

December 2018

faith

Living as adventurous followers of Jesus Christ

Introducing Seeking Shapes for Living: Lent course 2019

In early February, look out for the Shapes for Living Lent course. It's a resource aimed at helping us all to get our lives back in balance, through focus on relating, praying, working, praying and growing. Christian believing is for the whole of life, not just the 'religious' or 'spiritual' parts. A great deal of living in today's world is experienced as stressful and overwhelming. And quite a lot of Christian and church living can easily feel the same at times. If our living is frantic and reactive, our praying will tend to be the same.

Bishop Rachel will introduce each week with a video reflection and there will be links to help continue conversation on social media. Included in the pack will be resources for worship, prayer and reflection, a practical introduction to the focus for the week with some questions, ideas and discussion material and a practical guide to reflection at the end of each week.

We hope this will be just a beginning for many... a way for you to find balance in your lives. Shapes for Living booklets will be sent to all parishes early in 2019.



The difference a choir can make

The Revd Sue Greatorex, Vicar of St Bartholomew's, Lower Cam and Coaley, talks about the transforming change that a children's choir can have on the church family.

"When I arrived in Lower Cam, two and a half years ago, we didn't have young families in church. My church warden Bobbie told me about iSingPop and we arranged for them to come to the local community junior school.

After they had done their stuff in school and church, I sent out a notice to parents asking if any of the children would like to join a children's choir to sing at our family service. I stressed that there would be one practice on the Saturday afternoon before the family service. Six children signed up and so of course those families now come to church for the family service. This means that we have a 'critical mass' - when other families come, they see that we have children in the church. Our family service is the most well attended service with often almost double the number we have on other Sundays.

"As well as encouraging families, we now have the beginnings of a music group (two guitars and I am praying for a drummer!) It also means that we are developing our repertoire of more up-to-date worship songs because when the children introduce them everyone just loves them! One of the children's choir was recently confirmed, and as a result of her preparation we have just started a kid's Bible study."

Interested in starting your own church choir or introducing contemporary music in your church? Spring 2019 sees the start of a series of training events, aimed at equipping people in all our churches to grow this style of worship. Read more about the courses which run in Bream, Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cirencester and book your space at gloucester.anglican.org/2018/worship-team-training

Raising awareness of domestic abuse

Wednesday 5 December

- 10am to 12.30pm, Parliament Room, Church House, Gloucester
- 7pm to 9.30pm, St George's Church, Tuffley, Gloucester

What is domestic abuse and who is affected? How can we support people affected by domestic abuse? Looking at what can be done and the theology around domestic abuse. Book on safeguardingtraining@glosdioc.org.uk

New housing, new community, new values

Saturday 26 January, 9.45am to 3pm at Christchurch, Abbeydale

Explore the joy, frustrations and opportunities of creating kingdom-shaped community in areas of new housing, with a focus on medium-sized developments (300-1,000 homes). Cost is £5 to include lunch.

Book at <https://goo.gl/gyAbyt>

Events and training

Nativity— a visual story of God's gift to us

Saturday 1 December, 10am to 3.30pm at St Catharine's, London Road, Gloucester GL2 0RR

Nativity sets, carol singing, prayer tree, children's craft, refreshments and gifts. All welcome, wheelchair accessible. Contact lesleybarrett@btinternet.com

Advent Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 2 December, 6pm, Gloucester Cathedral

All are welcome for a dramatic and majestic service to mark the beginning of the new Christian Year. No ticket needed, just come along and celebrate the beginning of Advent.

A quiet day for Advent—The Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire

Wednesday 5 December, 10am to 3pm, Harnhill Centre of Christian Healing

Who do you think you are? The surprising women in Jesus' family tree. Led by the Revd Liz Palin. To reserve a place contact Alison Evans on Malcolm.alison@btinternet.com 01453 825034.

Emmanuel Festival of Decorated Christmas Trees

Friday 7 to Sunday 9 December, various times, Emmanuel Church, Cheltenham GL53 7PJ

A display of trees, designed and decorated by local people. Entrance £2.50 (under 16s free). Carol concert on 8 December at 7pm with Cotswold Male Voice Choir and Naunton Park Primary School. Jackie Dunlop on 01242 580731 or www.emmanuelcheltenham.co.uk

The Snowman screening with live orchestra

Friday 14 December, 1pm, 3pm and 7pm at Gloucester Cathedral

A live, professional orchestra play the original score along to the film shown on a large screen. The effect is magical and incredibly moving. Tickets from £9 to £21.60 available from <https://bit.ly/2qBcj9l>

Celebrate Christmas with your local church

Would you like to know about services happening locally in your church? Details of Christmas services, midnight masses, crib services, Christingles and carol services across the Diocese of Gloucester are listed at www.achurchnearyou.com