



Churches Together in Alresford December/January Newsletter

And so, the restrictions on our ability to plan joint activities between our churches continue. December and January would normally be one of the busiest times for Churches Together in Alresford but this year we have had to cancel most of our normal activities.

It is with sad hearts that we reluctantly have decided not to go carol singing either in the sheltered housing or on Broad Street as we would normally do. With the limits on the number of people allowed to attend services together with the difficulties of just putting on a service it is not possible to plan a joint Christmas carol service on the same scale as last year. We are however looking into the possibility of doing something virtually – watch out for further information.

January contains the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and would normally see CTIA sharing in worship through a joint ecumenical service as well as our churches sharing in a meal of some sort (either lunch or afternoon tea). Last year we used this service to celebrate the anniversary of signing our covenant together. Although we will not have a shared service, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland has prepared material to be used during the week of 18-25 January.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2021 has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme that was chosen, “Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit”, is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community’s vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.

Today the community has fifty sisters, all women from different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion. They remain faithful to a life of prayer, life in community and the welcoming of guests. The sisters share the grace of their monastic life with visitors and volunteers who go to Grandchamp for a time of retreat, silence, healing or in search of meaning. For 2021, the sisters are inviting churches across the world to enter into their tradition of prayer and silence that is rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church catholic.

The resources can be found on the Churches together in Britain and Ireland web site at <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/>. You will find daily devotions as well as an order of service for shared worship and other resources made available by the Grandchamp Community. I would urge you to take a look if you are able to do so.

And finally, on behalf of CTIA I would like to thank The Pigs for taking on the responsibility of delivering to the Basics Bank during the lockdown as our normal team were unable to do so.

Gary Carter