



LIFESTREAMS' NEWS-SHEET

WELCOME

Winter 2022

The occasional journal of the Lifestreams Churches, Southend-on-sea, Essex

Winter with Lifestreams

As I'm writing, it is really raining hard...and persistently! It was only a few months ago that we were close to a hosepipe ban and the reservoirs were drying out to such an extent that the fear was that we'd never recover. I wonder if the reservoirs are full now?

That was the beginning of the Autumn newsletter, but time has gone so fast that it has now changed into the winter one..... sincerely apologies for the delay.

We go through many different periods or seasons of life of struggles and celebrations and just being...average, I suppose. There is a only consistency that we know that God, the unchangeable who loves and cares for all of us, even if we don't understand how, or don't recognise His touch in our lives, is in control. It is us humans that distance ourselves from God and we pay the consequences. The result of ignoring climate change is becoming more and more apparent each season. Floods and droughts, high winds, hot temperatures around the globe are evidence that unless huge changes are made in the way we live there will be more destruction, and misery in appalling conditions. Now is the time to take urgent action. We may not agree with the methods of organisations like 'Just Stop Oil' but they are getting our attention. The church is beginning to take action. Saint Peter's have achieved Bronze status from A Rocha and we are working towards Silver. The other churches are on a similar course. You will see bird feeders and plants, and



bug areas on all three of our sites. More major changes are being explored. Here we



see some of the planters and the 'bug hotel' at Saint Cedd's.

Now we rapidly move into winter, and it feels like it after a cold snap with lots of thick frosty days, though we had no snow! Our thoughts turn to Advent and Christmas and then 2023.

We enter a new season for Lifestreams too. The bishops have decided that the time has come to remove the suspension, that is on

NewWine

The United conference is on in 2023, this time at the home of Detling, near Maidstone. It's only an hour's journey from here. Bookings are open and the early bird rate closes on 19th January. I would encourage everyone who possibly can, to come this year, it will be really special and close by.....you could even come for a day



or an evening! We will show more promotions over the next few months. Pray about it!!

.....continued from front cover page

Saint Stephen's and officially designate me as Vicar. Here is an extract from the Church Times making the announcement. In reality you won't see anything different but there will be an



acceptance and willingness to share has been an inspiration and I pray that it may spread around the world.

So I wish you a blessed Christmas time and we will be back with more news and views in the coming year.

God bless. **Colin**

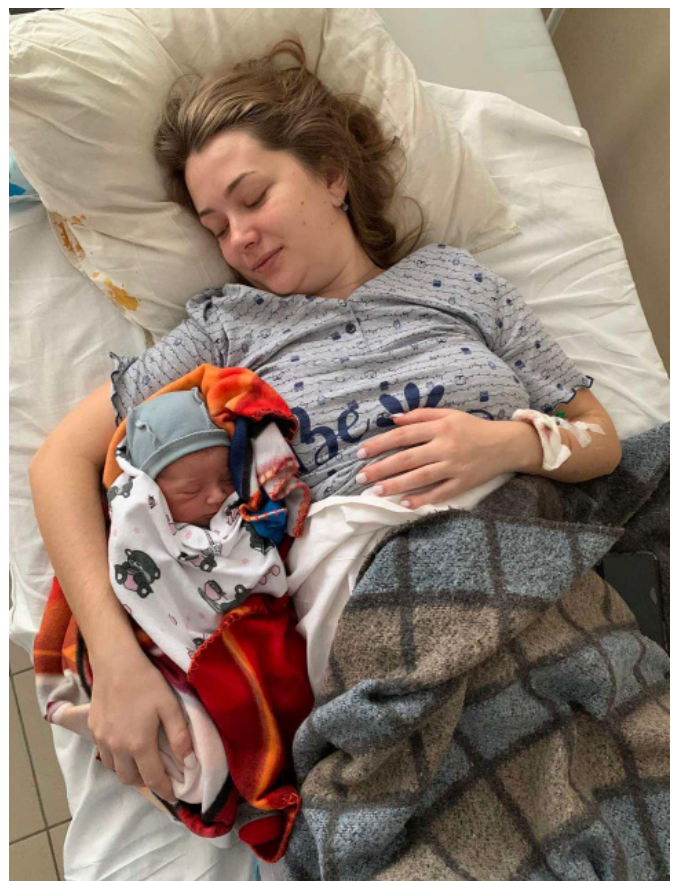
Congratulations to Ivanna and Yuri following the birth of Matvi, back in Ukraine. The family are doing well and we hope to hear from them again soon in the new year.



opportunity to celebrate this new ministry as I will be inducted at Saint Stephen's on Sunday 26th February 2023, 6pm, so please come along and raise the profile once again for Saint Stephen's in the area.

Christmas is a great time to invite friends, neighbours and colleagues to join in the journey and celebrations. This year we have a 'Calm Christmas' corner in the chapel, where folk can remember those who may struggle for various reasons during this 'jolly' season. You can email, call the office to write a name or a prayer on one of the gold baubles available for this purpose.

I have been very moved by the participation of the students and staff and Project 49 users with whom we have recently shared the Christmas story. The encouragement and





"There always seem to be something going on here." Someone remarked to me one morning while we were chatting. They were amazed that a church community would be so active. But that

is the reality. The CoffeeHouse was relatively quiet over the summer period but during the Autumn and winter months there have been more people gathering on the occasional basis as well as regulars. The CoffeeHouse meets the needs of so many people, just to meet others and talk, for others it is a place of training and work experience, Heidi continues to take the lead role although now with reduced hours, to suit her family and other commitments. We are so, so grateful for the volunteers who regularly put in a long shift to make and serve coffees as well as all the other tasks. The convivial and safe atmosphere created is somewhat unique and highly valued by the customers. There is still plenty of space so do pop along whenever you can and bring some friends. It was such a shame that Knit and Natter had to stop because of the change in bus routes but in recent news First buses are taking a look at how they can hopefully we will again soon.

LIFE @SAINT PETER'S

Yinka, our Parish Safeguarding Officer recently held a training session for staff and volunteers.

Unfortunately due to safeguarding we can't always take photos of events involving children but here are a few of the light party, The Elves Brunch.



We kick off the Advent and Christmas season with the Southend Band, with the addition of plenty of cake!!



Bernard and Cornelia preach at the carol service (below)

Chuks (right) in full swing and Bernard (above, right) presides at midweek communion.



Saying thanks is important. We expressed that this autumn but hosting a cheese and wine event for the volunteers. Heidi created a great spread (as you can see here). It was an informal evening and very enjoyable, so

thanks again to all you folks who help make Lifestreams on all three sites tick.

You probably don't think straight away of the behind the scenes events. Safeguarding is high on the agenda for Lifestreams and



life at 213, saint stephen's

Following on from our food hygiene inspection and being graded a 5, We are now serving tea and toast daily although we have tried to encourage this as a regular session on a Thursday morning. We are also offering soup and a roll each day between 11-2 and using our space as a warm hub for those that may need it.

Our latest group which will start on Monday 7th November is Monday menopause and Women's well-being. As this is very much 'on topic' now, I am hoping that over the next few weeks it will become a popular group to attend. In addition to this, I would like to start a well man group on a Friday morning. I am looking

for someone to co-ordinate this.

Our half term events were good fun, we made tomato soup during our cookery session, we only had 2 attendees, but they enjoyed themselves and learnt that a few low-cost ingredients could make a tasty, healthy soup.

Autumn craft was attended by 5 children, they were given freedom to be creative with paint and leaves collected from the garden. It was messy, but they enjoyed mixing paint and making their pictures. They also had time to play in the garden and make apple crumble.

The community Fridge has been very busy. Co-op have slightly changed their



procedures, so we have negotiated a slightly earlier pick up time at about 6.30pm otherwise it isn't worth our time collecting. The harvest festival donations have helped us provide some much-needed donations to the community.

During October we gave out 175.415 kg of food. (The weight of an adult Panda) We have between 5 and 9 visitors each day. Many of these visitors are regular, but we still meet new people each week.

Dawn

LIFE @SAINT CEDD'S

Over the Autumn and early winter period life at Saint Cedd's has become a hive of activity with community events. Oasis is regularly visited by the local councillors and South Essex Homes as a place to meet residents, alongside ATF with whom we partner. Liz has organised several events including a Christmas gift fare, where Santa lightened his load and nearly ran out of gifts!

The Lifestreams Memorial Service was held here with quite a number of people

remembering their loved ones.

Joe has decided to relinquish his official role but may still be volunteering at various events, so we wish him well and will continue to support him as much as possible.

We look forward to Leanne joining the team in January 2023.

We were so pleased to host a Christmas event for St Christopher's school during advent, where about sixty students took part in carol singing and the Christmas story telling. It was a brilliant



and unique occasion. We are planning to provide worship for families with special Needs on a regular basis during 2023 and look forward to seeing some of the families return. If you want to get involved then give us a call.



Christmas, my chance for another story...from Bernard Noghiu

It is said that, after Maria and Joseph knocked on the doors of many inns and houses, they decided to try at an inn on the outskirts of Bethlehem. Maria asked Joseph to stop insisting, understanding that the city is extremely crowded because of those who came to register at the census ordered by the Emperor. Maria was ready to give birth, and her strength was leaving her now, after a long journey and searching for a place to spend the night. Joseph encouraged her and told her that at that isolated inn they would surely find a place for them too. They knocked on the door and waited. It was late at night. After a few minutes that seemed to Maria to be as long as a year, the innkeeper, with a sour face, carrying a torch, opened the door and without waiting to find out why Joseph and Maria were in front of his door he shouted that there is no place left. While Joseph explained that Maria was ready to give birth, the innkeeper slammed the door and went about his business.

A few days after that night, the innkeeper heard stories about angels, kings from afar, shepherds and even officials from Herod's court who would have announced that a baby was born in Bethlehem, who is the true Messiah and that all these happened in a stable on the outskirts of the city, right near his inn. Curious, he went to investigate and found there the man and the woman who knocked on his door that cold night. The man was working hard trying to make the stable a pleasant place as possible - as pleasant as a stable can be for living in - and the young woman was swinging something wrapped in a big ball of cloth and at the same time she was singing a barely audible lullaby.

In the meantime, there was a continuous flow of comings and goings to and from the stable. People from all walks of life came with small packages that they placed in front of the woman. Taking courage, the innkeeper also approached. The woman raised her eyes

and whispered: do you want to see him? The innkeeper saw that there was a wonderful child. Without knowing why, he fell to his knees and began to cry repeating: give me one more chance to receive you, give me one more chance to receive you, give me one more chance...

Without knowing if the newborn or someone else was talking to him, the innkeeper heard a crystalline voice telling him: I'll give you one more chance. Starting next year and until children are born on earth, you will visit all the houses with children and bring them gifts so that they feel that they are welcomed and loved. And your name will be Father Christmas.

I reconstructed this story from what I remember from a Christmas play, in which I also played the role of one of the wise men, when I was 10 years and 4 months old. In the meantime, I forgot about that play, but when I got older, the story from that play comes back to my memory, every year, at Christmas. And I don't know why I feel that Christmas is always a new chance for me too. It is a time when I am happy to be given a new chance, I feel that I am loved, that I matter to someone, but I also know that I am given a new chance to make someone feel that he or she is loved, received and that he or she matters to me.

In fact, what else is Christmas if not the truth that we are loved by Jesus, received and that we matter to him? What about him for us? I don't think it's appropriate to get lost in lamenting every moment when we ignored him and refused him. It is more important to capitalize on the chance we have now.

What do you say? Do you agree to enjoy this chance and capitalize on it?

I want to take this chance to meet you, to receive you, to be happy with you, but also to be received. After all, this is Christmas. Let's live our chance to be with: with Jesus, with others, with ourselves. Emmanuel - God with us!

Revd. Bernard Noghiu



Holding on together when the world seems to be falling apart

I am convinced that you are on topic with what is happening around us. I don't know about you, but I sometimes have the impression that the world around me seems to be falling apart. When I try to put everything together, it seems to me that I have in front of me a puzzle whose pieces no longer fit no matter how hard I try to put them together. Of course, I have no intention of making a chronicle of the last two months, but I will point out some of the changes to create a general picture.

... 3 prime ministers

No, it's not a typo. In two months, no more than 3 prime ministers wandered through the famous apartment number 10. Each of them promised the best solution to stabilize our world, which seems to be spinning too fast, and we risk being thrown off the axis. The third prime minister has barely landed. So let's wait until he reads his plan. But not for long.

jumps, and jumps...

It's not about the electrons from the electrical bill, nor about the mega-calories of gas, but about their price. The energy companies send us letters almost every month so that we should be well prepared and don't panic. At least I have been very sought after by these companies in the last 3 months.

higher salaries, only for dogs, ... not for puppies

An envelope that claims to be made of "environmentally friendly" paper landed in my house. I read the first part and I was filled with joy. The joy only lasts until I reach the second paragraph. The first paragraph announced a salary increase, and the second one told me that it was not for those like me with a low salary, but for those with a slightly higher salary. So the environmentally friendly envelope has returned to the environment. I don't know how friendly this time. Not with the environment, with me.

same basket, but more expensive... or it's time to reduce the basket

Initially, I had the impression that the store next to me had enlarged the basket and I didn't realize it, but after examining the basket I was dragging behind me, I realized that it was the same plastic basket, with wheels, squeamish and filthy. Unwashed since I was born... And I looked to see what is the cause of the higher cost. I read the

receipt as carefully as I hadn't done in years. Each thing bought had different numbers next to it. It is normal for the pile to have a different figure than two or three months ago.

do not take your children shopping

Yes. It's exactly what a great advisor from I don't know which great bank told us through the dead eye of the TV. So what do we do with the children? Aah, done with their freedom to choose something else. Even the type of candy they want to taste. Freedom and choice... Stop talking about all this for the sake of survival.

.....

I can go on endlessly with the presentation of the pieces of my puzzle. But you know them well. Maybe even better than me. But where are we in all this? As Christians, we know that we must come to the aid of those who are less fortunate than us. Charities know the same thing. The Church is doing everything it can. But we all already feel fatigue and exhaustion. And those at the top come up with plans. Of course not for them, because they don't need it. They are not in the situation of having to survive (maybe only more than 45 days in the position they have).

Prayer helps us, hope keeps us alive, love motivates us to act. But it's not just about doing something for those in need, but to act by asking those who lead us what they are doing up there, beyond laws and plans. Let's ask them about concrete actions and their consequences. I know that through our vote we are delegating their decisions to them. As Christians we must make our voice heard. As a Church, we must unite our voices to be stronger. The way we unite our voices and hearts in prayer to God must be a model for the way we unite our voices to demand concrete actions from those who lead us. At any level. The Christian is called to be a member of this society not only through his deeds, but also through the active way in which he fights for his rights and those around him. And this includes questioning those who have the power about what they do.

I read on many posters that being silent is not the way to avoid abuse. Even in the case of those who lead us, being silent is not the way to make them do their job. Again, at any level.

It seems to us that our voice is too weak... Let's unite with other voices, as many as possible. The approaching new year must be a time in which we aim to be more civically engaged Christians, for ourselves and for those around us.

Revd. Bernard Noghiu

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Lifestreams has responded in many different ways this season by giving a helping hand for those most vulnerable and in need.

A call to provide clothes and toiletries for people at HARP led to several large boxes of goods being transported by Ann and her husband. Ann was overwhelmed by the response and HARP have written to express their grateful thanks.

Lifestreams continues to support families in need. People generously gave food and financial gifts for six families identified with particular difficulties this Christmas in the Saint Cedd's area.

Special thank you to all who donated items.

This kind of support takes place throughout the year, not just at Harvest or Christmas so please keep up the generous work.

PASTORAL CARE

How can we support you at this time?

Please give Colin or Andreas (300402) a ring to speak to someone, arrange shopping or to be added to our prayer list.

WORSHIP ON SITE AND ONLINE

(online services
marked with
sunflower)

WEEKDAYS:

**8am Morning Prayer
Monday to Saturday**



Live on Facebook and YouTube channels

8pm - Night Prayer



A quiet time to reflect upon the day.

WEDNESDAYS:

**10.00am - Holy Communion taking
turns at all three venues**



FRIDAYS:

6.00pm - Worship, live from 213



Contemplative modern sung worship with words on screen.

SUNDAYS:

**10.00am - Doors open for informal
worship for everyone, with communion**



**3.30pm at Saint Cedd's for a more
traditional Holy Communion**



PRAYER BOARD

Office 01702 300402
lifestreams.org.uk
[@LifeStreamsUK](https://www.instagram.com/LifeStreamsUK)

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

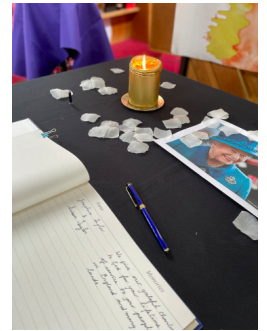
- Bishops Guli and John, Archdeacon Mike, Area Dean Louise Williams
- Our clergy, staff and ministry team -
- All those who are grieving following the death of a loved one. We pray for the family and friends of people known personally to us.

Please send us details of anyone that you would like us to pray for especially at this time.

Remembering and honouring Queen Elizabeth II



So much has been said and recorded about the influence and inspiration, duty, loyalty and faith of the late Queen - we played our part for the community to pay their respects, sign a book of condolence and attend various services at all the churches and opened up Saint Peter's to watch the funeral as part of the community.



Reverend for 46 days

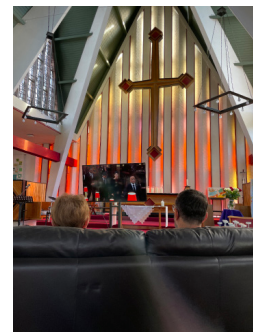
What do you think about? Are you impressed as I am? If I measure these days in time, it is not very long, but I measure them in great experiences, joy, opportunities and challenges, and I consider myself lucky and blessed by God. Don't be very jealous of me, because there is plenty of room for all of you, with one condition, speak with God first. Do you need help? I am the right person. I don't have too much experience but a lot off fresh advices. Sorry, one small problem. I'm a bit busy at the moment, join the queue. But what do you expected? I am reverend!

Serving God and others I don't feel the pressure that I have to be perfect, but the desire to share the happiness that I have in my heart. Do not understand me wrong, my life doesn't go smooth. I have worries, doubts and fears but I never feel alone.

I am confident that with God on my side and your love, prayer and support I will succeed in my ministry.



Paddington came to meet us and at Café Church we celebrated memories of the Queen with marmalade sandwiches which could of course be eaten straightaway, or tucked into handbags for later!!



Revd. Cornelia Noghiu