

# Church News

9<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Over the last few weeks in our house, we have been listening to the song 'Prepare Him Room' by Sovereign Grace.

The following verse is one which both challenges and humbles me every time I listen to it:

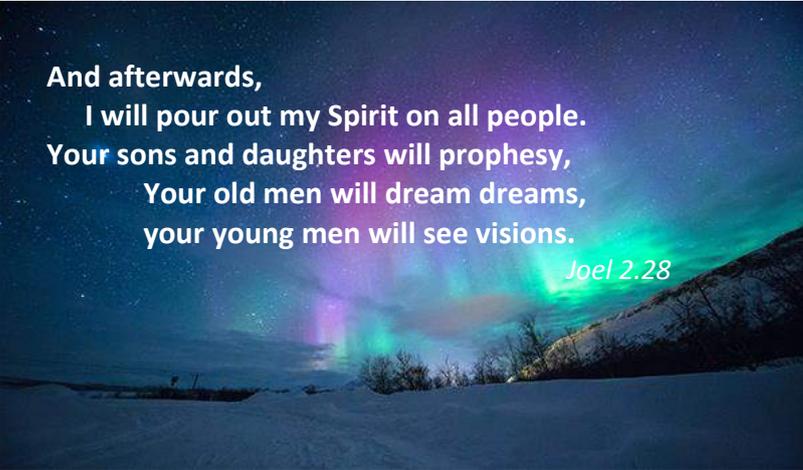
**Oh, our hearts, as busy as Bethlehem,  
Hear Him knock, don't say there's no room in the inn,  
Through the cradle, cross, and grave,  
See the love of God displayed,  
Now He's risen and He reigns.  
Praise the Name above all names.**

Our hearts are often 'as busy as Bethlehem' especially during the season of Advent and Christmas when there seems so much to do but at other times too. I know that I can be so busy cluttering my thoughts and heart with things that frankly don't matter at all that I fail to listen clearly to what God is saying to me through his word, fail to tell others about him and fail to care enough about those in need.

It's only 'Through the cradle, cross and grave' that we have been forgiven, redeemed and brought back into a relationship with our loving heavenly Father. The birth, death and resurrection of Jesus were all part of God's rescue plan from the beginning.

So as we go into a new year let's keep on fixing our eyes on Jesus so that we can focus

on what he wants our hearts to be busy with and so that we will continue to grow in knowledge and love for him, giving him the praise and honour that only he is worthy of.



And afterwards,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
Your old men will dream dreams,  
your young men will see visions.

Joel 2.28

***"Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest."***

Hebrews 3v1  
Lindsey Norman

<b>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.30am</b>	All-Age Service at St Saviour's
	<b>11am</b>	All-Age Service at Christ Church
	<b>6.30pm</b>	Prayer Gathering at St Mary's Balderstone

<b>Next week:</b>	<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Service of the Lord's Supper at St Saviour's</b>
	<b>11am</b>	<b>Service of the Lord's Supper at Christ Church</b>
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Prayer Gathering at Christ Church</b>

### ***Weekly Prayer Gatherings***

Our weekly prayer gatherings will resume tonight at St Mary's Balderstone, the details for which are:

Time: Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 6.30-7.30pm

Venue: St Mary's Hall, Oldham Rd, Rochdale OL11 2HB

Zoom details: Meeting ID: 991 7890 8003 Passcode: 123531

### ***Small Group Bible Studies***

Bible study small groups are re-starting this week. Continuing with the Discipleship Explored course based on Philippians we started before Christmas. Details of all sessions available can be found in the "Regular Mid-Week Events" (*below*). If you would like to join in, please just choose a session that suits you and turn up; if you need the zoom link for the online groups please contact the parish office - all are welcome to participate in any session.

### ***PCC Meeting***

Our next PCC meeting will take place on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.30pm at St Saviour's Church. If you have any items to be raised on the agenda, please can you let Cathy or Ben have them before 14<sup>th</sup> January. Thank you

### ***Missions Gift Day***

Our parish Missions Gift Day is on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January; more details on where we plan to send the money this year will follow. Gift Aid envelopes will be available from the back of church if you wish to gift aid your contribution. Please take time to consider and pray about how much you feel your donation should be.

### ***Please can we have your small plastic bottles?***

King's Kitchen and Food Store could really use any small plastic bottles that you have emptied so they can provide some milk to all of the people coming for food. All donations welcome. Please pass them on to Linda, Jeff or Margaret P at Christ Church or Elizabeth at St Saviour's when you see them.

### ***Send just one Christmas card!***

Please may we have any outstanding contribution for TearFund as soon as possible. Many thanks.

## Readings:

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022: Ephesians 3.1-13

Next Week: Joel 1.1 – 2.17

*Please take time to read ahead*

## North West Gospel Partnership Annual Conference 2022

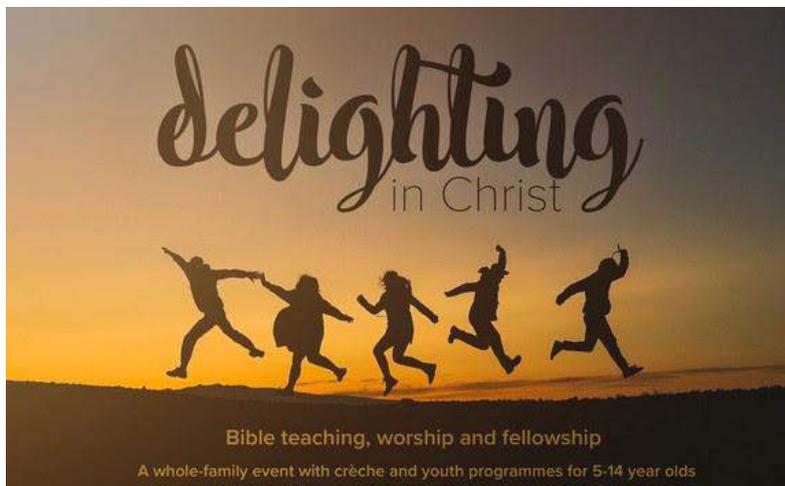
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022  
10am to 4.30pm  
at The Edge, Wigan WN3 5AB.

Speaker: Raymond C Ortlund, Jr, President  
of Renewal Ministries

Cost: Full price £18 (before 18<sup>th</sup> January)  
Pre-Booked under 16's FREE  
(Lunch not included)

To book please go to the NWGP website

(<https://www.northwestgospelpartnership.com/event/annual-conference-2022-delighting-in-christ/>) and book online.



The conference is for everyone: Yorkshire Camps will be running a day of teaching and games for 4-10 year olds and a half day of teaching for 11- 14s. Parent led creche available for babies and preschoolers. Please come and join us as we meet together again in person, to make new friendships and renew old ones, rejoice in our partnership in the gospel, to sing God's praise together and to hear God's Word faithfully and warmly proclaimed.

## How to give to God's work in your church

To give regularly to your church you can:

- By Standing Order to Account name: Christ Church Chadderton  
Account number: 22384340  
Sort Code: 05 06 46  
Please pick up a Standing Order Instruction (back of church) or create one online
- Through Stewardship – Find our giving page online at:  
<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20090018>
- By giving weekly through our Planned Giving Envelope Scheme (see Margaret Parrett at Christ Church or Dave Hindle at St Saviour's)
- Weekly offering box

And, of course, if you are a UK taxpayer please complete a Gift Aid declaration form enabling the church to reclaim 25p of tax for every £1 given. Forms available from the back of church. For more information, please see Eric Mee at Christ Church or Dave Hindle at St Saviour's.

## Looking ahead:

22 <sup>nd</sup> January	NWGP Annual Conference	10am at The Edge, Wigan
24 <sup>th</sup> January	PCC meeting	7.30pm at St Saviour's
29 <sup>th</sup> January	Women's breakfast	9am at St Mary's
30 <sup>th</sup> January	Missions Gift Day	Both churches

## Regular Mid-Week events:

Monday	10am	Noah's Ark Toddler's Group at St Saviour's
	1pm	King's Kitchen and Food Store at Christ Church
	1.30pm	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Tuesday	10am	Small group Bible study at St Saviour's
Wednesday	6pm	Rainbows at St Saviour's
	6.30pm	Brownies at St Saviour's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored at Christ Church
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored on zoom ( <i>for link please contact the Parish Office</i> )
	7.30pm	Guides at St Saviour's
Thursday	2pm	Small group Bible study at Margaret Clow's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored at Tim & Lindsey Norman's
	7.20pm	Discipleship Explored on zoom ( <i>for link please contact the Parish Office</i> )

## COVID 19 Update

For safe opening we request that the following guidelines are followed:

- All attending use hand sanitiser (available at the door) prior to entering the church
- All attending must **wear face coverings**
- We are allowed to sing, preferably from behind face coverings
- **We will continue to take individuals' details** (name, contact telephone number, etc.) each time they attend and retain the information for 21 days after the service. In the case of infection these would have to be passed on to track and trace.

The seating is arranged to give everyone as much space as possible and we ask that you are considerate in where you choose to sit in relation to everyone's safety. If you wish to ensure space is maintained between you and others, please pick up the seat space sign that will be available at the door.

**Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has been asked to self-isolate having had contact with someone who has tested positive, or is feeling unwell, should not attend church.**

A video of today's sermon is available through the parish website after the service each week.

### Christ Church and St Saviour's:

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Website: [www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk](http://www.christchurchchadderton.co.uk)

*The office will be open on weekdays between 9.30am and 1pm.*

# The Parish of Christ Church & St Saviour's Chadderton



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## Sermon Sheet

### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – Epiphany Sermon

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**Reading:** Ephesians 3.1-13

#### **God's marvellous plan for the Gentiles**

**3** For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you  
Gentiles –

<sup>2</sup> Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given  
to me for you, <sup>3</sup> that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have  
already written briefly. <sup>4</sup> In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my  
insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to people in  
other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy  
apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup> This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are  
heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together  
in the promise in Christ Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through  
the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's  
people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches  
of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery,  
which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. <sup>10</sup> His intent  
was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made  
known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, <sup>11</sup> according to his  
eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> In him and  
through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. <sup>13</sup> I  
ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you,  
which are your glory.

## Sermon

May I wish you all a happy New Year!

I wonder whether you know what special Christian festival has been celebrated all around the world in the last week?

Before anyone says “Christmas” it’s not Christmas, because Christmas Day was 2 weeks ago!

The answer is Epiphany – which is on 6<sup>th</sup> January. In some countries, like Russia, Epiphany, on 6<sup>th</sup> January is a bigger celebration than Christmas. And children get their presents at Epiphany, not Christmas

Epiphany marks the time when the wise men visited the baby Jesus and honoured him as the King. Now the wise men came from the East, so they came from outside of Israel and outside God’s people at the time.

So Epiphany is about the light of Jesus going to the nations of the world. And that’s what our Bible reading, from Ephesians chapter 3, is all about

What we just read is a part of a letter that the apostle Paul wrote to a group of Christians in Ephesus (Turkey). Paul is in prison because he’s been telling people from lots of different nations about Jesus. He’s in prison, but he’s happy because he can still do that job that God’s given him, because his job is to tell people one of God’s big secrets.

### **1. God has revealed a big secret**

Read v4-5

*<sup>4</sup>In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,[big secret] <sup>5</sup>which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets.*

So there’s a big secret that Paul is telling people. And this big secret is about the greatest treasure in the world. So I thought, for our all-age service, we could do a little treasure hunt. Although it has to be a covid-safe treasure hunt, so we’re going to stay in our seats.

So I’ve made a treasure map and in one of these places on the map we find the big secret. And if we can find the big secret, then it will lead us to the treasure.

So I’m going to give you some clues and the clues are places where the treasure is NOT.

This is for children and adults to join in. Talk to person next to you. Feel free to shout out the answer if you know it!

Clues to where the treasure is NOT:

- Biggest structure (Great wall of China)
- Highest waterfall (Angel Falls)
- Biggest desert (Sahara Desert)
- Longest river (Nile)
- Country with the most types of cheese (France)

Remaining place name:

- Mount Everest (that's where the treasure is!)

Treasure chest. Inside it says "Read Ephesians 3v6 and v8"

3v6:

*"This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles [the nations of the world] are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus."*

So the secret is that anyone from any country can come into God's family through hearing and believing the good news of Jesus.

And Paul calls this "the boundless riches of Christ" (v8):

*"Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ."*

This is the greatest treasure on earth. It's much better than gold coins and jewels. This is the treasure of an inheritance amongst God's people. Being one of God's people. Being close to God. Enjoying his goodness forever and ever.

But for thousands of years this was a secret that was hidden. That whatever country you come from, whatever language you speak, you can be one of God's special people. It's not just for the people of Israel. We can all be a part of God's family. We can all have an equal share in God's inheritance.

**SONG: 10,9,8 God is great!**

- "he's the king of everyone, God's the mighty mighty Lord of all"

## TALK PART 2

### 2. God is revealing his secret on an even bigger level

Can you imagine anything bigger than this secret? It covers the whole world!

Well actually – God’s plan is even bigger than that

Read v10-11:

*10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The secret is being passed on even further! To the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms (v10). Showing that God’s plan to bring people from the whole world together in Jesus is working! (v11)

The Bible says the spiritual world is real. There really are angels, there really are demons. And of course God is spirit.

Who is in charge of all the spiritual powers that exist? The answer is Jesus. And Paul has been saying this in this letter to the Ephesians. Jesus is on the throne in heaven.

And so God wants all of the spiritual powers in heaven to know that his plan, which has Jesus at the centre of it, is working out on earth.

And so it’s like, in the heavenly realms, they have a big TV screen, showing loads of live webcams.

If you could have a web cam showing you anywhere in the world, right now, where would it be? Where is the most exciting place?

- I wonder whether you know where this is?
  - Disney World Florida
- Or what about this?
  - Etihad Stadium
- Or this?
  - Edinburgh Zoo

On the webcam in the heavenly realms, there’s something that God finds even more interesting, even more important to his plans:

Places like this:

- Pictures of church gatherings in different countries

God’s plan to bring people from all nations to him through them hearing and

believing the good news of Jesus. And that's what God's showing the spiritual powers in the heavenly realms.

And do you know where else is on this heavenly webcam?

- Photos of inside St Saviour's / Christ Church / St Mary's

As we listen to God's word. As we trust in Jesus and worship him together, God's plan is happening on earth!

- And that's why Paul was happy, even though he was in prison

As he says in v13:

*"I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory."*

Well doesn't that give us a great way of looking at life in 2022? Whatever's happening to me, even if I'm suffering – like Paul in prison – there's a bigger thing going on.

If I belong to Jesus, if I am one of God's international people, if other people here and around the world are hearing about Jesus and believing in him together, then God's eternal plan is coming together!

When we trust in Jesus we have a part in that plan. And we have a full share in that inheritance: "the boundless riches of Christ".

And we can even play a part in this plan, by telling other people about Jesus, people from our own country, people from all over the world who live right here in Oldham and Rochdale.

Let's pray.

***Lord God we thank you that you have a glorious plan.***

***Thank you that Jesus has done what it takes to make your plan a success.***

***Thank you that your plan is working out all over the world as people from all nations hear about Jesus and trust in him and in his saving work.***

***Thank you that we can be a part of this plan here in our churches as we are united in Jesus.***

***Please help us to display your glorious plan to the world around us and even to the spiritual powers in the heavenly realms.***

***So that your glory will be known through your grace in our lives.***

***In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.***

## Prayers

Take time to pray for:

*Our world: Conflicts around the world; in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Iraq; the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the Kurdish/Turkish conflict; and political instability in Ethiopia, Egypt and Lebanon.*

*Corona virus pandemic and for wisdom for our world leaders in how to respond to the ongoing situation. Its effects on poor and vulnerable communities around the world and the worldwide vaccination programme.*

*Climate change & stewardship of the world; as we see the effects on our planet the vulnerable and poor; thinking about the tornadoes in Kentucky this last week For wisdom on how we should change and the courage to act as good stewards. All our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world including our mission partners Bishop Abelino and Patti in Chile.*

*Our country: That God's word will go out to all communities and people.*

*For wisdom and knowledge for our leaders both political, in the community and in the church.*

*For our mission partners now based in the UK, Audrey & Derek Newton, Mike & Helen Parker and Daniel & Mei Whetham Those affected by the pandemic; for strength and resilience for those working in the health service and social care.*

*Our church and community: our parish family,*

*Ben Wilkinson and his family (Hannah, Esther & David)*

*Our working together with St Mary's*

*For wisdom and discernment for our PCCs and all who work to manage our churches and facilities.*

*For God to raise up good leaders.*

*Outreach and support to our local community and those in need.*

*Ourselves: to grow in understanding of Jesus' love and grace  
To put our trust in our Lord and Saviour  
For humility, to be gently and patient and to bear with each  
other in love.*

*You may end each time with:*

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Prayer requests:

- Ruth, a friend of Ruth Glover who is seriously ill in hospital
- Margaret Cooke: for healing and relief from pain in her broken ankle
- Pauline Lewis as she undergoes tests for digestive problems: please pray for wisdom for her doctors and God's peace in her heart
- Eva Dale
- Val Harley
- Eddie Wilson: recovery and healing
- Alan and Isabelle Dean
- Norma Howe
- Doreen Buckley
- Audrey Newton: for stamina for her and wisdom for her doctors
- Esmee (Derek & Audrey Newton's granddaughter) and her continuing health problems
- Sienna Grace (for continued improvement)
- Graham Beswick: that his treatment in the coming months is effective
- Joan Ball: For recovery after her recent heart problems
- Pauline Dalton: for God's sustaining love throughout treatment and wisdom for her doctors
- Mildred West

For the family and friends of:-

## **The Lord's prayer**

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us always. Amen.

### **Christ Church and St Saviour's:**

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