and much more. Pray that God uses these to draw people to Him through the work of these ministries. Pray too for those who rent the building regularly: Bub Club, Karate Club, Rock Choir, Lindy Hop, U3A, NHS Blood Doning service, and Sussex Wildlife Trust. Pray that God will speak to people through the building itself and the welcome people receive.

Thursday: Thursday is our Ukraine focus. As I write this in December, the war still rages in and around Lebedyn. Pastor Bohdan and the team continue to work to serve the people of Lebedyn through food distribution, children's work, church services, puppet shows, pastoral visiting, blanket and sheet making, computer classes, and so much more. Please pray for God's protection over the team and the buildings. God's Kingdom is growing in Lebedyn, lives are being changed amid the struggles of war. Pray for energy, strength, uplifted spirits and hope. Pray too that the young men such as Farmer Sergey and Valentin can escape conscription into the army.

FUEL FOR PRAYER

Friday: With the uncertainty in Syria at present, please pray for Christians who are still there. Pray that any new regime will allow them to worship freely. Pray also for all our brothers and sisters in Christ who live under persecution in places such as Gaza, Israel, North Korea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Pray for the church leaders to have God's wisdom and the Holy Spirit's strength to lead their churches. Pray for those in prison to have hope and be reminded of scripture as they are isolated from friends and family. Pray that those who persecute will see the light of Christ and turn to Him.

Saturday: Scripture teaches us to pray for our government and those in authority over us. Whatever your political colour, pray for our Prime Minister. He professes to be an atheist. Pray that Christians in Parliament will have influence over him. Pray for Godly wisdom for our government, to unite the nation, to have compassion in their decision making and put people before money. Pray too for the King and the royal family, that the late Queen's faith would continue to influence them. Pray for their spiritual advisers. Finally pray for the Anglican church in its journey to find a new Archbishop. May they choose a truly Godly person to unite them.

Sunday: Today, pray for God's word to be revealed to us. Thank God for Chris' leadership and his faithfulness to scripture. Pray too for our leadership team, the CLT. May they be inspired to lead us well and direct the church in the way God wants it to go. Pray for wisdom for all the staff team who work in the offices each day. Chris, Colin, Kevin, Sandra, Julie, Tim, Lucy, Simon, Jez, Phil and Nadine. Thank God for the blessing they have been in helping VBC become the church that it is. But also pray for vision for 2025, that they may be faithful to God's lead and call.



Flower Ministry

The flowers last week were donated by
Beryl Hancock in memory of Bernard



Our flower ministry team will be having a well-deserved 2-week break over Christmas so the next time you can expect to see flowers at the front of the church should be Jan 5th.

There are only 5 dates left blank for donations before Easter so get in quickly if you have a particular date in mind. Contact Chris McMahon for further info.



Barbara and Dave Brown would like to thank everyone for the beautiful Christmas cactus. It was such a lovely surprise. We wish all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

