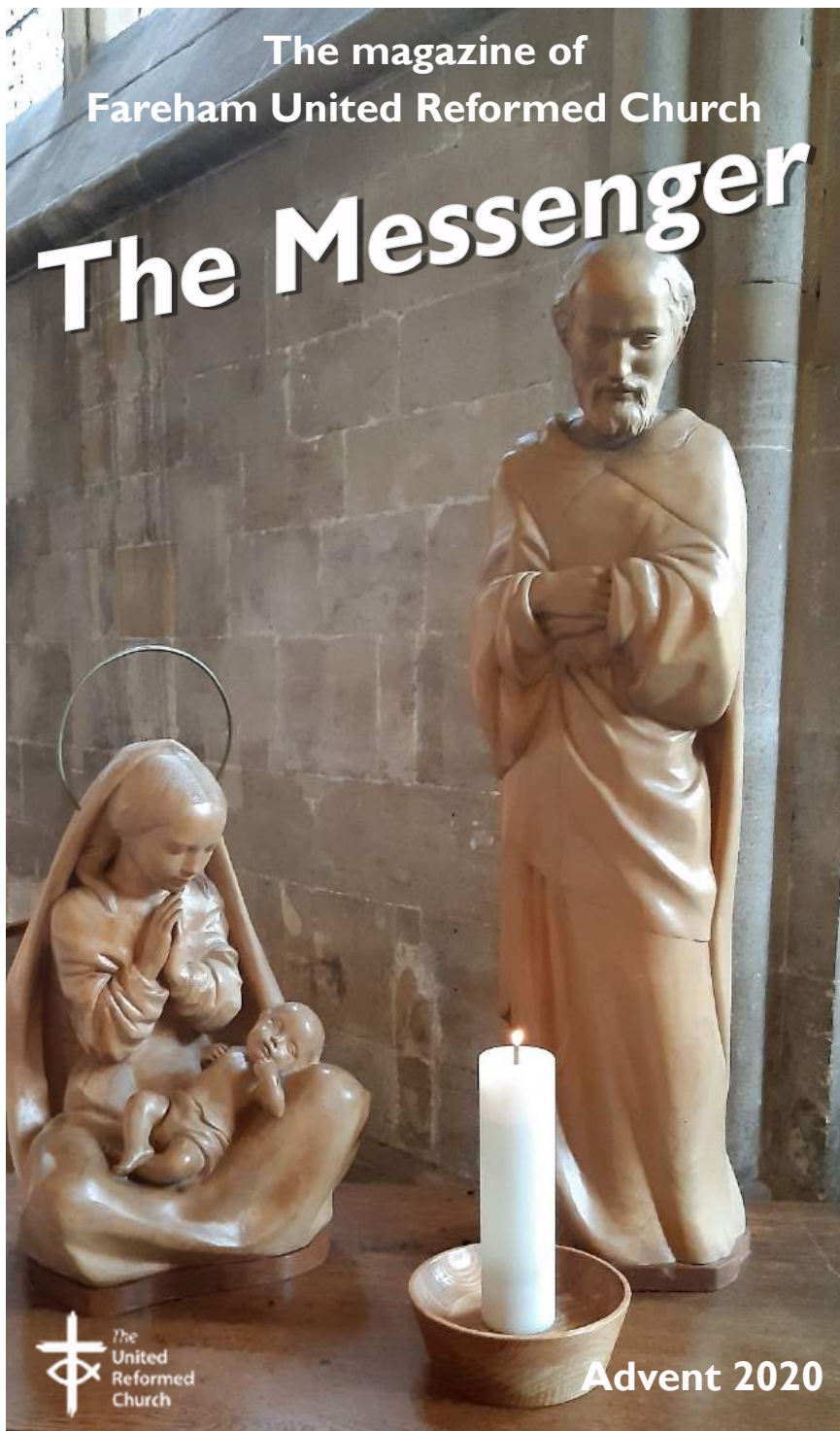


The magazine of  
Fareham United Reformed Church

# The Messenger



# Prayer suggestions for December 2020

**To Ponder:** Isaiah chapter 7 and Luke chapters 1 and 2 v 1-14

**Pray every week for.....** Our Elders and Church Officers as they seek the way forward for Fareham URC and care for the congregation and those leading worship.

## 1st – 5th December

Give thanks for all those working hard to produce a vaccine  
Pray for Bible Study on Zoom 2nd December  
Pray for those struggling with financial problems, loss of jobs and homes.

## 5th – 12th December

Give thanks for the increased number sharing in online worship  
Pray for University students and staff  
Pray for all those who are being abused in any way around the world  
Pray that everyone will wash their hands, keep their distance and wear a mask

## 13th- 19th December

Give thanks for Doctors, Nurses and all frontline workers and volunteers  
Pray for those whose businesses are in danger of possible closure  
Pray for all who make decisions which affect many people

## 20th – 26th December

Give thanks for Jesus Christ our Lord, Saviour and Redeemer  
Pray for God's blessings on Christmas services all over the world  
Christians Together in Fareham Alternative Christmas Meal



## 27th- 31st December

Give thanks for all those who have supported and helped you in 2020  
Pray for everyone who has been bereaved during 2020  
Ask God to bless those you know and love in 2021

## For reflection

**All my hope on God is founded;  
he doth still my trust renew,  
me through change and chance he  
guideth,  
only good and only true.**

**God unknown,  
he alone  
calls my heart to be his own.**  
*Neander, Joachim, 1650-1680*

# Advent: A Time of Hope

Dear Friends,

As we come towards the end of what has not been an easy year, and Moira asked me if I would write something for the December Messenger, which would cover Advent, Christmas and New Year, I wondered what might be a good theme and the one that almost immediately came to mind was HOPE. So I share some thoughts about hope .

One definition of hope is to trust in, wait for, look for, or desire something or someone; or to expect something beneficial in the future.

As we move into Advent - the four weeks before we celebrate Christmas - we remember more than 2,000 years ago, the birth of Jesus. In our church we normally mark the progress through this time in church with an Advent ring of candles, one being lit each week. A kind of countdown to



the time to celebrate and give thanks.

We do so with hope and expectation.

Advent will be a time when young children write letters to Santa with a list of those things they would like to receive for Christmas. Families prepare for celebrating together and hopefully time spent with those they love..

All this towards the end of a year which, because of the pandemic, with lockdowns, separation and for many concerns which weigh heavy, has not been easy.

Whatever your hopes I expect we all hope for good news and some

sort of normality as we also give thanks for those who are working to try to allow this to happen.

People have, of course, throughout time had hopes and have watched and waited expectantly for their fulfilment.

As far back the eighth century BC the prophet Isaiah proclaimed

*‘How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation.’*

*Isaiah 52:7-9*

Many of his prophecies revealed good news about the coming of the long awaited Messiah who would show God’s love and reveal the promise of salvation.

How wonderful that we in 2020 can celebrate that Jesus, the Messiah, was born in Bethlehem and three years later died on a cross, was buried and rose again, a once for all sacrifice for humanity, for us.

On Christmas Day we **must** give thanks and rejoice, no matter what our situation or who we are with, as we remember the greatest gift ever given - God sent His Son to walk with us, demonstrate love for all and be revealed as our Redeemer - Immanuel, God with us.

Christmas Day is a day of celebration and so should every day be.

As we move forward through Advent, celebrate at Christmas and greet a New Year, here are words written by Minnie Haskins (1875-1957) which King George VI used in his Christmas broadcast to encourage people in December

1939, when Great Britain was at war. Shared it as a part of his message of hope, and which I pray will bring you reassurance and hope for each and every day.

## **'God Knows'**

*'And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."*

*And he replied:*

*"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand  
of God.*

*That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known  
way."*

*So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into  
the night'*

May the Lord bless you with hope through Advent, Christmas and  
throughout 2021

With love

Brenda Russell



## Services

6 December	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mr David Childs
13 December	10.45am	Nativity Service	Mrs Jean Antcliffe
20 December	10.45am	Morning Worship with Christmas Eve service with Holy Communion	Revd Stephen Wilkins
24 December	11.30pm	Zoom Service only	Revd Brenda Russell
25 December	10.30am	Christmas Day service	At Fareham Methodist
27 December	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mr Jeremy Hicks
3 January	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mr David Childs
10 January	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mrs Christine Ahern
17 January	10.45am	Morning Worship with	tbc
24 January	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mrs Grace Westerduin
31 January	10.45am	Morning Worship	Mrs Ruth Dewis

Service details are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Please see Weekly Bulletin for details.

From 6 December, and for as long as Government regulations allow, the church will be open for Sunday morning worship at 10.45am. The service will also be broadcast online via Zoom. For instructions on how to access online services, see pages 20-23.

# Elders Election 2020/21

As agreed by Church Members on 4 October 2020, the Eldership Election for this year has been postponed due to the Pandemic. Dennis Mason and Mary Scott-Brown kindly agreed to continue in post until the end of March. We thank them for their willingness to do this and all the work they have done in this difficult year.

The Elders have now agreed to hold a Church Meeting on 16 March 2021 when an election for two elders will take place. Details of how we will hold this meeting is to be worked out but will hopefully be a mixture of Zoom and in person at church depending on Government Guidance at the time.

In order to adhere to the timescale set out in our Constitution, we will be distributing the Nomination papers by 2 January 2021. Nominations will need to be communicated to Fiona by 23 January 2021. Once the nominees have confirmed their willingness to stand for election, ballot papers will then be sent out;



ballot responses need to be received on or before 16 March 2021.

Any members who definitely do not wish to be considered for election, please let me know as soon as possible.

Distribution of papers will be done via email, and by hand delivery (as we currently do for the Bulletin and Messenger). Responses can be sent securely and confidentially to [secretary@farehamurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@farehamurc.org.uk); or via post, or hand, delivery to the church from where they will be collected. Those members who are receiving hand delivered communication, please let us know if you would like your responses collected.

*Fiona Corless*

# A Christmas Story

There was a Scottish farmer who did not believe in the Christmas story. The idea that God would become a man was absurd. His wife, however, was a devout believer and raised her children in her faith. The farmer sometimes gave her a hard time, mocking her faith and belief in the incarnation of God in the baby of Bethlehem: "It's all nonsense, he said. "Why would God lower himself to become a human like us? It's such a ridiculous story".

One snowy Sunday evening his wife took the children to church while the farmer relaxed at home. After they had left, the weather deteriorated into a blinding snowstorm. Then he heard a loud thump against the window. Then another thump! He ventured outside to see what was

happening. There in the field was the strangest sight: a flock of geese. They had been migrating south but had become disoriented by the storm.

They were stranded on his farm, unable to fly or to see their way. The farmer had compassion on them. He wanted to help them and realised his barn would give them shelter for the night. He opened the barn doors and stood back, hoping they would find their way in. But they didn't realise it would be shelter for them. So he tried to shoo the geese in, but they ran in all directions. Perplexed, he got some bread and made a trail to the barn door. But still they didn't catch on. Nothing he could do could get them into the shelter of the barn. Feeling totally frustrated he exclaimed, "Why don't they follow





me? Can't they see this is the only place where they can survive the storm? How can I possibly get them to follow me?"

He thought for a moment and then realised that they would not follow a human. He said to himself, "How can I possibly save them? The only way is for me to become a goose. If only I could become like one of them. Then I could save them They would follow me and I would lead them to safety."

At that moment he stopped and realised what he had said. The words reverberated around his head. "If only I could become like one of them, then I could save them". Then, at last, he understood God's heart towards humankind. He fell on his knees in the snow and worshipped him.

©A Bundle of Laughs



## Notices

***Christmas will be very different for many of us this year so I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year***

***From Margaret Henderson***

Now that Rosie Smith has moved to Eastbourne, and while we do not have a minister (who would also be an authorised person) we only have two authorised persons for weddings in the church. Anyone interested in this role should speak to Fiona Corless or Moira Noble.



Training will be provided

# From the Treasurer

Firstly, thanks to everyone for their continued giving to the church during lockdown. Income is inevitably down but not as drastically as I at one point feared. The biggest dent in our income has been the lost hall lettings, and while there has been some reduction in our expenditure (e.g. utility bills), many expenses continue as normal. Hence I believe we are now headed for a deficit of around £5000 for the year, rather than the break-even position I had originally predicted. However, thanks to our healthy reserves we are in a much better situation than many churches.

Usually at the December church meeting we would be selecting a new charity to support next year; however, recognising the lack of fund raising activities this year the elders have agreed we should continue supporting the current charities (Mercy Ships & Moving On Project) for an additional year. Also we agreed last year to give CMA Fareham £2000 towards start-up costs and £500 per year for the following 4 years. I am informed that generous donations combined with lower than budgeted costs have left CMA with a healthy surplus. The elders have therefore agreed that we should not give to CMA this year, but that the funding will be made available if and when needed.

*Graham James*

<b>Messenger Dates</b>		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Deadline for articles</b>
Lent	1 February	24 January 2021
Easter	1 April	21 March 2021
Pentecost	16 May	30 April 2021
Summer	1 July	18 June 2021

# Holm Oak

Thanks to the current situation many of you won't have either been to the church or even necessarily have walked or driven past it.

However, I am sure that you all remember the large oak tree that stands just outside the front door.

This tree is a Holm Oak and has a council tree preservation order which means all work on it has to be approved and controlled by Fareham Borough Council's tree

officer. Discussion with the council first took place in 2018 and a scope of work agreed at that time.

Recently the elders decided that the work needed to be done rather than delayed any further.

The work was re-confirmed with FBC; it covered raising the base of the crown of the tree up to 5 metres, reducing the branches over the pavement/road and removal of dead wood. Our contractors,

Gristwood and Toms, completed the work on Monday 30 November.

The picture shows the tree after the work was completed. Although it might not look much changed, you should notice the difference the next time you stand on the pavement under the tree as there is more room above.

*Michael Noble*



# Advent Boxes

**Welcome to your box of Advent Hope & Joy**

– six weeks of fun and thoughtful ways to bring a little hope and joy to this Christmas-tide.

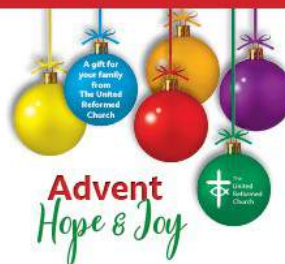
**You are invited to open each envelope in turn at the start of the week from the beginning of December to find a range of activities and reflections.**

Open carefully so you can use the envelopes later!

Weeks one to four also include a section of a stained glass window to colour in with permanent markers or tissue paper and can then be displayed on your window or elsewhere in or around your home.

In addition there is:

- **Colours of Christmas book** – read and re-read over the six weeks
- **Giant colouring** and **spot the difference** challenge to enjoy
- **Resources to use** – cookie cutter, tealight, gold pen, colouring pencils, wooden shapes



You will remember from the last issue that Advent Boxes from the URC Children's and Youth Office were delivered to 24 Messy Church families; here is a thank you from one of our families:

*Dear Messy Church*

*A Big Thank You for the Advent gift. What a lovely surprise.*

*We are missing Messy Church and FFUFs on a Monday.*

*We hope this message finds you all well and look forward to seeing you again.*

*Take care. A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.*

*(The Matambanadzo Family)*

## Christmas Shoeboxes 2020

Sadly, this year, because of the virus restrictions we were unable to process the Christmas shoeboxes at the church. We decided to move the whole operation to our home on Hayling Island. This meant that although we really missed our usual willing band of helpers, many needy children in Eastern Europe would still get their boxes.

We cleared out the rooms, rearranged the garage, set up tables, sorted our extra fillers and waited!

Sure enough, on Monday morning we received our first load. 141 brightly covered boxes from the school and village in West Harting. After that boxes arrived from two more schools; Copnor Primary school gave us 81 and the Royal School in Haslemere brought another 57. Several churches and many individuals delivered either boxes or extra fillers and the pile of boxes ready to be put into cartons for transporting, grew.

Altogether, 488 were checked, packed and finally loaded ready for their journey, firstly to the warehouse in Wrexham and then, together with those from other parts of the country, on to be given to thousands of very excited children from poor families in places like Romania, Moldova and Bavaria.

We cannot stress enough how thankful we are to those who gave so generously, especially in this very difficult year. Let's hope and pray that we'll be back in the church nextyear and that the number of boxes we can send will be even bigger.

*Gill Bailey*



*Wessex Synod*  
*Advent Quiet Day*  
*Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December*  
*10.30am to 3pm*



In the run up to Christmas you are invited to join others in taking time out to look forward in hope. Our day together will include online worship and short talks, with plenty of time for personal reflection offline.

All are welcome to join in the whole day, or any part of it. A full programme, with a link to the meeting will be shared the week before the event and will also be available on the Synod website.



# Memories of Fareham URC *continued*



*Following on from the fascinating articles from Madeleine Brand and Andrew Cooke in the last two issues, we have been delighted to receive these two items from Margaret Hopkins. Here she is with her new husband on their wedding day in the old church on 4 November 1964. Mr Hopkins passed away in 1994. Margaret has helped with Ffufs for over 20 years.*

*Their daughter Denise was baptised in the church in June 1966.*



## The Bigger Picture

As a keen walker I like seeing the Christian life as a walk. We have our Guide (Jesus), our guidebook (the Bible), and plan to be properly equipped for our walk, like the soldier in Ephesians chapter 6. We aim to get to the summit, but often don't know which way our Guide will lead us.

Every walk has some difficulties. We keep our eye on our guide – but in poor weather we have to concentrate on where our feet are going. Even in West Street you can bump into other pedestrians – especially when battling with an umbrella against a westerly wind and rain.

On a rocky mountain edge, with a steep drop both sides, it's important

to concentrate on every single step. It can be frightening, and sometimes the Guide has to hold out a hand. There are steep, slippery and rocky sections in the Christian life too, when we have to concentrate hard on the present.

But I also enjoy photography, and try to look round for a good picture – to see the 'bigger picture'. Sometimes we take a photo of the rocky ridges to prove to ourselves that we did, after all, manage that scary section. Sometimes a rainbow appears amidst the cloud and rain – and if we are not looking, we miss it.

Sometimes there is a glorious sunset – but we can't quite pick out a good place for the photo, so keep looking. And I do like the photographs that





pick out where we have been.

We live in troubled times and are often concentrating on those rocky sections in the wind and rain, looking at our feet, and rightly so. But we can also try to see the 'bigger picture', see how far we have come, how dangerous it was; look back, look up to the rainbows. Looking back on how God guided us through troubles in the past gives us pause to be thankful; seeing the rainbows under the dark clouds helps us see the hand of God and the miraculous. And that helps us look forward to our Guide who beckons us on to that time that we can take the boots off our tired feet and rest.

'Come unto me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

*Judith James*

## **Pictures in Worship**

Pictures are very important in our worship: there is a photograph used for the Time of Reflection at the beginning of our Sunday morning service and also as illustrations for other parts of the service. I use photographs and graphics in the Messenger to add colour or interest to an article. We have to be careful to only use images that are not restricted by copyright; the easiest way to do this is to use our own.

We have some very talented photographers in our midst. It has been suggested that we could compile our own library of images that could be used on the Sunday morning Powerpoint or for the Messenger or for posters. The images could be stored 'in the cloud' so they can be accessed by others. If you are interested in taking this on or forming part of a group who could do this, then please let me know.

*Moira Noble*

## Fareham Fairtrade Status Renewed

*We are delighted to share this email received by Rachel Hicks, Chair of the Fareham Fairtrade Borough Group. Together we are making a real difference to people's lives.*

Dear Rachel,

Congratulations! We're glad to let you know that your Fairtrade Borough renewal for 2020 has been successful. It's been fantastic to hear about everything that you have achieved in the past few years. Your group has demonstrated dedication to take your campaign forward and ensure Fairtrade becomes part of daily life in Fareham.

Thank you very much for sharing with us the progress you have made on your various efforts; your team has no doubt been very busy and we appreciate the hard work you have put in. We were particularly impressed by the reach of your events and your focus on developing links with various community organisations. You have managed to engage successfully with a great number of people through these efforts and have organised interesting events engaging with a variety of local organisations. It is

also very promising to hear that you are asked to participate in schools events such as assemblies and workshops in raising awareness of a younger audience to the benefits of Fairtrade. Also, we are pleased that you are helping schools in gaining various levels of Fairtrade status. You have also built a very strong relationship with the Council and we are glad to hear that they are supporting your group in different ways from councillor representation on your group and financial assistance. It seems the relationship is quite robust even if they are not offering Fairtrade products at the moment – hopefully this will change from next year.

Congratulations again and best wishes with your continued campaigning!

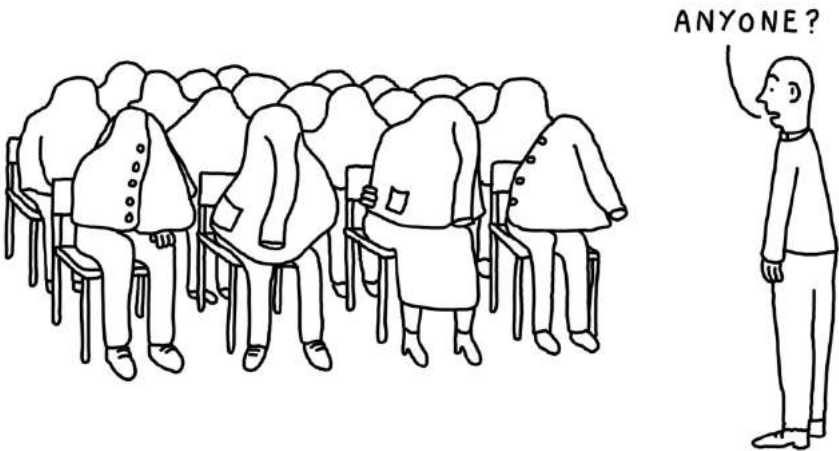
Best regards,

Chrysi Dimaki of The Fairtrade Foundation

# Community Money Advice

## Volunteers needed

The current pandemic has meant that more people than ever are now struggling to cope with crippling financial problems and debt. Community Money Advice Fareham provide free confidential advice and support to local people going through this situation. They are now urgently seeking additional volunteers to help with this. Full training will be provided. If you have a passion for helping people such as these, then please contact Steve Dent on 07722 902 344 or by email to [steve.e.dent@gmail.com](mailto:steve.e.dent@gmail.com) for more information.



# Worshipping in a Virtual World

Many of us have been enjoying worship together via Zoom on a Sunday morning for many months now; we have also been joined by members of Bishops Waltham United Free Church, Sarisbury Green URC and Gosport URC. It is different, but a good experience to worship together and meet with our friends in this way. Although a vaccine is imminent, it is still likely to be a fair amount of time before we can all join together in the Sanctuary and sing heartily as we are used to.

We would encourage those who haven't so far tried this new way of coming together to give it a go. As well as using laptops, PCs and iPads, it is possible to use a landline or mobile phone to listen to the service; you can also say hello before the service starts and join the chat at the end – hearing many friendly and recognisable voices in reply.



If you want to stay on at the end of the service, participants are divided up into “Break out” groups, so you can have a catch up with a smaller group. Those on computers need to click to Join a Group; those on the phone just wait and the Zoom Host can allocate you to a group.

We are able to record the service and can download onto a CD or DVD. If you would like to see a copy of our recent Songs of Praise service and last Sunday's worship, please let me know.

## To access the service via the link in the Weekly Bulletin email

To access the service via your Bulletin email, simply click on the blue coloured Zoom link. You may also be asked to click on Launch the Meeting. From 6 December 2020, this Meeting ID and password will be the same each week.

## To access via the Zoom app

To access via the Zoom app, enter the ID and password given in the Bulletin (attachment).

### To access via a landline

To access via landline, dial any one of the numbers listed; you will then be asked to enter the Meeting ID followed by the # key, and then the password number finishing with the # key.

### To access via a mobile phone

To access via mobile phone, dial the one tap mobile number, you will then be asked to put in the Meeting ID followed by the # key, and then the password number followed by # key.

I know some people have found being seen by everyone or seeing so many people at once a bit uncomfortable, but there are options you can try. It is possible to turn off

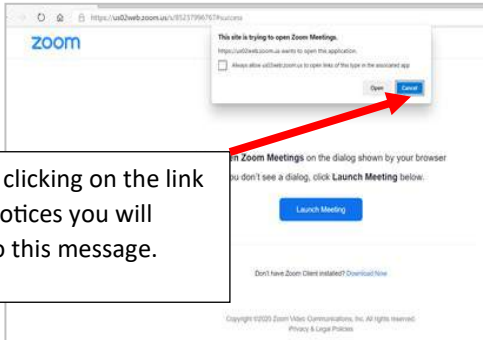
your camera and only have audio to both speak and listen, and you can change the view so that you only see the speaker. Please see the graphics on pages

It may seem a bit overwhelming if you are not used to this way of communicating, but it really isn't that complicated and we are here to help if you have any difficulties.

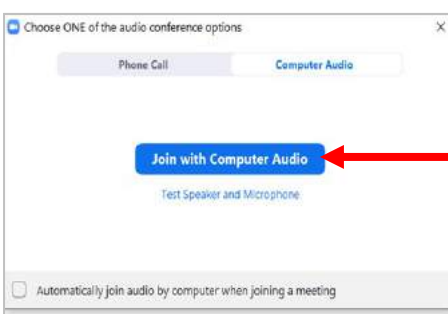
We are planning a Carol Service at 6pm on 20 December; hopefully in the Sanctuary as well as on Zoom (rules pending) Have a practice before then, it will be a special time for as many of us as possible to join together to celebrate the coming of our Lord.

*Fiona Corless*

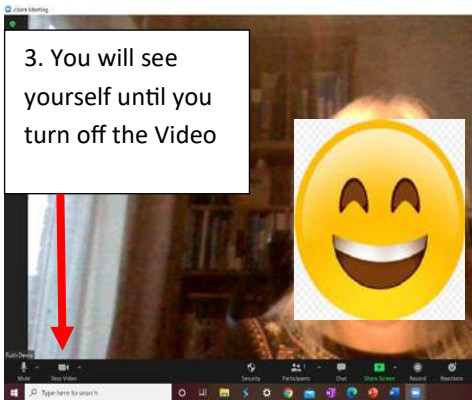
# How to join a service on Zoom



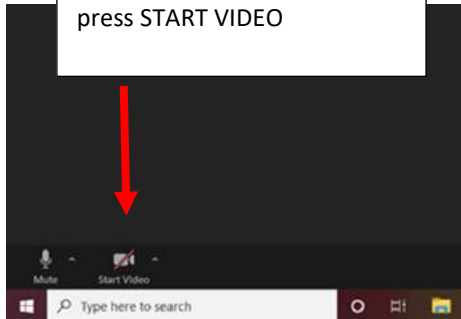
1. After clicking on the link in the notices you will come to this message.



2. You will be asked to join with **Video** - allow this initially because you can turn it off when connected. Then click **Join with Computer Audio** - this allows you to hear as well as be heard.

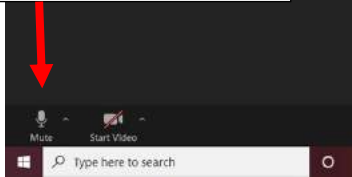


3. You will see yourself until you turn off the Video

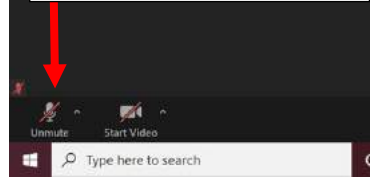


4. **START VIDEO** with a red line through it will appear and you will disappear. If you want to turn the video on press **START VIDEO**

5. When asked to MUTE you may have to hover on the mouse for MUTE to appear. When it does, press MUTE



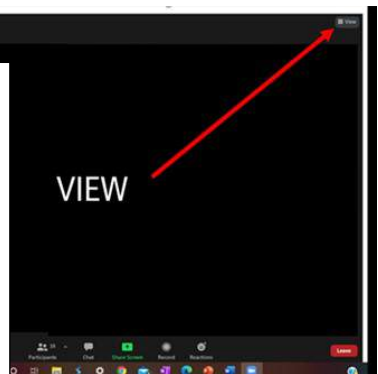
6. To UNMUTE press here



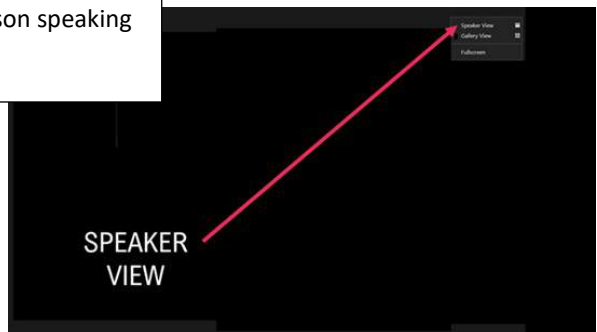
7. If you want to see the person talking go to the button at the top right corner VIEW

This will reveal 3 options:

- Speaker View (when you can see the person speaking)
- Gallery View (when you can see everyone)
- Fullscreen



8. Press SPEAKER VIEW so that you will automatically see the person speaking only.



# Fareham United Reformed Church

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call 07745 790338

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*'Sharing Jesus' love  
with the world today'*

