

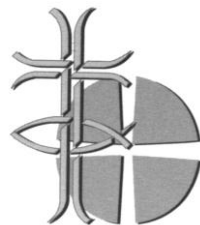
CHRIST CHURCH

United Reformed and Methodist

CHRIST CHURCH
LINK



February 2025
March 2025



Prince Edward's Road
Lewes BN7 1BL

www.christ-church-lewes.org

MINISTER

Vacancy

LAY WORKER

Claire Bell

Tel: 07725 592658

Email: layworker@christ-church-lewes.org

CHURCH SECRETARY

Neil Fisher

Tel: 01273 471487

Email: secretary@christ-church-lewes.org

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

Lindsay Frost

Tel: 01273 486448

Email: secretary@christ-church-lewes.org

CHURCH TREASURER

Irene Gannon

Tel: 01273 813003

Email: treasurer@christ-church-lewes.org

The publication date is normally the final Sunday of the preceding month, and items for inclusion should be sent to the Secretary by the Wednesday before that date.

Church Office Telephone: 01273 488237

LENT: THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 5 March.

The temptation of Christ is described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. According to scripture, after being baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights in the Judean Desert. During this time, Satan appeared to Jesus and attempted to tempt him towards sin. Jesus, having refused each temptation, the Devil then departed, and Jesus returned to Galilee to begin his ministry.

Here is the text from St Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 4, verses 1-11



4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted^[a] by the devil. **2** After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’^[b]”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. **6** “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’^[c]”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’^[d]”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. ⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’^[e]”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him

We are planning a Lent Bible study course, possibly in conjunction with St. Anne’s and other Lewes churches. Watch out for further details during February

FROM THE SECRETARIES

Welcome to the February – March 2025 edition of *CC Link*

At the start of the New Year, we wrote to the URC Southern Synod, the Central Sussex United area and the Methodist South East District seeking to open a discussion with them on the future of church leadership in our pastorate (Christ Church, Cross Way and Alfriston)

We have, in effect, not had a minister in post for nearly five years. In the current circumstances, there seems little immediate prospect of a ministerial appointment for a smaller pastorate such as ours. We have sought to offset the lack of a minister with the appointment of Claire Bell as our part –time Lay Worker since spring 2022. This has been a very successful appointment and we are grateful for the energy and vision Clare has brought to the post, both here and in Seaford. However, she will be standing down in spring 2026 and we need to put in place new arrangements, without which our progress over the last few years will go into reverse.

We are asking our parent churches to consider a “new deal” for active and ambitious pastorates, such as ours, who do not have a minister and cannot expect one in the foreseeable future. We think this means developing better structures and increased resources to support Lay Worker appointments.

A copy of the letter jointly sent by Christ Church and Cross Way is attached below for your information. We will keep you posted on progress in these discussions.

The **Advent and Christmas season** underlined the value of Claire’s role as our Lay Worker. She worked very hard to deliver a programme of special events during December. It was great to see big attendances at Carols on the Green (15/12 - see picture elsewhere), the Community Christmas Party (18/12), and the Christmas Carol Service (22/12). Thanks to all church members who helped with these events, particularly to the Vance family for the big effort they put into the carol service and to the Ukrainian singers who made that such a special occasion.

It is good to see **David Smith** back in church after a spell in hospital during December. David is now resident at Claydon House Care Home in Lewes and welcomes visitors. Whilst there, he plans to work through his papers and reflect on his Christian journey through life, and share this through articles in future editions of ***CC Link*** .

We have a **Congregational Meeting** on Sunday 2 February, immediately after the morning service, and hope you will be able to attend to discuss some important church business.

Neil Fisher Church Secretary

Lindsay Frost Administrative Secretary

**LETTER TO THE URC SOUTHERN SYNOD, CENTRAL SUSSEX UNITED AREA
AND METHODIST CHURCH SOUTH EAST DISTRICT**

January 2 2025

Dear Friends

***FUTURE CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE CHRIST CHURCH, LEWES, CROSS WAY
SEAFORD, and ALFRISTON PASTORATE***

We are writing on behalf of the churches in the pastorate to seek to open a dialogue with you on future church leadership in our pastorate, which comprises Christ Church Lewes (an LEP), Cross Way Seaford (an LEP) and the Synod's Alfriston Project.

As you may know, the pastorate has been without an ordained minister since spring 2022, when Rev. Andrew Mills was forced to retire through ill-health. Andrew's illness meant that he was badly incapacitated after contracting long covid at the start of the pandemic in early 2020, so we have effectively been without a minister for the best part of five years

Since spring 2022, Christ Church has employed a part-time Lay Worker, Claire Bell, supported by the church's elected trustees and Rev. Andy Melvin as the CSUA's Mission Enabler. Claire has been working 20 hours per week at Christ Church. A similar arrangement was extended to Cross Way in spring 2023, where she has been engaged for a further 8 hours per week.

*Claire's appointment has been a great success. A list of the many initiatives she has led over the last 2-3 years is attached as **Appendix A**.*

*Claire has told us that she intends to step down from the Lay Worker role in spring 2026, although she will remain an active member at Christ Church. This means that we have little over a year in which to think about future church leadership in the pastorate and then to put appropriate arrangements in place. **We do not want our pastorate churches to drift, and see the achievements of Claire's time in post wither away, after spring 2026. Hence, we are writing this letter to you.***

Whilst we would very much like a new ministerial appointment, we accept that our immediate prospects for this are not good. It is increasingly clear that the URC and the Methodist churches are struggling to allocate ministers to the smaller pastorates, and that ministerial resources may be stretched even more thinly in future years.

This leads us to ask whether the Synod and CSUA need to consider some sort of “new deal” to support active and ambitious pastorates who do not have a minister in post, and for whom the traditional “incumbent minister” model is not currently available.

Some ideas we would like to discuss with you are:

- Some form of enhanced Lay Worker role , ideally with “full time” hours, as this will greatly assist recruitment*
- A package of support from the Synod, District and CSUA, perhaps in the form of some “Strategic Project” funding or other assistance over the period of an appointment, to supplement any funding we can provide locally (Christ Church has fully financed its current Lay Worker appointment and Cross Way has partially done so , with some grant aid to spring 2025, after which it can fully finance the rest of the contract period. Both churches can provide some continuing finance for a new appointment beyond 2026*
- mentoring support of the type provided by Rev. Andy Melvin*
- Use of the vacant URC-owned manse in Seaford (or other accommodation) as a means of attracting good candidates and giving them a local base (Housing is very expensive locally and will be a real barrier to recruitment)*
- A handover period with Claire to ensure a smooth transition for the new appointee*
- Any other “good practice” elsewhere in the Synod, District and CSUA areas from which we can learn*
- If there is agreement that this initiative is to be pursued further , how best to expedite necessary approvals (we are keen to avoid getting bogged down in bureaucracy , given the tight timescales)*

*We have prepared a draft timescale to recruit a new person to Claire's post. This is attached as **Appendix B**.*

The arrangement we have in mind for an enhanced Lay Worker role does not preclude a ministerial appointment at some later date, if that is possible. Indeed, under any circumstances, any new minister with wide ranging responsibilities will benefit greatly from the support and additional capacity provided by a Lay Worker in our pastorate.

We hope that you will respond positively to this request and will be willing to meet to talk things through early in the New Year. Please contact Neil Fisher with possible dates in the first instance via secretary@christ-church-lewes.org

Neil Fisher, Church Secretary, Christ Church, Lewes

Cochrane Young, Church Secretary , Cross Way, Seaford

APPENDIX A

INITIATIVES DURING OUR CURRENT LAY WORKER APPOINTMENT

(a) Christ Church

- *Developing a Vision for Christ Church*
- *“Second Sunday” services providing more informal worship for a wider audience*
- *Pastoral visits and provision of home communion*
- *Bible Study classes*
- *Weekly prayer meetings*
- *Ukraine Café for refugees settling in the Lewes area*
- *Warm Welcome space during the winter months for people suffering fuel poverty*
- *“Open the Book” sessions with local primary schools in partnership with Trinity Lewes*
- *Eco Church – bronze and silver awards*
- *Re-starting Christ Church Tots sessions for pre-school children and their carers (after a covid break)*
- *Community events with food and children’s activities in summer , autumn and at Christmas in partnership with Lewes Food Partnership and Lewes Open Door*
- *Discussions with other churches in the Lewes area on the scope for joint community initiatives*
- *Weekly lunches for homeless people*
- *Tear Fund Big Quizzes*
- *Ecumenical House Group*
- *Hosting “Art Wave” exhibition*

(b) Cross Way

- *Updating safeguarding arrangements at Cross Way*
- *Setting up a new “Parents and Toddlers “ group*
- *Weekly Bible Study classes*
- *Monthly prayer meeting*
- *Monthly service designed for young families*
- *Pastoral visits to housebound church members, including communion visits*

- ***Baptisms and funerals at both churches***

APPENDIX B

DRAFT TIME LINE FOR APPOINTMENT

Date	Activity
November 2024	<i>Initial discussion on way forward at Christ Church , following soundings with Church Council and Congregational Meeting</i>
December 2024	<i>Initial liaison meeting with Cross Way to discuss their views on a future appointment , procedure and timescale</i>
January 2025	<i>Liaison with Synod , SE District and CSUA on possible future appointment and possible use of existing (or new) manse to assist recruitment</i>
February – March 2025	<i>Update Job Description and Person Specification , extent of appointment (years), start to draft recruitment advertisement, and consider channels by which it will be advertised</i>
May-July 2025	<i>Recruitment process , interview and appointment with a view to preferred candidate being available to start in autumn 2025</i>
Autumn 2025	<i>New Lay Worker in post working alongside Claire Bell for a period of up to six months , to effect smooth handover</i>
Spring 2026	<i>Claire Bell steps down and new person fully in post</i>

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

Our “Carols on the Green “service on Sunday December 15 was a great success, with between 80 and 90 people attending (along with quite a few dogs) on a mild and dry winter afternoon: more people than we have had for several years.

The service was led by the Rector of St. Anne’s , Lewes, Rev. Ben Brown and music to accompany the carols was provided by members of the Lewes, Glynde and Beddingham Brass Band.

Thank you to all those who helped with the event, in particular Claire Bell for making all the arrangements ; our Bible readers; our refreshment providers ; and the intrepid group who matched up all the right poles in all the right places to erect (and dismantle) our gazebo. Ben Brown did a short talk which focused on Christmas as an opportunity for re-birth and renewal in our hectic modern lives. Thank you to Ben and our friends at St Anne’s Church

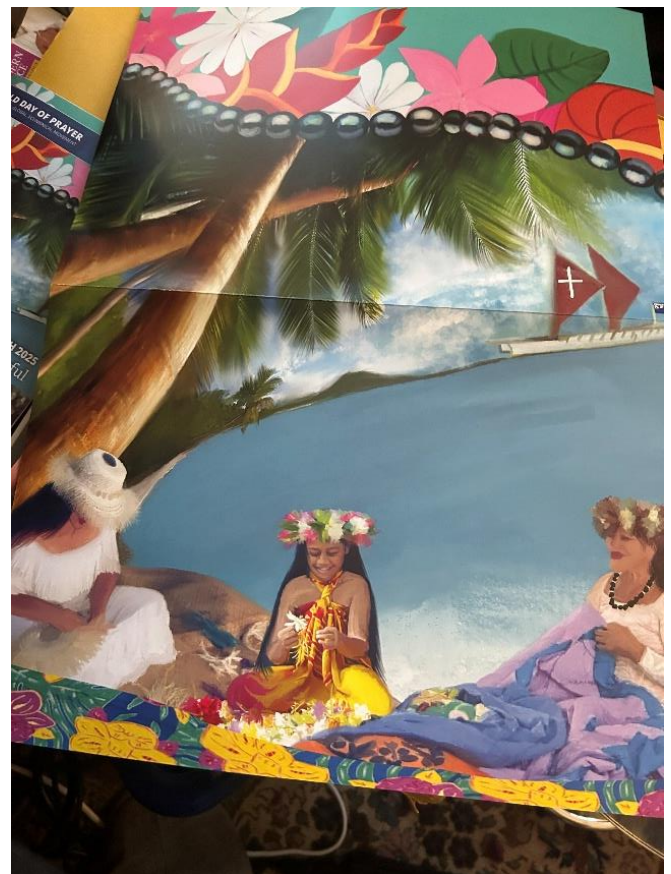


WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 7 MARCH 2025 AT 12 NOON

AT CHRIST CHURCH LEWES

Kia Orana! Our sisters in The Cook Islands welcome us and lead us for the Day of Prayer 2025. This group of 15 islands in the South Pacific Ocean has a rich and colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature. Join with us as we pray together and reflect on the theme 'I made you wonderful'. World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical organisation which enables us to hear the thoughts of women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns and prayers.

The preparation for the day is vast, the service begins with the writing country and theme being chosen a number of years earlier. Once written it goes to the International Committee in New York for translation and dissemination to the National Committee in each participating country. The service is then discussed and edited before being presented nationally, regionally and then locally for branches to make their plans. Finally, at Christ Church Lewes at 12 noon, on Friday 7 March 2025, people will gather to celebrate the service prepared by the women of The Cook Islands.



The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 120 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world — through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later. A worldwide wave of prayer...



COME & SING

“OLIVET TO CALVARY”

by J.H.Maunders

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE
UNITED AREA CHOIR



on MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 17th 2025 - 7.30pm

at:

Emmanuel Church Eastbourne

There will be four rehearsals at Emmanuel
prior to the performance on:

Saturdays: 22/29 March & 5/12 April at 10.30am

Music & learning resources will be available.

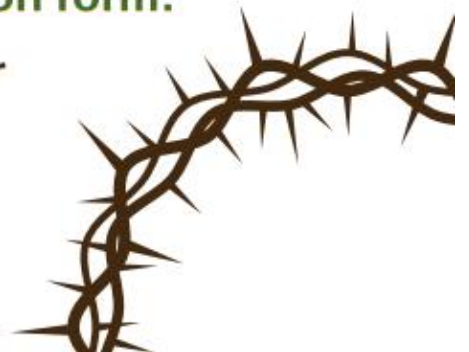
To make this a memorable service we need to ensure a
balance of voices, if you would like to take part,
please complete a registration form:

[AVAILABLE HERE](#) or

contact Jennie by:

email at: tcwsec@gmail.com

or phone: 01323 484189



NEWS FROM THE LEWES BEREAVEMENT CIRCLE



The new bereavement circle hopes to start in late January 2025 in Lewes .

The group is a recent addition to the Lewes House of Friendship's activities list, being held on Wednesday afternoons, each new session now is being held during school term times, but this might change in the future.

The Lewes Bereavement Circle is a completely free therapeutic group for anyone affected by the death of a close family member, friend or colleague. We are open to anyone within the Lewes and the local surrounding villages.

The circle is facilitated by a local highly regarded, qualified counsellor based in Lewes, and three volunteers all with either counselling or active bereavement experience. These facilitators give their time freely to the circle.

We run a series of Bereavement Circles each lasting 7 weeks, starting at 1.15pm to 3pm, we can offer 12 places per session to the circle and as stated previously these are completely free of charge, with no hidden costs to the member of each circle.

We arrive at 1.15pm for a meet and greet and get settled in for a 1.30pm start, the circle lasts an hour and at 2.30pm we offer a hot drink and biscuits for anyone who wishes to stay and chat afterwards.

We know that what's discussed and heard during the circle can often be upsetting and can open-up hidden or buried feelings, which is why this chance to sit and decompress with fellow members can be very calming and rewarding.

We do ask for a commitment to the 7 weeks and to arrive on time each week of the circle, as this shows respect to the other members of the group and the volunteers who run them. The group is fully insured and supervised.

If you think anyone within your group, club, practice, care or acquaintance could benefit from joining our bereavement circle, please could you pass on our details to them.

We can be contacted via email abisaunderscounselling@gmail.com or by calling into the House of Friendship, 208 School Hill, Lewes, between 9.30am and 1.15pm Monday to Friday and picking up a form from reception.

Once we receive the online or paper form, we will be in touch with them directly to confirm spaces and the date for next available Bereavement Circle.

Kind regards

Abi, Su, Polly and Bridy

Lewes Bereavement Circle Facilitators

NEW YEAR MESSAGE

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT CHRISTIAN AID



This week marks the start of **Christian Aid's 80th anniversary year.**

Our work began in 1945 when we were founded by the British and Irish churches to support refugees in Europe following the devastation and upheaval caused by the Second World War. Ever since we have worked around the world to overcome the injustice of poverty and tackle its underlying causes.

For 80 years, we've been an expression of faith in the unstoppable power of hope to create a more just and peaceful world.

It is thanks to your support, and that of generations of supporters before you, that Christian Aid and our partners have been able to do our work. Your gifts, campaign actions and prayer continue to enable us to respond to a world disfigured by the effects of conflict, inequality and the climate crisis.

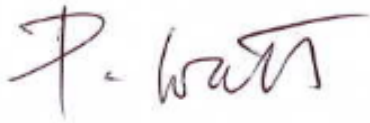
You're helping to ensure that people's voices are heard and that local communities are given the means to identify their own solutions to poverty. Our close working relationship with over 250 partners in 26 countries meant that in 2024 we were able to reach 4.5m people directly and 19.3m people indirectly.

Christian Aid has always collaborated with national and local organisations, many of them rooted in the churches, which understand their context and can sustain their work over the long term. In Gaza, our partners are delivering life-

saving aid to civilians caught up in the conflict. In South Sudan, partners are responding to the needs of almost a million people forced across the border by the brutal civil war in their northern neighbour. In the Middle East, South Sudan, and Colombia – and in other countries beset by conflict – we are working for peace: both at the community level, and in our advocacy towards governments and international institutions.

Thank you for all your ongoing support, which brings hope to people in situations that sometimes appear hopeless.

Wishing you a blessed and hope-filled year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Watt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Patrick Watt

CEO

Christian Aid

BACH CHOIR EVENTS IN LEWES DURING MARCH

The East Sussex Bach Choir is holding a series of events in Lewes during late February and March comprising cello recitals and talks, culminating in a performance of " The St . Matthew Passion " at Lewes Town Hall on Saturday 29 March. Tickets are £30, £25, £20, accompanied under 16 free

In addition, there will be four exciting linked events, all of which will be taking place at St Michael's Church, Lewes, starting at 7pm. Tickets are £15:

Wednesday 26 February

Bach Cello Suites 1,2 & 3

Sebastian Comberti (cello) introduced by Lord Rowan Williams

Thursday 27 February

Bach Cello Suites 4, 5 & 6

Sebastian Comberti (cello)

Thursday 6th March

Reflecting on JS Bach & the St Matthew Passion

Talk by Rev Richard Coles

Thursday 13th March

Discussion: Performing the St Matthew Passion

Sir John Tomlinson in discussion with Alison Bury & John Hancorn,
chaired by broadcaster & Journalist Richard Wigmore

Tickets for all these events are now available from eastsussexbachchoir.org

CHRIST CHURCH WALKS

Our **New Year's Day** walk to Mount Caburn was cancelled due to high winds and driving horizontal rain.

Fortunately, we had better weather – albeit cloudy and very cold - for our January 19 walk on the south side of Lewes to see the new **Cockshut Stream Restoration Project**. This has freed the old stream channel of clogging weeds and opened up a large new area of wetland, with a vibrant bird life. It also reduces flood risk downstream towards the town centre. Wellies were very much required as the route was very muddy underfoot, but improved as we headed around to the Railway Land Nature Reserve and back to the start through Lewes town centre.



The new wetland south of Lewes is behind our intrepid walkers

The **February walk** will be another attempt to do a downland walk of 3 miles /5km at the back of Seaford, starting at **Bishopstone** Church at 1.30 p.m. on **Sunday 16th**. We had to postpone this walk twice last autumn and are hoping it will be third time lucky.



View from Lodge Hill

The **March walk** will be on Sunday 16. This will start at 1.30 p.m. from the new **Ditchling Village Car Park** in Keymer Road, Ditchling and head north to **Lodge Hill**(for great views over the village and the Downs beyond) and then a short loop on footpaths in the Low Weald, before returning to the start: total about 4 miles /6 km

THINKTANK

Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 7.30 pm

Dr Sarah Pitt

“What have vaccines ever done for us?”

After graduating with a degree in microbiology at the University of Bristol, Sarah trained as an NHS biomedical scientist, specialising in hospital diagnostic virology, in London, Bristol, Manchester and Liverpool, and through work for charities and the World Health Organisation in Zimbabwe and Tajikistan. She was awarded an MSc at the School of Tropical Medicine in Liverpool, and a PhD from John Moores University. She came to the University of Brighton in 2004 and is now Principal Lecturer in the School of Applied Sciences and a Life Member and President Elect of the Institute of Biomedical Science. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she trained volunteers in the testing programme in Brighton and has given many talks and interviews on radio and television, for non-specialists.

THOUGHT FROM THE LAYWORKER

In a recent service Rev Roger Wood used a verse from Philippians 4 during his sermon. It struck a chord with me because I had been thinking particularly about the Christian response to New Year, to the idea of making New Year's resolutions and in particular about our response to the situation in the world as we entered 2025. The preacher spoke to us of the Ukraine War, the war in Gaza, the (then) forthcoming inauguration of President Trump and the importance of Truth. As Christians we have a unique response to the question 'what is truth', and a unique responsibility in these unprecedented times when so much that is not truth is broadcast and circulated through mass media. So if you are wondering how we should respond as Christians at this time, let's listen to St Paul:

Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

I hope this is as helpful to you as it is to me. I look forward to seeing you in the months to come, perhaps at the weekly prayer meeting at 12.30 pm in the church or at our bible studies on Wednesdays at 1.30 pm.

God bless,

Claire

Church Calendar for February 2025

- Sun 2 10.30 am Morning worship led by Rev Jacqui Horton
- Wed 5 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Eco church series
- Fri 7 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
- Sun 9 9.30 am Prayer Meeting in the Quiet Room
10.30 am Second Sunday worship
- Wed 12 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Eco church series
- Fri 14 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
- Sun 16 10.30 am Morning worship led by David Coleman
1 pm Church Walk
- Wed 19 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
- Sun 23 10.30 am Morning worship with Holy Communion
led by Gwyneth Watkinson
- Wed 26 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
- Fri 28 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots

Church Calendar for March 2025

- Sun 2 10.30 am Morning worship led by Gwyneth Watkinson
- Wed 5 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Lent course
- Fri 7 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
12 noon. World Day of Prayer service at Christ Church,
followed by lunch.
- Sun 9 9.30 am Prayer Meeting in the Quiet Room
10.30 am Second Sunday worship
- Wed 12 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Lent course
7.30 pm Church Council (business)
- Fri 14 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
- Sun 16 10.30 am Morning worship led by Christine Sweet
1 pm Church Walk
- Wed 19 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Lent course
7.30 pm Thinktank
- Fri 21 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
- Sun 23 10.30 am Morning worship with Holy Communion
led by Rev Dr Richard Goldring
- Wed 26 10 am - 12 noon Ukraine Café
12.30 pm - 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
1.30 pm - Bible study at the church - Lent course
- Fri 28 9.30 am - 11.30 am Christ Church Tots
- Sun 30 10.30 am Mothering Sunday worship
led by Gwyneth Watkinson

Rotas for February 2025

	2	9	16	23
Welcoming	Linda B		Brenda	Graham
Vestry Steward	Glenda	Glenda	Glenda	Glenda
Coffee	Lindsay & Viv	Rod & Aly	Judy & Ian	Linda B & Janet
PowerPoint	Irene	Tom	Graham / Irene	Neil
Organ	Norman	2 nd Sunday	Norman	Norman

Rotas for March 2025

	2	9	16	23	30
Welcoming	Janet	Brian	Linda B	Andrew	Brenda
Vestry	Lindsay	Lindsay	Lindsay	Lindsay	Lindsay
Coffee	Brenda & Alison	Brian & Joan	Glenda & Alan	Lindsay & Viv	Rod & Aly
PowerPoint	Irene	Tom	Graham / Neil	Neil	Irene
Organ	Norman	2 nd Sunday	Norman	Norman	Norman

CHRIST CHURCH

(United Reformed and Methodist)

seeks to proclaim the Gospel and serve
the community around it.

The Layworker and Church Council
members would appreciate information
about those who need pastoral care and
will endeavour to answer the questions of
those who want to know more about the
Church's life and witness here in Lewes.