

CHRIST CHURCH, SOWERBY BRIDGE

WEEKLY NEWS



Precious lives

MATTHEW 2.13-23

We pick up the Christmas story after the visit of the magi to the child in the manger. Joseph again has a dream that forces a decision – he is told that Jesus’ life is in danger from a vengeful Herod and to flee with his young family to Egypt. A slaughter of innocent life in Bethlehem follows. Only when this Herod dies is it safe for Jesus and his family to return.

The lectionary takes us to a challenging place this week. In the midst of the bright lights and joy of Christmas, we have the darkness and sorrow of the story of the ‘Holy Innocents’ and the account of the holy family fleeing as refugees.

Both the joy of the season and the sorrow at the heart of the Gospel reading remind us that all lives are precious. We reflect on this in different ways and allow ourselves to be challenged to care for those in danger or sorrow.

Sunday 28th
December 2025
Christmas 1

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 63.7-9

PSALM

PSALM 148

SECOND READING

HEBREWS 2.10-18

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 2.13-23

SERVERS

DAVE GILL

ANTHEA GEE

FIRST READING

PAUL HEALEY

PSALM

GLENIS MCCARTHY

SECOND READING

DAVE GILL

INTERCESSIONS

PETER HENRY

SIDES PERSON

KEVIN HENRY &

JACKIE GILL

JUNIOR CHURCH

DONNA (L) & ALYSSA (A)

Collect Advent 4

God in Trinity,
eternal unity of
perfect love: gather
the nations to be
one family, and
draw us into your
holy life through the
birth of Emmanuel,
our Lord Jesus
Christ.

THIS WEEKS HYMNS

Processional

Good Christian men
rejoice

Gradual

In the bleak
midwinter

Offertory

Unto us a boy is born

Communion

Lord Jesus Christ
Joy to the world

Recessional

Angels from the
realms of glory

What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to the Books of the New Testament: Philippians

This letter was written to Christians in the Macedonian city of Philippi when Paul was in prison, probably in Rome (60-62 AD). His primary purpose in writing was to thank them for the gift they had sent him upon learning of his imprisonment.

However, he also uses the letter as an opportunity to report on his situation; to encourage the Philippians to stand firm in the face of persecution and rejoice regardless of circumstances; to exhort the church to live in humility, fellowship, and unity; to commend Epaphroditus and Timothy to them; and to warn them about false teaching. This included Judaizers who were persuading the Philippians to submit to circumcision.

The central message of Philippians focuses on joy (the word occurs some 16 times!). For Paul, joy isn't simply an emotional response to favourable circumstances. True joy is to be found through a relationship with the resurrected and glorified Christ. Death ceases to be an enemy, because through it we can more fully enjoy the presence of Jesus.

This joy is also rooted in an expectation of the return of Jesus, which gives urgency to the task of sharing the gospel.

So, Paul begins his letter by thanking the Philippians for their partnership together in the work of the gospel through the offerings they have sent.

Paul also powerfully appeals to the Philippians to be of 'one mind' in pursuing humility and unity. He gives the example of Jesus himself 'who made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant' (2:7) to the point of dying the death of a common criminal. 'Therefore', say Paul, 'God exalted him to the highest place' (2:9). This 'Jesus attitude' is the one that all believers should share.

In your prayers this week....

Anne and her family; Anthony; Jean Angell; Lesley; Piper Fletcher; Alyson Healey; Peter Jeffery; Terry Marsden; Michael Parker; Maralyn Pawson; Ruben; Carol Sharp; Karen Spencer; Vanessa Starsmore; Christopher, Stella and Will Streidling; Victor Smyth; Kelly Swift; Christine Russell; Lisa White.



This weeks flowers are Christmas Flowes

If you would like flowers in church either in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special day please speak to Angela W

Quotes

With New Year's Resolutions in mind, here is John Wesley's rule of conduct:

Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can.

From the Parish Prayer list:

For people known to us; Willow Hall Fold; Willow Hall Lane; Willow Houses; Willow Street; Willow Terrace; Willow View; Willowfield Avenue



Get ready with your environmental New Year's Resolution. How will your care for creation in the coming year?

Blessed are those who look beyond their local context, not with despair but with the hope of making a difference.



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Next week

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY 2026
CHRISTMAS 2

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 60.1-6

PSALM

PSALM 72

SECOND READING

EPHESIANS 3.1-12

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 2.1-12

SERVERS

ANTHEA GEE

GRAHAM LAMB

FIRST READING

GLENIS MCCARTHY

PSALM

REBECCA LUMB

SECOND READING

ANTHEA GEE

INTERCESSIONS

ALYSSA HARGREAVES

SIDES PERSON

JANET TURNER & JANE

MUNDAY

JUNIOR CHURCH

TBC

DIARY

Monday

9:30 Morning Prayer in church

Tuesday

11.30am Midweek service of Holy Communion

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

10am Coffee Morning

Sunday

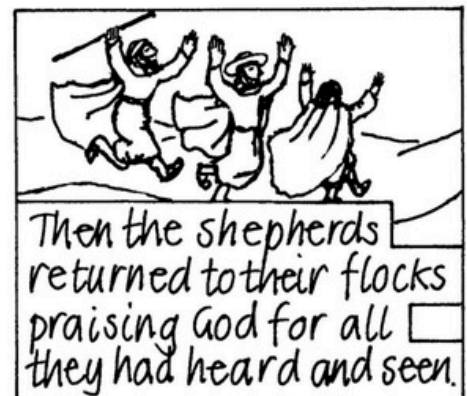
10.30am All Age Worship

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough, they were usually avoided, or overlooked.



The Nicene Creed: Trinitarian Faith

In the last of our series on the Nicene Creed, we want to ask about its significance today. The original Creed dates from 325 AD, but was expanded at the Council of Constantinople in 381. Over the last months we have seen how the Creed provides a 'big picture' of who God is and challenges our commitment to him. Its value can be seen in three main areas:

The Nicene Creed stresses the need to believe the right thing:

Sadly, we often hear Christian leaders and churches denying the essential articles of the Christian Faith. To be a part of orthodox Christianity, we must believe in what is affirmed in the Nicene Creed. 'For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).

The Nicene Creed affirms the importance of the Trinity:

Generally, Christians give little thought to the Trinity, and many churches rarely teach on the subject. However, by regularly reciting the Nicene Creed, people are reminded of the doctrine about the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It protects the truth about the Trinity, especially in opposition to Arianism, which sees Jesus as the first and greatest of God's creatures, but not the same as God the Father.

To be a Christian is to be baptised in the triune name and to worship God, who is three persons in one Godhead: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19).

The Nicene Creed focuses on God's salvation:

At the heart of the Nicene Creed is the good news that Jesus came down from heaven 'for our salvation'. It understands Christianity as essentially being about sin and salvation, judgment and forgiveness, and new life in Jesus Christ.

This theme is very relevant at Christmas, when we celebrate the baby born in Bethlehem as our Saviour. As the angels said to the shepherds: 'Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.' (Luke 2:11,12).



Fresh from the word 2026

If you would like a copy please speak to Peter. Each book is £15.00

Prayer List Update

As we approach the New Year, it's a time to reflect and renew our prayer list.

A new list will begin in January. If you know someone who would like to be included, please speak to Anthea or Peter.

All names currently on the list will be removed as we start afresh, so please let us know if you would like any names to be re-added.

Thank you for helping us keep our prayers thoughtful and up to date.

Church Flowers

If you have ever wondered how our flower rota works, it is actually very simple. The flowers in church each Sunday are given as a gift – an offering from members of the congregation.

A flower rota is displayed on the noticeboard in the Community Room, showing all the Sundays of the year. You are welcome to add your name at any time.

Flowers may be placed in church in memory of loved ones, to mark personal celebrations, or for church festivals and special occasions. They bring beauty to our church and greatly enhance the atmosphere of our worship space.

We also have a flower fund, and anyone is welcome to contribute. Donations may be given to celebrate birthdays, wedding anniversaries, or other special events.

Our Flower Co-ordinator is Angela Wilkins. Please speak to her if you would like to arrange flowers in church for a special occasion.

MIDWEEK SERVICES

Monday

09.30am Morning Prayer

Tuesday

11.30am

Holy Communion

Thursday

6.30pm

Evening Prayer - Book of Common Prayer

Find us on
www.christchurchsb.org.uk



Using your smart device,
scan the QR code to join
'Hebrews Coffee' Wi-Fi



Once connected
scan the QR code
below



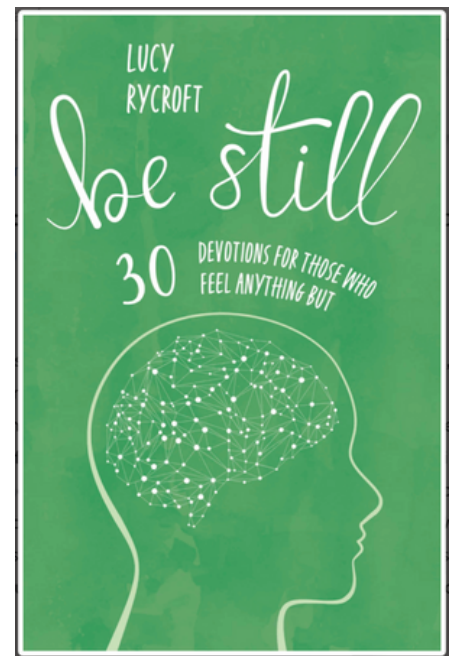
Captions* will appear once
the Service / Event starts.

*Captions are auto
generated and will include
errors



*Be Still: 30 devotions for those who
feel anything but
By Lucy Rycroft, BRF, £8.99*

Stillness is an alien concept in today's busy world. Communication, entertainment, work and relationships seem accessible to us 24-7, and it can feel impossible to change the pace. So this book is a series of reflections on the concept of being still. Made up of 30 Bible moments, it ranges from Moses leading the Israelites through the Red Sea, to the raw emotions of the Psalms, to Jesus calming the storm. The book's aim is to help Christians living in the crazed busyness of the 21st century to discover what 'being still' looks like for us today.



Smile Lines

New Year's Eve is coming soon...

The bagpipes are the missing link between music and noise. – E K Kruger

The inventor of the bagpipes was inspired when he saw a man carrying an indignant asthmatic pig under his arm. Unfortunately, the man-made sound never equalled the purity of the sound achieved by the pig. – Alfred Hitchcock.

Bring not a bagpipe to a man in trouble. – Jonathan Swift.



Church News 2025 Year A

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Ordinary people Sharing God's love in our world.
Growing in faith. Living by prayer. Loving God's word.
Living Loving Learning.