



SBC News

Dec / Jan 2022

Swallownest
Baptist
church

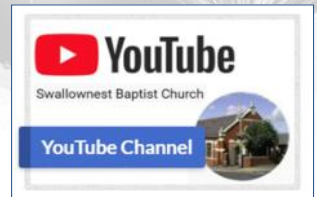
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JOY TO THE WORLD, ADVENT IS HERE!

We'll no doubt have a few renditions of 'Joy to the World'! Those infamous lyrics that declare *'The Lord is come, let earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing.'*

Research suggests that Advent has probably been observed since the fourth century. Originally, it was a time when converts to Christianity readied themselves for baptism.

During the Middle Ages, Advent became associated with preparation for the Second Coming. In early days Advent lasted from November 11, the feast of St. Martin, until Christmas Day. Advent was considered a pre-Christmas season of Lent when Christians devoted themselves to prayer and fasting. I'm not sure what went wrong there. I doubt there'll be much fasting this year, more like feasting!

Many Christians still view Advent as a season to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus. In the last fifty years, however, it has also come to be thought of as a time of anticipating the Nativity, on Christmas Day.

Then there's the history of the

accidental Christmas Hymn - 'Joy to the World' - its origin as a Christmas carol written by Isaac Watts, who was one of the most prolific and celebrated creators of hymns.

In 1719, Watts published "The Psalms of David," a collection of poems where each verse was based on a psalm. But, instead of translating the original texts of the Old Testament, he made some subtle adjustments. His poems referred more explicitly towards the works of Jesus, thus seeking inspiration from the New Testament.

The vision of Psalm 98 is to bring joy for all people. 'Joy to the World' inspires the listeners to look forward to a future time when sin will finally be evicted, and all of humanity will bask in the glory of Jesus' righteousness. Therefore, let us look forward and declare aloud that Christ is risen, Christ will come again and that he brings joy, hope, peace and love to all.

Let me close by saying it's an honour and a privilege to serve you all. I also want to thank the leadership team: Rob, Carol, Mark, Jan, George and Olivia for their servant hearts and support. For all those that help make things happen during the services, the tech and worship teams, Junior church leaders, and those of you that organise and run other groups.

It can be tiring at times and it may not always be joyful! However, we do so bringing the message of hope that the future will be brighter as we glorify God, because the Lord is come, earth will receive her King. So let every heart prepare Him room as heaven and nature sings.

Have a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Grace and peace



David Skeet is our Church Team Leader

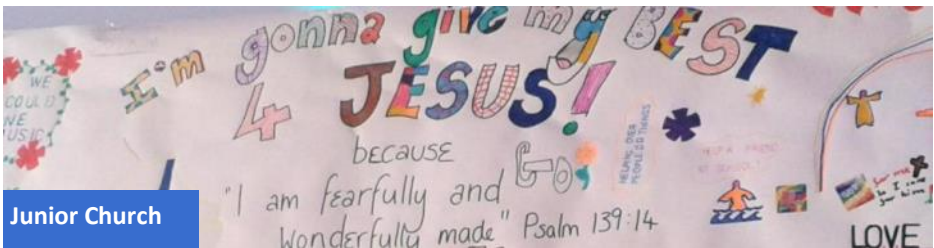
Contact Us



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Hello, my name is Mark, and I am the treasurer of Swallownest Baptist Church. Firstly, I would like to thank you all for the faithful giving over the last year. During the last few months we have given various amounts to the Barnabus Fund, YBA's India Appeal, Hope for Justice, Asiaanna and New Sight Congo and over the next few months, we will be donating to more good causes. In addition to the above we also raised some money for Macmillan Cancer when we had our recent Coffee Morning.



Hello everyone,

I just thought that I would update you on a few exciting things that are happening in Junior Church. Our numbers have dwindled slightly but the children's enthusiasm more than makes up for lack of numbers. We had a discussion, after lockdown had been eased, as to what the children would like to happen week by week when they come out. They've all grown so much

(particularly Alex, who's now also part of the tech team) and we thought that the children would like to take ownership of some of the activities that happen. Suggestions included, a meeting mid-week, a Youth Club or the children leading a bible story. All good suggestions, and ones we may use in the future but these are some of the things we have decided to undertake.

The children would like to do some work outside, but as we haven't really got anywhere suitable we thought we might raise some money in various ways to transform the space where the bins are kept and under the kitchen window.

This will involve raising money to buy paint so we can do some arty 'Jesus' type graffiti on the walls, which hopefully Beth will help us with. We would like to buy a bench to use if the weather's nice and also to put some pots of flowers or raised beds.

Obviously, this is all going to cost money. If you were at the Light Party you would have noticed that the children had decorated some pots to put candles in. We raised a grand total of (drumroll please) £25.90! The kids were overwhelmed with your generosity on the night so thank you very much.

Our next project involves us making some things to sell on a table at the Christmas Coffee Morning which is at the beginning of December. The children are going to come into church to update you from time to time and keep you informed of our running total. We might even have a poster up somewhere in Junior Church with a running total, so keep an eye out for that. We are also hoping to come back into church on occasions to let you know what we're doing in the schoolroom.

As I've said many times, it is a privilege to walk alongside the children as they take their very first steps with Jesus. We pray the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and the life of our church. God bless.

Jan Dean & all the Junior Church team - Jennie Joyce, Julie Skeet and Alice Dean x

Junior Church is for school-age children and meets every Sunday. The children and young people stay in the main building at the start of the service for the time of sung worship, and then go out to our School Room building for their age-specific groups, where they engage with songs, bible teaching, crafts and other fun. The School Room is attached to the right-hand side of the main church. If you have children of school age, please bring them along, they are very welcome to join in.



CHRISTIANS AND CLIMATE CHANGE?

The climate crisis is an injustice that's causing harm to people.

Jesus commanded us to *'love your neighbour as yourself'* (Mark 12:31). This isn't just referring to the person who lives next door – it means neighbours in our community, our country and around the world. (Luke 10:25–37)

Love for our global neighbours takes many different forms. From providing help during an emergency to empowering communities to build for their future.

When issues of injustice are causing harm to people, love means taking action to set things right. To address the root causes.

'There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.'

Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Proverbs 31:8–9: *'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.'*

Isaiah 1:17: *'Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.'*

The climate crisis is a justice issue with a huge human cost. It's people living in poverty who are suffering the most from droughts, floods, food shortages and being forced to leave their homes. Unless we act urgently, climate change will push 130 million and more people into poverty this decade. We know this is not God's plan.

Tackling something as large as the climate crisis we must all play our part: governments, businesses, communities and individuals.

We've seen, over and over again, that when we raise our voices together, decision-makers take action and situations change for people in poverty. Earlier this year, we saw a big win as the UK Government stopped all taxpayer support for fossil-fuel energy projects overseas, in response to prayer and campaigning.

Could you, our church, and your wider community get involved with taking action?

The UK has recently hosted the UN climate talks, COP26, in Glasgow. Decisions made there will affect us all, now and for generations to come. By emailing, calling, writing to or meeting up with your MP about the climate crisis, you're letting them know that you care.

Tearfund has a host of information available on this topic and how as Christians we can get involved. A selection of helpful articles is featured below. Please go to their website tearfund.org to view all their stories, information, and other articles.

Sue Willsher, Tearfund's Senior Policy Advisor for climate and energy, reflects on a recent campaign win and the importance of prayer when campaigning.

tearfund.org/stories/2021/05/campaigning-in-the-face-of-a-goliath

It seems as though there are more people calling for urgent climate change solutions every day. What does this have to do with Christian faith? And why should Christians get involved with campaigning for change?

tearfund.org/stories/2021/09/should-christians-speak-up-on-climate-change

A guide to help you tune into what God's heart for the UN's climate talks is—and how you can get involved.

tearfund.org/stories/2021/10/what-does-god-want-to-say-to-you-about-cop26-and-the-climate-crisis

The climate crisis can seem like a huge, overwhelming issue to pray into. Where do we start? What are we asking? How do we want God to act?

tearfund.org/stories/2021/10/a-hope-filled-prayer-for-cop26



Our **Sunday services** take place each week at 10:30am in our church building. We will also continue to livestream the services via our YouTube Channel. The first and third Sunday of each month will include communion.

Dec

- 5th David Skeet (Communion)
- 12th Rob Joyce
- 19th Junior Church - Family Carol Service @ 10:30am
Carols by Candlelight : 4:00pm
- 25th Christmas Day Service - David Skeet
- 26th No Service

Jan

- 2nd David Skeet (Communion)
- 9th Rob Joyce
- 16th David Skeet (Communion)
- 23rd Mary Taylor
- 30th David Skeet

We offer an open invitation to anyone who would like to join us at any of our events. Email swallownestbaptist@gmail.com for further information.

The **Prayer Meeting** takes place in church and via Zoom on the 1st Saturday of each month at 9:30am.

- 4th Dec
- 8th Jan

A time of **Prayer & Meditation** takes place fortnightly on a Monday, via Zoom only, at 9:30am.

- 13th Dec
- 10th and 24th Jan

The **Ladies Meeting** takes place in the church school room as follows.

- Mon 6th Dec at 1:00pm - Candlelight service
- Mon 17th Jan at 1:30pm

Prospects, a learning disability friendly church service, meets once a month in the church school room at 3pm.

- 19th Dec
- 16th Jan



Come and Celebrate Christmas with us



Christmas Coffee Morning

Sat 4th Dec @ 10am

Join us at our Christmas coffee morning for frothy coffee, tea, and bacon butties. Cake stall & Christmas gifts. All welcome, please pop in!



Aston Churches Together Crib Blessing

Wed 8th Dec @ 6pm, Birdcage Walk Aston

A short outdoor gathering, at the start of the Christmas season, to mark the arrival of the annual community Christmas Crib.



Family Christmas Service

Sun 19th Dec @ 10:30am

Join us for our special Junior Church Sunday service with a Christmas celebration for all the family.



Carols by Candlelight

Sun 19th Dec @ 4pm

Join us for Carols and Bible readings by candlelight, as we reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.