

# VICTORIA *Life*

Sunday 21st December 2025



"My soul lifts up the Lord!  
My spirit celebrates God, my Liberator!  
For though I'm God's humble servant,  
God has noticed me.  
Now and forever,  
I will be considered blessed by all generations".

*Luke 146-48*  
The Voice Bible



## Mary's Song

Luke 1:46-48 (NIV)

*And Mary said*

*"My soul glorifies the Lord*

*And my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,*

*For he has been mindful*

*Of the humble state of his servant."*

This morning, we continue our series on the Bible's Christmas Songs. Mary's song, *The Magnificat*, is memorable in its rejoicing, magnifying of God and the joy of knowing Christ will be born. Mary is aware of her humble state and yet was chosen to carry the Son of God. She celebrates with her cousin Elizabeth. I hope you can join us in rejoicing with Mary as we celebrate the miraculous birth of our



Lord Jesus Christ.



And please join us at 6.30pm today for our **Carols by Candlelight**, led by Chris Short. It's not too late to bring along some mince pies for refreshments after the service - and for our Christingle Service on Christmas Eve. And it's also not too late to invite friends and neighbours along!

## Next Week (28<sup>TH</sup> Dec)

Next week's live@10 will be led by Chris Short, bringing the Christmas series to an end with a message on Zechariah's Song.

## And the week after (4<sup>TH</sup> Jan)

We have one of our relatively new members, John Jones, bringing God's Word to us at the live@10 service. There will be our first Sunday evening prayer meeting of the new year at 6.30pm.

## STAFF/OFFICE MATTERS

### Staff movements

The office will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's day. No staff will be present in the office on the Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday between Christmas and New Year with everyone trying to squeeze in the last of their holiday allowance before the end of the year!

If you have an urgent matter that needs a response, please leave a message on the answerphone and one of the team will get back to you as soon as possible. Don't forget to leave your number though so we can indeed get back to you!

#### **Senior Minister**

Chris Short

#### **PA to Senior Minister**

Sandra Taylor

#### **Church Administrator**

Colin McMahon

#### **Caretaker**

Kevin Virgo

#### **Head of Family Ministries**

Emily Jenkins

#### **Children's Ministries**

Simon Grimes

#### **CAP Debt Centre Manager**

Phil Papps

#### **CAP Debt Coach**

Nadine Crawford-Piper

#### **Treasurer**

Mark Evason

#### **Finance Assistant**

Julie Hanks

#### **Ministry Assistants**

Lucy Craggs (Women)

Tim Nunn (Discipleship)

Jez Taylor (Life Groups)

#### **Staff contact details:**

*firstname@victoriabaptist.org.uk*

(eg chris@victoriabaptist.org.uk)

#### **VBC Bank Details**

*Account Name:*

Victoria Baptist Church Trust

*Account Number:* 00010297

*Sort Code:* 40-52-40

#### **01323 737974**

Eldon Road, Eastbourne BN21 1UE

[helpdesk@victoriabaptist.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@victoriabaptist.org.uk)

[www.victoriabaptist.org.uk](http://www.victoriabaptist.org.uk)

Sun 21 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' office  
 10.00am live@10 - with Lucy Craggs  
 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

Mon 22

Tue 23

Wed 24 7.00am Prayer Meeting  
 4.00pm Christingle Service

Thu 25 10.00am Christmas Day Service with Chris Short

Fri 26 OFFICE CLOSED

Sat 27

Sun 28 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' office  
 10.00am live@10 with Chris Short

Mon 29

Tue 30

Wed 31 8.15am Community Fridge

Thu 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY

Fri 2 10.00am Outreach Prayer Meeting

Sat 3

Sun 4 9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' office  
 10.00am live@10 - with John Jones  
 6.30pm Prayer Meeting

Mon 5

Tue 6

Wed 7 7.00am Prayer Meeting  
 8.15am Community Fridge  
 10.00am Vicky Bees

Thu 8 7.30am Men's Prayer Meeting  
 2.30pm Women's Fellowship with Lucy Craggs  
 6.30pm Omega (for 18-35yr olds)  
 7.30pm Ukraine Prayer Meeting

- Fri 9    10.00am Vicky Bees  
           10.00am Outreach Prayer  
           5.00pm Kids' Club  
           7.00pm Friday Youth
- Sat 10    10.00am Flow Cafe  
           10.30am Creative Writing  
           10.30am Bookworms
- Sun 11    9.30am Prayer Meeting in Chris' office  
           10.00am All-Age service, live@10  
           6.00pm Evening Service

## Men's CURRY NIGHT

**Date -**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 7.15pm**

**Venue -**

**Ashoka 30 Cornfield Rd, BN21 4QH**

Following a number of successful curry nights, we are going to try a new venue which comes highly recommended. There are a restricted number of seats, so please can you add your name to the sign up sheet in the Welcome Centre as usual, in the New Year.



## Women's ITALIAN NIGHT

**Date - Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 7pm**

**Venue - Pomodoro e Mozzarella, Cornfield Terrace**

A sign-up sheet will appear in the Welcome Centre early in January, but get the date in your 2026 diaries!

## PRAYER DIARY : 22<sup>ND</sup> - 28<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

**Monday** Heavenly Father, open our eyes this Christmas to see the needs around us in this wonderful town of Eastbourne. Where poverty and suffering is hidden behind closed doors, help us not to look away but to seek out those in need. Soften our hearts to reflect the compassion of Jesus, who saw the crowds and the vulnerable, and was moved with mercy. Teach us to love not just in words, but in action and truth. Amen.

**Tuesday** Lord God, we lift before You those in our community who are struggling to make ends meet — families and individuals choosing between heating and food, people burdened by unmanageable debt, and those anxious about tomorrow. You are our Provider, and we ask that You would supply their daily needs and give them hope in the midst of uncertainty. May we be generous to those around us as You have been so generous to us. Amen.

**Wednesday** Father, thank You for placing us in this town for such a time as this. We believe this is no accident - in Your grace we are part of Your wonderful plan for the world and for Eastbourne. Help our church to be a light in dark places and a refuge for the weary, thereby seeing Jesus honoured in Eastbourne and beyond. Give us wisdom, generosity, and courage to serve the poor with humility and love, pointing always to the saving grace found only in Jesus Christ.

**Thursday** Hallelujah the Saviour is born! We celebrate today Your birth and the message of joy to the world. We pause for a moment and taste afresh the wonder of the meaning of this day. We marvel at Your coming to earth - born into a temporary home, without pomp and ceremony, to a humble family, in a village in the corner of the world. Jesus, we pray for those who feel forgotten — the elderly, the homeless, the bereaved, the lonely, those with broken relationships and those cut off from support. Draw near to them with Your comforting presence. Use Your people to offer friendship, dignity, and genuine care, so that no one feels unseen or unloved this Christmas.

**Friday** Gracious God, we thank You for the ministries in our town such as our CAP debt centre, the Community Fridges, Street Pastors, Beachy Head Chaplaincy, Linking Lives, the Foodbank, and many more. Thank You for charities, councils, and their staff and volunteers serving those in need. Strengthen and sustain them as they work under pressure and with limited resources. Refresh them over this Christmas period. Grant them favour, unity, and wisdom, and help us to partner well with others for the good of our community. Amen.

**Saturday** Righteous Father, we pray not only for relief, but for justice. Address the root causes of poverty in our town — unemployment, low wages, poor housing, addiction, and inequality. Raise up leaders who seek fairness and compassion, and help us to be faithful advocates for those whose voices are rarely heard. Keep us from compassion fatigue and from hopelessness in the face of injustice. Your coming at Christmas heralds the coming of the Kingdom of God, where You reign supreme and love and justice rule. Amen.

**Sunday** God of hope, in the midst of so much hardship and struggle, remind us that You are always at work, sometimes seen and sometimes unseen. We pray that those in need would encounter not only practical help, but the hope of the gospel. May our lives and the lives of all those we live amongst be transformed by Your love. May Eastbourne come to know the peace, restoration, and salvation found in Jesus Christ. Amen.

**REQUEST FOR PRAYER**

Sadly, during a health check last Tuesday (16<sup>th</sup>), Bruce Bird discovered that the cancer has returned and he now faces treatment to get on top of it.

He would very much appreciate the prayers of the church at this difficult time.



**BIBLE READING notes**



If you have ordered Bible Reading notes from Sandra, please collect them from your pigeon hole at the back of the church as soon as possible.

The pigeon-holes are also filling with Christmas cards and we would appreciate it if you would clear these out too.

**A MESSAGE FROM THE CAR PARK MARSHALS**

We have a couple of big events coming up on Sunday and on Christmas Eve and we are anticipating a very busy car park. Please would pedestrians walk through the middle section of the wall at the front of the building rather than using the car entrance and exit spaces.



## Women's Fellowship

Our lovely ladies **generously** bought and made wonderful gifts and knitted hats and matinee jackets for children in impoverished parts of Croatia. They were to be transported in shoe boxes by workers with *Living Life* this Christmas and helped by the *Red Cross* to distribute them to bring joy to the children and to make known God's love.



The Women's Fellowship meets Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm in the Small Hall during term time. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January when Lucy Craggs will be our speaker.



## The Giving Tree

What an amazingly **generous** fellowship we have at VBC! After the tremendous Gift Day we had recently, as well as the support throughout the year for CAP and Hope Lebedyn, we had a great response to the Giving Tree appeal whereby we were asking for you to purchase gifts to give to youngsters who are about to leave the Eastbourne Care System. We collected **205** presents in total and this was greeted with great delight by the social workers who came to collect them.

Thank you again for all your efforts in helping to make Christmas something special for these youngsters.

**Thank you** to all who supported Flow Café last Saturday. We raised a magnificent £400 for St. Wilfrid's Hospice, so thank you all for your **generosity** once again.



## PRAYER DIARY : 29<sup>TH</sup> December - 4<sup>TH</sup> January

This week is often known as TWIXMAS, the time between Christmas and New Year. For some people, it can be a bit of downtime after the hustle and bustle of Christmas. For others, it is filled with visits to relatives and repeated family Christmas events. Yet for others, it can feel like time in the wilderness before returning to work or restoring the usual daily routines.

With these thoughts in mind, use this week to pray through the following themes, not in any particular order or on any day, but as you feel led.

**Those who feel lost:** Many in our church family have struggled this Christmas due to grief. It may have been the first Christmas without a loved one. Pray that the Lord will comfort them through His Spirit. Pray that friends and family step in to provide company and love. Pray that those we know who are grieving will find a new purpose and plan as God leads them into a new season of life.

**Unity of our nation:** As our MPs and national leaders take a Christmas break, pray that they may find Godly wisdom to lead this land. Whatever your political colour, pray for the government, the Prime Minister and his cabinet. Pray that in 2026 and beyond, compassion becomes the foundation for decision-making, and not economics or crowd pleasing. Pray that those who seek to destroy this nation through division and hatred are thwarted and that the name of Jesus is glorified and not used for political gain.

**Peace:** Our world is in turmoil with wars, strife, and tension across the globe. Pray that those genuinely seeking peace will carry influence in negotiations in Ukraine/Russia, Palestine/Israel, Yemen, Venezuela, India/Pakistan and so many more places. Pray that leaders seek guidance and take notice of their people. Pray that in places like Nigeria, where the church is under pressure and Christians are facing increased persecution, the Lord gives them peace and protection. Pray for changed hearts and peace to reign.

**Family life:** Christmas and New Year can be a very busy time for so many families, and this can sometimes lead to tensions and arguments. Pray that hearts remain soft and tempers under control. Pray that the message of Christmas, Jesus, the king born as a baby, remains in people's hearts all year and not just this week of celebration.

**The Church:** Pray for our church, the team and all those who help make the church function. Thank God that we have such amazing facilities, and thank God for the generosity of our members in giving to the recent Gift Day. Pray for the ministries of the church, such as Children's and Youth work, CAP, Community Fridge, Men's and Women's Fellowships, Pastoral team, Girl's Brigade, the Flower Ministry team, Flow Café, and so much more! Ask God to work in the hearts of all those who are part of the church, to fill them with His Spirit.

# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

**A very Happy Christmas from all at  
Girls' Brigade!**

These photos were taken at their  
Awards Evening/Christmas Party on  
Monday. Their first session in the new  
year will be on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Jan.



# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

To all my friends at Victoria Baptist Church



Happy  
Christmas  
*and blessings in 2026*

With grateful thanks for your  
prayers and support this past year

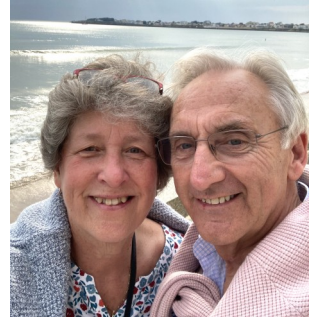
John Simmonds



We are so grateful for those who have supported us  
with prayer and encouragement during our pastoral &  
prayer ministry at Spring Harvest Holidays in France.

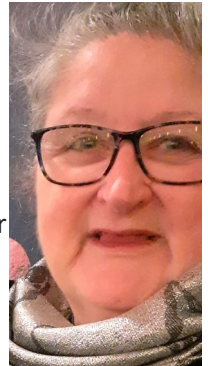
We give thanks for the opportunities set before us.  
We trust and pray Gods richest blessings of peace, love  
and hope for our church family this Christmas.

Tom & Ruth Duncanson.



Rosie & Bernie would like to  
wish all our friends at VBC a  
Happy Christmas and  
a peaceful New Year.

May the peace of Christmas  
stay with you throughout your  
days and the Holy Spirit fill  
your loved ones, to His Glory.  
Blessings from Chris Wrench.



We trust you will all be richly  
blessed this Christmas and in the  
coming year. Jez & Sandra xx



Merry Christmas  
from Chris, Emily,  
Anna, Eleanor &  
Faith Jenkins.

Looking forward  
to celebrating  
Christmas with  
you all.



## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



God's blessings and favour on you today and always,  
Mandy Bowers (Women's Fellowship)



What a joy to be part of the Victoria family as we  
celebrate Emmanuel together. Festive felicitations  
to friends and family Ian Doling



Wishing all our church family  
rich blessings at Christmas and  
throughout the coming year.  
Love from Joyce and Peter K

Happy Christmas to everyone at VBC.  
May you know the peace, love, joy  
and hope of Jesus our Saviour at  
Christmas and throughout 2026,  
David and Heather Elliston



Sending all our friends and church family at  
VBC our Christmas greetings and wishing  
you God's blessing for 2026! Peter & Karen

# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



To all friends at VBC. May you have a joyful and peaceful Christmas - God's blessing on you and those you love in the New Year. Paula



Love and prayers to all VBC friends this Christmas and for 2026. God Bless Lesley x



Wishing everyone at VBC a peaceful and happy Christmas, celebrating the birth of our Saviour. Anna



Wishing our wonderful church family a very Happy Christmas, Stephen&Helen.



Wishing all my church family a Very Happy Christmas, love Nola xx



Happy Christmas everyone. Have a great time, all our best wishes for the New Year. Love Ken and Gill Grimes.



## PRAYER DIARY : 5<sup>TH</sup> - 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

*"But one thing I do, forgetting what is behind. I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

**Monday** A new year, a new beginning. And Jesus says- *"Father, I want those You have given me to be with me"*. Heavenly Father, we thank You that You have begun a good work in each of us, and we pray that You will enable us through the power of Your Holy Spirit to carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

**Tuesday** *"Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born."* Genesis 21:5  
How easy do we find it to trust God when sometimes the answer to our prayers is to be patient. Heavenly Father, help us not to try to resolve the difficult situations in our lives by our own means . We pray that You will be at work in the tricky situations this year. Help us to learn the lessons that You reveal to us in the bible. Sarah, Abraham's wife, was not patient to let God answer her prayer in His timing which resulted in her letting her jealousy of her maidservant overshadow her joy at the birth of her own child.

**Wednesday** Go where God is leading you this year. *"The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you, He will never leave you nor forsake you"* Lord, help us to choose to only go where You are leading this year, to learn to know Your voice when You speak to us, and to choose to be obedient for our own sake knowing that You are with us, and though we may stumble, we will not fall because You will uphold us with Your hand.

**Thursday** Lord, we pray that this year we will have our minds opened to understand the scriptures better. *"Then the Lord opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures - the counsellor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things"*

**Friday** *"At once they left their nets and followed Him"* Mark 1:18. Lord we bring before You in prayer the things that are cluttering our lives and our minds and preventing us from seeing ourselves as You see us. In the place where You have put us and with the people we are connected to, help us to reflect Your love in the world. In Mark 1:10,11 Jesus has a moment of revelation which changes His whole life in an instant. His world and ours will never be the same again.

**Saturday** Lord, we pray that VBC and all Christian churches will find effective ways to reach unchurched people this year.

**Sunday** Lord, this year put a new hymn of praise to our God in our mouths. Guide us to be strong and courageous and not to be discouraged for the lord is with us, the joy of the Lord is our strength. Praise be to our God. Amen

## Accommodation Needed

A family of 4 (+dog), with VBC connections, are looking for ground-floor (for health reasons) accommodation. Please contact the office if you feel you can help.



# CHRISTMAS

It's all about the children, toys and turkey too  
Gifts from aunts and uncles, money from Auntie Sue  
Brussel sprouts and sweet mulled wine and tinsel all around  
Though when I said money from Auntie Sue, she only gave a pound.

This morning, it's stockings from Santa-Clause  
Hastily unwrapped without a pause  
It's funny you know, but every year, he wraps them just like mum  
Satsumas, nuts, and chocolate vanish into my tum.

We're always ready for breakfast, we've been up since half past three  
So it's bacon and egg with dripping fried bread gobbled down with glee.  
Christmas lunch at half past one, although we've already eaten a ton  
Of quality Street and Heroes and a selection box, I won  
In competition with my father, who let me win 'cause I'm his son.

At three o'clock, the box goes on, it won't be the Queen this year,  
It's King Charles' message on bbc, spreading the Christmas cheer.  
The King you say, a new one, just like in the days of old  
The story about the new King, shouldn't that also be told?

The story of Jesus the saviour, who came to save us all  
Born of the Virgin Mary in a lowly cattle stall?  
You see, it's not just about the children and the presents that Santa brings  
It's all about the one child, for whom a host of angels sings  
It's glory to God in the highest, all hail the king of Kings  
Glory to God and peace on earth is the gift that the saviour brings.

*Richard Kirk*



## FLOWER MINISTRY

The flowers last week were donated by  
**Ian & Jane Parratt**



*I just want to thank VBC for  
the beautiful bunch of  
flowers that I received this  
morning. I feel very  
blessed  
God bless you all - YK*

A huge thank you to all of you who have donated flowers in 2025, some of you more than once! Whilst it's lovely to see the flowers on a Sunday morning, the real satisfaction comes from delivering them (usually 4 bunches) on a Monday morning to people who are celebrating, mourning, in need of encouragement, or have health issues. If you have never been involved in this ministry please see Chris McMahon for more details.

Looking ahead, we are still in need of someone to donate on 18<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> Jan, plus a number of dates in February and March.