

**APRIL - MAY
2022**

Life.

Ladies Elevenses Time

A first look at LET's
future guest
speakers

Easter Children's Activities

Coming to CCB
this Easter!

Farewell Recital

Min-Min Peaker
sings goodbye



**CHRIST
CHURCH
BEDFORD**

Living to love God and You

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Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition of Life. If you would like to contribute something to the next edition, the deadline for submissions for the June/July edition will be 13th May 2022.

Please email: Editor@CCBedford.org



You can read this edition
online, just go to our website:
CCBedford.org/lifemagazine

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A word from our Wardens

Dear Friends,

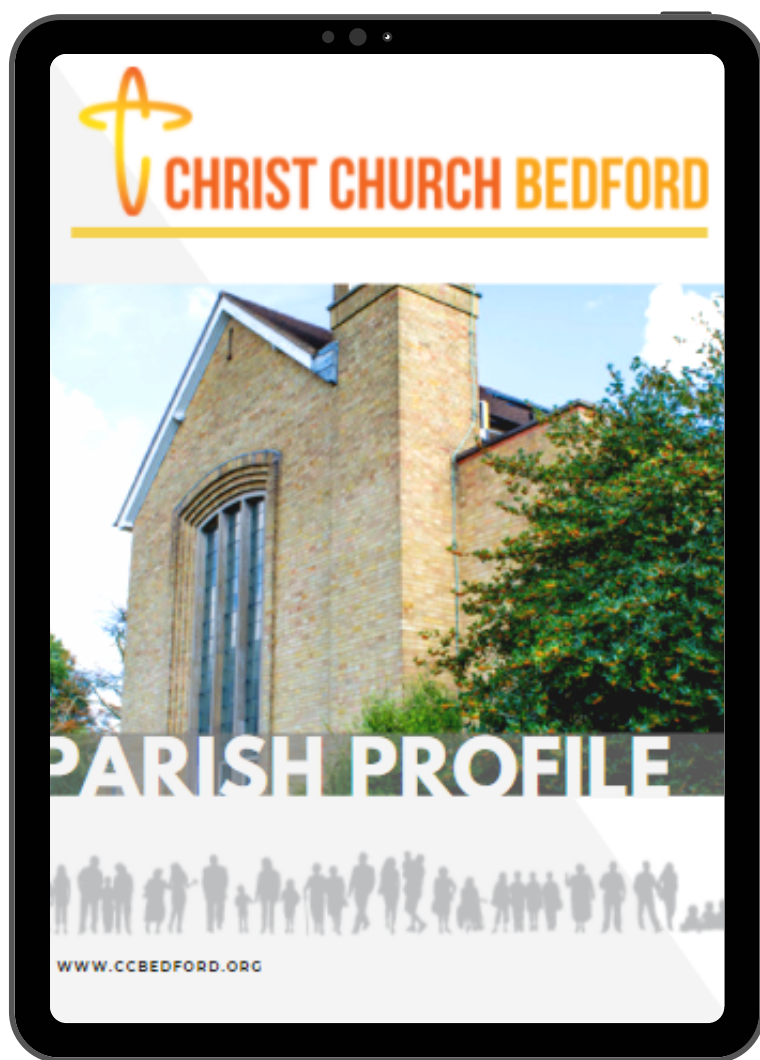
We have all been impacted by the tragic events happening in Ukraine. At times like this it's easy to feel powerless in our ability to change the situation. But there are things that we can do to respond. Firstly, we can pray. God is still sovereign and we need to keep praying for a resolution to the conflict in Ukraine. We can do this both as part of our personal prayers as well as by participating in the communal prayer events that Christ Church is



organising. Secondly, we can support the Ukrainian refugees who will be coming to our community. Several church families have already offered to provide accommodation for refugee families. Not all of us can do this, but we are actively looking at ways in which we can support those in our congregation and community who are able to offer accommodation. We continue to explore and investigate what we can offer as a church, such as making use of our halls complex or providing meals . If you would like to be part of this support effort, please let us know.

Closer to home, we have been busy putting together the Parish Profile which will accompany the advertisement for our new vicar. The profile

provides an overview of who we are as a church and our future vision. Getting this right is an important part of attracting the right candidates to apply for the vacancy. As we write, the profile has been approved by the PCC and is with Bishop Richard for final approval before posting with the advertisement. A huge amount of thanks needs to go to Michael Bishop and Chris Brown for crafting the text, and to Chris and AJ Wade for the artistic design of the document. Together they have created a really professional Parish Profile that we can be proud of.



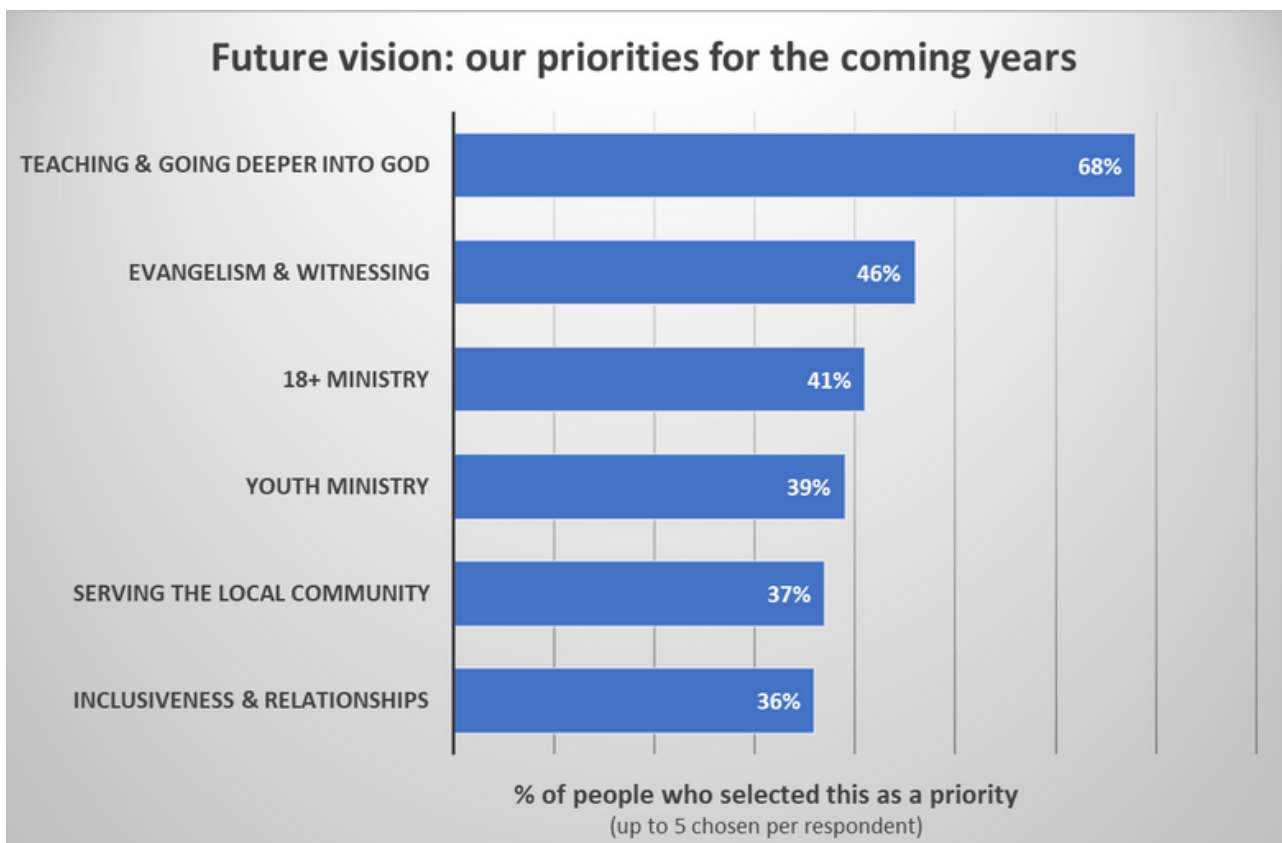
Critical to the content of the Parish Profile were the results of the surveys that were conducted within the congregation. We had an amazing response, with 123 people completing the online survey and 12 home groups submitting a summary of their vision for Christ Church. Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey and take part in group discussions. A summary of the results of the online, individual survey are shown in the accompanying diagrams. The results of the home group survey gave a more detailed view of our future vision. The most commonly mentioned priorities for the church included:

- building on what we already have
- maintaining our bible-based approach
- focusing on youth and young people
- being outward-looking and evangelistic
- becoming more welcoming and inclusive
- more prayer
- outreaching into the community



Having such rich output from the survey enabled the team to put together a realistic description of who we are as a church family and the direction that we want to take. The completed Parish Profile will be available for all to see once it is posted on the Diocesan website with the advertisement. Please keep praying for the vacancy process and for the interviews, which will take place on May 19.

How would you describe Christ Church?



**KAY BERRINGTON &
ANDREW RUSSELL**



LIME HOUSE GROUP INTRODUCE

FOOD.GIVES

By Kathy Priddin



As the heart-rending media images of the evacuation of Kabul, Afghanistan, filled our screens in August 2021, a conversation with a generous-hearted member of Lime House Group raised the plight of persecuted Christians. What could be done to help them? How could we help in a practical way? Rosemary had read of The International Christian Food Bank, food.gives, in the magazine of the Barnabas Fund. Within a short time, Lime House Group had agreed to engage with the project and had requested a starter pack.



Food.gives is an initiative of the Barnabas Fund, with the aim of feeding hungry believers around the world, mainly in Africa, SE Asia and the Middle East. Christians who live in the context of anti-Christian pressure or persecution may be the last to be helped by their government and international aid, may be jobless and may be the last in the line to buy what little food is available. This initiative helps to ensure regular and urgent food supplies are sent to those with greatest need, preventing malnutrition and improving health.

The food.gives website explains that individuals or groups can sign up for a 'one box pack' to fill and send dried food goods, a 'three box starter pack' or a 'church pack' or you can donate directly by ordering items of food from the food.gives website. Lime House Group requested the starter pack which arrived with instructions and three large flat-packed cardboard boxes plus return postage labels. We all contributed to the boxes as we were able, bringing packets of lentils, salt, wheat flour, chickpeas and rice (the items specifically requested by food.gives) to our weekly meetings. As each box became full to capacity, we sealed and labelled the box before taking it to our nearest DHL drop off point that would accept a parcel of this weight. In our case, it's Premier Stores Newsagents at the corner of Goldington Road and Newnham Avenue.

It's worth noting that a packed box is heavy so someone with strength is required to take it to the drop off point, although food.gives state they can arrange collection if needed. After one or two hiccups with the first box - working out which was the appropriate DHL drop off point and having to request a replacement DHL returns label for one box - our boxes have been dispatched by DHL to the food.gives warehouse from where they will be sent out across the world.



Lime House Group members have nearly filled their third box as I write this. We have been delighted to respond to the need of our brothers and sisters in Christ for food in a very practical way and commend this project to you and our local Christian community. If you or your home group are interested, go to **<https://www.food.gives/gb/>** to find out more.

A food.gives shopping list...

- Rice
- Salt
- Wheat flour
- Dried Chickpeas
- Lentils
- Soap



LADIES ELEVENSES TIME

Saturdays at 11.00am —A time to get together with others for refreshments and an interesting talk!

Summer Term Programme of Talks

***7th May - Liz Inwood (Mother of two CCB missionaries & another who helped start the King's Arms project for the homeless in Bedford. Liz's husband was once Bishop of Bedford!)**

'Family, Jesus and... me!'

***4th June - Jude Hamilton**

'Mind, body and faith health'

***2nd July - Malawi Team (Tracey Emmott, Ruth Janes & Gillian Lindley + others!)**

'Nuts, games, education, equipment, trees, computers etc. and... Jesus!'

**August – Social at Bedford Park
(Date TBA)**



”

**AND GOD RAISED
THE LORD AND
WILL ALSO RAISE
US UP BY HIS
POWER.**

“

A bit like Christmas, Easter presents us with the challenges of familiarity: we know the story so well that it's easy to lose sight of the enormity and central significance of those events 2000 years ago. And there are so many facets to ponder and angles to consider. How do people "tackle" Easter, I wondered? What do they do to try to penetrate beneath the familiar? What memorable experiences of Easter have they had? What do they find most challenging, moving, helpful, humbling, exciting, difficult? I thought I'd invite some Christ Church folk to share with us.

John and Marion Braithwaite: Some of our most vivid insights into the Easter story (and the Christmas story) have been when we've been trying to make them accessible to people for whom the (English) spoken and written word is of limited help, either because they don't speak the language (like those at the Yarl's Wood Centre) or because they have learning difficulties. Acting scenes out brings them powerfully to life, and using very handle-able, touchable props – like a crown of thorns, a purple robe, a bag of blood money or a scourging whip – really helps lift the story from the page. And, of course, in helping others to "see", we have invariably enjoyed fresh insights into the familiar ourselves.

John: In 2012, we visited Israel and that enriched my understanding of all sorts of facets of Jesus' life, including those around the Easter story. Now, when I read in the bible about Jesus being in the wilderness, I have a much better grasp of what that was like having been there. Likewise, I can see in my mind's eye Jesus' arrest having stood in the garden of Gethsemane; or Jesus' post-resurrection restoration of

REFLECTIONS

Peter on the shore of Lake Galilee having stood in that very place.

Marion: I have a Jewish background and didn't become a Christian until I was 21 when I was serving with VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) in East Africa. I celebrated my first Easter at an outdoor communion service at sunrise on Easter Sunday. The big African sun coming up over the horizon was a memorably wonderful symbol for Jesus' resurrection. Years later, a TV programme highlighting Lent and Easter from Canterbury Cathedral provided a rather different setting for another memorable Easter. For the Good Friday service, the building was stripped of all decoration and the lights turned low, creating a dark and heavy setting appropriate to the occasion. What a contrast when we arrived on the Sunday: it was hard to believe we were in the same place! Flowers, and banners and candles and light everywhere! A great way of reminding us what a difference Jesus' resurrection makes.

Wil Horwood: The Cross has been central to some of the most important moments in my life. I grew up in a Catholic church and so effigies of Jesus on the cross were very familiar to me. We had a big one in the church building and another at home but – in each case – the face of the crucified Jesus expressed a sort of benevolent and dignified sadness which I found impenetrable. Then, at one Good



Friday Service, as we followed the Stations of the Cross round the building together, reading the gospel passage appropriate to each picture, the love of God they expressed got through to me and I felt very moved. I experienced a

connection and the reality of what had only been head knowledge struck home. It was very real. A few days later, when I was on a zebra-crossing near a 7/11 shop – I could take you to the place! – I realised with clarity that living for God was what I wanted to do.

That was a good start but, by the time I was a 21-year-old student, I had drifted somewhat from church and become disillusioned. I tried out various churches and settled on one that was strong on bible teaching. We took communion every Sunday and, each time, somebody from the congregation would talk briefly – and very practically – about what the cross had meant to them in their everyday lives recently: the impact on their decision-making, their choices, their understanding of God's love, and so on. Week by week the Cross became very powerful and very practical and very personal to me again. Since then, Trish and I have sought to keep it a regular presence in our lives and in the lives of our children, which I believe helps us all.



Trish Horwood: In my childhood, I would go to mass with my parents and always be moved when the communion was shared and the Eucharist was raised up in the air by the priest. I was always reminded of Jesus suffering but ultimately his love for me. Over the years as a Christian I have at times taken Easter for granted and not appreciated Jesus' sacrifice not only for me but for others, too. When asked to share what Easter

means to me, I reflected on this question. I think to me, in essence, it is all about forgiveness and seeing God's love and grace in action through Jesus. He became a man yet at the same time was God and to me that shows incredible unconditional love and humility. Also the fact that while dying on the cross he was thinking about others like his mother and who would look after her and the thieves on either side of him is incredible.

Recently with my work with Impact, we were filming the Easter story, which we plan to send out to schools. In the crucifixion scene a group of us were standing in the barn with two Roman soldiers and the three crosses before us. Various people were narrating the different parts and when 'Jesus' cried out, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani... My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" and - not long after - "It is finished", I felt very moved. It was as if I had been transported back in time to Jerusalem as I tried to imagine how Jesus must have really been feeling at that particular moment. It was very powerful! I am so grateful for Jesus' love but also know I am forgiven and no longer condemned.

Liz Kang'ara: Perhaps my most memorable Easter experience was in 2016 when I watched the events of Passion week being re-enacted in Bedford town centre, starting with the Palm Sunday procession outside the HSBC bank and finishing with Jesus' resurrection near the Castle Mound. Familiar as I was with the Easter story, and even though I knew the participants were only acting, I



still found it incredibly powerful to watch - much more than if I had just been reading the gospel accounts. The crucifixion was staged on Castle Mound and - to this day - whenever I walk past I remember it vividly. I felt such deep sadness at the complete injustice of what was happening, combined with a fresh realisation of what it cost not only Jesus but also Father God. As a mother, I was deeply touched by trying to imagine what it must be like to watch your child die like that. Looking around me I caught sight of a man who was clearly as emotionally engaged as I was: the look on his face mirrored perfectly how I felt. I wonder if glances like that were exchanged in the crowd when the real crucifixion happened. Eventually, we reached the resurrection and - again, even though I knew what was coming - the

emotional impact on me was tremendous: such release, and relief and elation. I was really caught up in the story: so much that what was already familiar to me came with a new and powerful freshness.

One thing the experience taught me was not to rush past the events of Good Friday in my eagerness to reach the celebration of Easter Day. The joy of the Sunday is all the more tangible and amazing for first reflecting a while on the horrors of the Friday.



YP and Jude Gayet: We both have artistic, creative backgrounds and, over the years, we've had great fun looking for fresh ways to help our own three children - and the youngsters we work with - grasp a bit more of what the Easter story means. Of course, it's not primarily about keeping their attention and entertaining them, but they're not

going to get much out of what we say if they lose interest! It also has to be authentic: we have to be communicating and sharing something that is real and meaningful to us.

YP: One of the great things about celebrating Easter every year - and sharing in Communion more frequently - is the continual reminder of the Easter story with the opportunity to go deeper, experiencing both new insights and new depths of old ones. The scriptures say a lot about growing in our faith and - of course - that's especially so for children and young people. They are growing and developing all the time (like adults, but more so!) and so it's particularly important for them to look afresh at things they were taught and experienced when they were younger. A couple of years back we tried to do this by helping people to experience a fresh take on the *Last Supper* which is the source of our Communion service. What we call the *Last Supper* is based

on the Jewish Passover Meal which - unlike our Communion bread and wine - is a full meal that people share together, taking plenty of time to share and celebrate being members of God's family together. So, we invited everyone to bring a contribution of food which we ate together in a very leisurely way, enjoying its smells and tastes and taking time to affirm our friendships and the blessings of being God's children - all made possible by Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Jude: Easter is in one of those times of the year when I really miss being in England! Here in Belgium, Good Friday is a normal school day and churches generally make much less of it than Easter Sunday. I really miss the Hot Cross Buns we used to share together after our Good Friday service in England: I miss the cross symbol on the buns as much as I do eating them! So, not to be deprived of my Hot Cross Buns, we have them on Easter Sunday here! Last year we invited all the young people in our Jeunesse at Vie (Young Life) youth group to our home on Easter Sunday, asking them each to come prepared to share a particular reflection or insight on Easter. It was very special, not least because everything had to happen outside on our patio - all wrapped up very warm - because of the COVID-related restrictions we had at the time. We finished by sharing communion together, using grape juice and Hot Cross Buns (with the all-important cross on them) as the "bread".



Erinna Pilbeam: I have known the Easter story all my life. The triumphant story. If I am honest, it has always felt a little superficial and I have struggled to relate to it or to be able to place myself in what it contains. Alan asked me to write a piece on Easter and so I read and reread the passages and I have discovered something very different. The Easter story is not for the faint-hearted. It is an honest reminder of

sides of life we don't like to acknowledge and maybe try to hide. It tells of unanswered prayer, suffering, persecution, dishonesty, disappointment, grief, rejection, fear, shame, loneliness and the dark unknown. I am sure we can relate to one or many of these. I certainly can.

Suffering is perhaps the most obvious. After all, Jesus died on a cross. Scripture tells us that his suffering was planned before creation and before the fall of Adam and Eve: "...the Lamb who was slaughtered before the world was made." (Rev.13:8). God knew that his Son, Jesus, had to suffer for him to achieve His very best plan for us: "God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake." (1 Peter 1: 20). Struggle doesn't just fall on us at the throw of a dice. It is planned, there is a purpose in it, and God is in control. I, perhaps oddly, find this comforting. If God is in control of it, then this makes it easier to look for the purpose, and to see God within the struggle. Jesus asked God if the cross could pass him by - I think we can all relate to wanting to be set free from our struggles. But I am more than a little relieved to know God allowed Jesus to suffer on the cross to give us the opportunity to have Life. This action being the most powerful representation of love.

"God has had one Son without sin, but he has never had one Child without suffering" (CH Spurgeon).



Nigel and Lesley Greenslade: Easter is a time of new beginnings for us, when we enjoy seeing our garden springing back into life and we re-connect with our extended family, usually over Easter Lunch. There are the usual Easter Traditions, such as the house having vases of spring flowers and the Easter Egg hunt in the garden with our excited three-year-old grandson. So much chocolate to eat, so little time!

We try most years to attend the Good Friday service in Harpur Square. It is a time to worship, witness and catch up with friends from other churches and to remember that Jesus was crucified in the open air with crowds looking on. There is always a very special atmosphere at the service. And then mingling with friends afterwards, as we munch on our hot cross buns! We also like to attend Compline at Christ Church during Easter Week, which provides times for special reflection and calm in the busyness of the week before the weekend festivities.

Lesley: For me, coming from a Methodist background, Easter reminds me of those good old Wesley hymns like “And can it be” and “Christ the Lord is risen today” that we sung with such gusto and lots of harmonies in our little Methodist Chapel - and also of the Easter breakfasts that we shared before the main service. A time of being church family together.

Nigel: For me, I like to follow a long-standing tradition of listening to Handel’s Messiah, which is so full of scripture and majesty. “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” provides the perspective that even the rulers of this world will have to give account to a higher Authority. Having once sung in the massed choir at “The Messiah from Scratch” at the Royal Albert Hall, I got a mere taste of the “... great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9). Sounds good to me!

**THANK YOU,
ALAN COTTENDEN!**

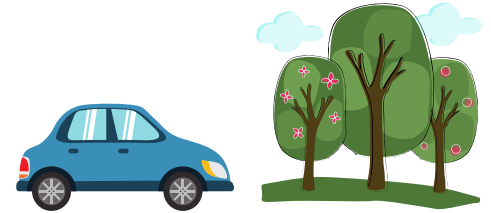


Easter Extra

April is a special month in children's ministry as we celebrate Jesus rising from the grave and follow the Easter story through different family friendly events.

FRIDAY 8TH APRIL, 11:00-14:30

[‘We’re Going on a Journey’ Outdoor Activity Day](#)



The Easter holidays begin with the opportunity for children to get dropped off with friends to learn about Journeys in the Bible. We are going to do this by going on our own Journey from Christ Church to Russell Park. We will be exploring sessions which focus on Abram's Journey, problems along the journey and being welcomed home like the prodigal son. There will be the chance to play outdoor games, build a rocky journey with chalks and boxes, and experience a parachute story. There will also be time to have a picnic lunch with friends and listen and pray.

THURSDAY 14TH APRIL, 14:00-15:30

[Family Fun and Craft Afternoon](#)

For families who like doing messy activities and crafting with others, this is the afternoon for exploring Maundy Thursday and the days leading up to Easter Sunday through craft activities. The families will hear the Easter story and will be able to take home what they have made.

EASTER SATURDAY, 14:00-16:00

[‘Rise Up with Jesus’](#)



Finally, on Easter Saturday afternoon families are invited to come to Rise Up with Jesus, which is a station-based event exploring the Easter story and summing up everything that we have done the week beforehand. At each station families can experience different places in the Easter story including a recreation of the Tomb, and Calvary hill and think about what the resurrection means for Christians today.



Spend time listening to God's creation
Wonder at the crackle of a real fire



Wild Church is a fresh expression focussed on reaching families with primary school aged children who want to engage with Christian worship but find it difficult to get to church on a Sunday morning. Christ Church and Bromham Benefice have partnered on this project to share resources and support each other's children and family work. Wild church gathers monthly at Leslie Sell Activity Centre: a place with lots of trees, a fire pit, and an open field. We can listen to the sounds of creation and use outdoor resources to do activities.

So far, we have had three gatherings on dark winter evenings and have decorated the space with fairy lights and each time the team have lit a big fire. My highlight was in January when we created tin can fires and enjoyed holding sparklers and each



Sing praise songs
Enjoy hot chocolate, star biscuits and
sausage rolls
Meet other families and make new friends

time, we have been blessed to have musicians play guitars as we have sung, and had snacks and drinks. We have looked at the themes of Light and Dark and Advent, and the stories of creation and David and Goliath. Our next Wild Church will be a springtime one, on April 10th and we will be unpacking the theme of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. If you know a family who would like to hear more about Christianity and experience worship in an outdoors setting, please encourage them to come to our April 10th or May 15th Wild Churches.

Written By - Ruth Hulme

Min-Min Peaker
performs a

FAREWELL RECITAL

with Richard Heyes and Alex Mnatzaganian

3pm Saturday 21st May 2022
Christ Church Bedford

Followed by refreshments in the Hub
Offers of cake and help to Rachel Bennett

Admission on door for
donation to charity (TBC)

HOLY WEEK

11TH - 17TH

APRIL 2022

COMPLINE:

11, 12, AND 13 APRIL @ 8PM

MAUNDY THURSDAY:

14 APRIL HOLY COMMUNION @8PM

GOOD FRIDAY :

MORNING WORSHIP @ 10AM

EVENING WORSHIP @ 8PM

EASTER SUNDAY:

HOLY COMMUNION @ 9AM

FAMILY COMMUNION @ 10:30AM

EASTER PRAISE @ 7PM





Sunday Services

09:00am & 10:30am Morning Worship

7pm Sundays@Seven

Wednesday Service

10am Holy Communion



CONTACT US

Vicar - Vacant

Curate: John Bell

01234 401 509

Curate@CCBedford.org

Office Manager - Pauline Grimley

01234 327150

Office@CCBedford.org

Children's Minister: Ruth Hulme

07554537757

Children@CCBedford.org

Bookings Administrator - Dawn Hire

07788687011

Centre@CCBedford.org

Social Media Lead: Benjamin Hulme

01234327150

Comms@CCBedford.org

Church Wardens

Kay Berrington & Andrew Russell

Warden@CCBedford.org



@CC_Bedford



@christchurchbedford



@ccbedford.org



@ChristChurchBedford



www.ccbedford.org

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