

CHALK FARM CORPS SUNDAY NEWSLETTER



A voice of one calling:
“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”
(Isaiah 40: 3-5, NIV)

This is the first Sunday in Advent and the Christmas Tree is up! Our hall is beautifully decorated and the Advent wreath is in place on our holiness table. The busy activity of the annual Christmas Present Appeal and food hampers for families in need is well underway alongside our continued work to support the street homeless, but the practicalities of running these programmes present challenges. The final homeless drop in of the season will be held on Wednesday 16th December with a Christmas dinner being served to each socially distanced guest at separate tables. Sadly other Christmas traditions are curtailed due to the pandemic restrictions.

Gathered worship will take place on the final Sunday before Christmas when our worship hall will be available with social distancing in place enabling us to celebrate Christmas together in a reflective way. Sadly we will be unable to sing our favourite carols this year but we may listen to them and appreciate afresh the truths they proclaim. The Christmas day meal for the lonely is sadly not able to take place this year and we are awaiting confirmation from the authorities as to if our band are permitted to play carols and fundraise or not.

In all this I would like us each to be aware of the *‘reason for the season’*. Advent is about preparing the way to welcome and celebrate the coming of Christ. This welcome is to be a deeply personal one and I suggest more so in 2020. The traditional business of advent services, carolling and shopping to prepare for the feast is significantly reduced. This gives opportunity to focus upon Christmas in a different way. You may take opportunity to work through personal reflections and a daily reading guide or simply sit and light a Advent candle each day in your quiet time. Opportunity may be grasped to sing carols at home with Songs of Praise on the TV and radio programmes. Some may access our

prayers around the wreath video online and other Salvation Army services.

I put to you that preparation for Christmas will not be so much a practical one this year but a more focused spiritual one so let us embrace it. In Isaiah 40 the reader is extolled to prepare the way for the Lord. This call is echoed by John the Baptist in each of the Gospels (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3: 4-6; John 1: 23). Advent is just about preparing the way to receive Christ.

When Christmas day comes, whether alone or with someone else, let us be ready to celebrate the holy birth of our personal Lord and Saviour. He is one guest who is always welcome into our homes and faces no restriction from outside authority. The question is if you are ready to welcome Him in this Christmas 2020.

God bless you,
Michael
Captain Michael J Kinnear, Commanding Officer

Christmas service, Sunday 20 December

Celebrate Christmas at Chalk Farm Corps with us at a socially-distanced service. To keep everyone safe we will have a booking system and everyone will need to wear a face covering (unless exempt). Watch this space for more details in the weeks ahead!

Captain Michael interviewed by Fortress Radio

Sunday at 9.30am: Listen to Captain Michael's interview on Fortress Radio about the work of Chalk Farm Corps in lockdown, and his recognition in Good Housekeeping's National Treasure awards. **Listen on Sunday morning at www.fortressradio.online**

New Charlie Ratchford Centre

The builders have handed over the new Charlie Ratchford Centre to Camden Council. We look forward to seeing what services for older people are provided at the centre.

Appointments Conference, 29 November - 3 December

Next week is a strategically significant week in the life of the UKI territory and your prayers are much needed as THQ Personnel, Service Heads and Divisional Commanders gather virtually via Zoom for the Territorial Appointments Conference.

This is a very intense week of prayer and discussion for all those involved, as decisions are made in respect of cadets receiving their first appointment and officers changing appointment in 2020.

Into the Wild: Incarnation - tidings of discomfort and joy

The latest 'Into the Wild' study is included with this newsletter. Discuss this chapter at a Zoom gathering on Monday 7 December at 7.30pm - to receive the Zoom link sign up at www.eepurl.com/g26lob. You can also share your thoughts on the Into the Wild Facebook Group: www.facebook.com/groups/606114346772568.



A prayer for healing and protection (London Oratory – adapted)

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness.

At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus, may they regain their health and strength.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have lost loved ones, as they worry and grieve, be their comfort and protect them from illness and despair.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with prudence and compassion for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve.

Thank you that you are Immanuel, God with us, by our side in the midst of this time of uncertainty and sorrow, grant us your peace. Amen.

Song of the week

O come, O come, Immanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Song of God appear.

Rejoice, Rejoice!
Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
Who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe:

O come, thou rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of Hell thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave:

O come, thou dayspring, come and
cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight:

O come, thou key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly Home;
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery.

Latin 13th century,
translated by John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

Contact us

Office Telephone: 020 7485 1605

Email:
chalk.farm.corps@salvationarmy.org.uk

Web:
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/chalk-farm

Facebook:
facebook.com/ChalkFarmSalvationArmy

Ephesians 1: 15-17

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

On the internet

Sunday at 11am

Join Regent Hall corps for a virtual Sunday meeting on YouTube:
youtube.com/user/ediprodv

Wednesday at 8pm

Watch the Salvation Army carol service, "Christmas at Home", filmed in part at the Royal Albert Hall.
youtube.com/user/salvationarmyvideo

On the radio

Sunday at 3pm, Radio 3

A Service for Advent with Carols, live from St John's College, Cambridge.

On the television

Sunday at 10.30am, BBC One

A service for Advent Sunday from Brecon Cathedral.

Sunday at 12.20pm, BBC One

Songs of Praise: Aled Jones presents the boys' semi-final of the BBC Young Chorister of the Year.