

Christmas is not cancelled ... it is just different :-)

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1: 14)

This Christmas let's marvel again at the wonder of the incarnation. God was not put off by a virus infected world. It was not 'safe' for him and yet he did not keep his distance. Instead he became flesh and 'moved into our neighbourhood'. He entered our sick world in order to bring us healing. 'Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!'

Yours in Christ
John Smuts

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Happy Christmas from RLBC!

Since the Church Office is about to shut for Christmas and New Year we wanted to send out one last message so that everyone is clear about what is going on...

- So that Staff can have a rest, the Church Office will be shut from Weds. Dec. 23rd - Fri. Jan. 1st and will reopen on Mon. Jan. 4th. In an emergency, please contact our Secretary, Jermaine, on 07958 589486.
- this is the weekly email for this week. So there will be no email on Friday.
- The Christmas Day service (10.30am) and Recommitment service (11am, Jan. 3rd) will be in the church (if you book a ticket) and online. Please do not come to church if you are in a vulnerable category or in a bubble with those who are.
- The service on Sun. Dec. 27th, 11am will be online only - the whole service will be pre-recorded so that Staff can have the weekend off. This online service will include Communion so please have some bread and wine/juice ready in advance.
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- After the 11am service finishes on Sunday, 27th Dec. there will be a 30 minute zoom call for anyone who wants to chat. It will start straight after the service finishes. There is no agenda. After some time all together, people will be automatically put into small groups so that they can simply chat, catch up ... or get to know people at RLBC.
- There will be a short, informal Watch Night service on FBlive and on the RLBC website at 11.30pm Thurs. Dec. 31st
- Refresh Cafe is happening on Zoom 10.30-11.30am on Saturday Jan. 2nd (not Boxing Day).
- Since we cannot meet informally together please continue to share our online resources with family and friends. E.g. The whole of the Carol Service will be on our website for a week - <https://www.rlbc.org.uk/carol-service/> Also keep watching the Advent Calendar as we build to Christmas Day - <https://www.rlbc.org.uk/advent/>
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- Tier 4 restrictions mean that only Sunday services, Foodbank and Crossroads ministry are allowed to continue in the church building in January.
- We will update you in the New Year when we hear more from the government.

Christmas Services

Here are our plans for services over Christmas and the New Year. Please note carefully which services are live (in the church) and which are online only. (All services will be available on our website.)

Friday Dec. 25th 10.30am - Christmas Day service (live + online)

Sunday Dec. 27th 11am - Service (online only)

Thursday Dec. 31st 11.30pm - Watchnight Service (FBlive + website only)

Sunday Jan. 3rd 11am - Recommitment Sunday (live + online)

Making the most of Christmas

As promised, John and Karen have produced a short video that shows how you can make the most of Christmas this year - e.g. how to use Zoom, how to share on social media, how to introduce the gospel etc.

The video is on our website and can be watched via this link - <https://youtu.be/cY0Kv-y-K50>

Christmas Offering 2020

During December we invite you to make a Christmas offering in support of FirmFoundation and Embrace.

FirmFoundation

FirmFoundation is a registered charity which helps relieve the immediate suffering of the homeless, while working with them to find a practical and sustainable solution to their needs. Their ethos is to demonstrate God's love for humanity in a practical, Christian way to those who are homeless, vulnerably housed or at risk of becoming homeless. FirmFoundation values the image of God in all people and respect the beliefs and cultures of all whom they come into contact with.

FirmFoundation was birthed through a collection of Churches in Harrow who wanted to make a difference. The charity is now working across the Borough of Harrow assisting those who are single and homeless regardless of circumstance.

Please use this link to give online – <https://www.rlbc.org.uk/christmas-offering-2020/>

Embrace the Middle East

Embrace the Middle East is a Christian charity with over 160 years' experience helping people of all faiths and none to free themselves from a life of poverty and injustice.

Together with local Christian communities they are bringing lasting change to the Middle East through healthcare, education and community development projects.

If you would like to make a donation this can be done by online banking, CAF Donate or by cheque.

Giving by bank transfer

Gifts may be made directly to the church bank account:

Account name: Rayners Lane Baptist Church,
Sort code: 40 52 40, Account number: 00022474

So that we can allocate your gift to the Christmas offering, please type Christmas in the payee reference.

If you have completed a gift aid declaration, we will claim gift aid on your donation.

CAF Donate

You may also give through CAF Donate <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/15219>

A small charge is made to the church for gifts given in this way, and if you are a UK taxpayer you can gift aid your donation.

Giving by cheque

If you would like to make a gift by cheque, please make your cheque payable to Rayners Lane Baptist Church and place your cheque in an envelope marked 'Christmas offering'. Your cheque may be given in at church during office hours or at a Sunday service, if you have an invitation to the service. If you have completed a gift aid declaration we will claim gift aid on your donation.

We thank you for your generosity and for your support for the Christmas offering.

Weekly and Monthly Offering envelopes 2021

Usually at this time of year offering envelopes would have been prepared for those who regularly use them. However, as many regular givers have changed the way in which they are giving their offerings this has not been done in order to avoid wasting the envelope packs. Please therefore let me know if you still require envelopes for next year and if you want weekly or monthly packs. I will then prepare these and make sure that you receive them to use in the coming year. My Email address and home telephone number can be found in Church Suite. Many thanks for your continued financial support of the work at RLBC and I look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Davis

Christianity Explored Course

Christianity Explored gives people time and space to think about the big questions of life and to explore the life of the person at the heart of the Christian faith, Jesus Christ. Over 7 sessions, involving an excellent DVD series, guests explore the identity, mission and call of Jesus – who he is, why he came and what it means to follow him. All are given the opportunity to ask questions or just to listen.

This course will run online via Zoom at 8pm on Tuesday evenings starting on Tuesday 12th January 2021. Please sign up using the following link and we will be in touch nearer the time with login details.

<https://raynerslanebaptist.churchsuite.co.uk/events/pab73rsn>

This Week: December 21st - 27th

Fri, 25th	10.30am	Christmas Day Service
Sun, 27th	11.00am	Sunday Worship

Future Events – January 2021

Sun, 3rd	11.00am	Recommitment Sunday
Thurs. 7th	7.30pm	Youth Group Meeting
Fri, 8th	8.00pm	Tamil Fellowship (Zoom)

Sun, 10th	9.45am 11.00am	Sunday Club online Sunday Worship
Mon, 11th	11.00am 8.00pm	Toddlers FB Live Leadership Team Meeting
Thurs, 14th	8.00pm	Home Group Launch
Mon, 18th	11.00am	Toddlers FB Live
Sun, 17th	9.45am 11.00am	Sunday Club online Sunday Worship
Tues, 19th	8.00pm	BLT
Thurs, 21st	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting
Sun, 24th	3.00pm	Church Members' Meeting

Church Office Hours

Please note that the Church Office will be closed from Wednesday, 23rd December 2020 till Friday, 1st January 2021. In an emergency, please contact our Secretary, Jermaine, on 07958 589486/ secretaryrlbc@gmail.com

Church office - 020 8868 6772/ churchoffice@rlbc.org.uk.

COVID-19 Support & Information: www.rlbc.org.uk/coronavirus