

Merry Christmas!

This months services

	10 am	6.30 pm
1st	Bob Sullivan	Sharing Prayer - Ronke
8th	Parade: Dave and the Guiding Groups. (Collection for Basildon Resource Centre)	Steve
15th	Georgie Berry - Mercy Ships	Colin
22nd	Colin	Carols by Candlelight: Dave
25th	10.30am—Christmas Day Service: Dave	
29th	Communion - Steve 2 Corinthians 9:15	Open Service: Bring a song that means something to you from the year.

Extra Dates

CTB Carols in Eastgate (1-3pm) - 8th December

Mince pie giveaway (10am-12) - 14th December

New Years Party (4-8pm) - 18th January



Knowing God, Showing God, Making God Known.



December 2019

**“Do what God’s teaching says,
don’t just listen and do nothing”**

James 1:22 ERV

A noisy Christmas? - John

It's December already! Soon be Christmas again ... When pondering this, I realised how Christmas makes me think about some of the material I teach at Uni. In signals theory, we are often concerned with how to tell the **signal** from the **noise**. There are books and books on this subject, and there must easily be tens of thousands of scientific papers in the literature.

The major problem in electronic and computer engineering is that both signal and noise look the same. They are both some physical thing, perhaps electrical or electromagnetic, fluctuating in an unpredictable way, randomly over time.

Often complicated mathematical algorithms are required to tell them apart - to really dig out the signal from all that background noise. Once that's been achieved of course you can hear your wife on the phone perfectly, so it's all been worthwhile. And you can upload all your personal stuff to Facebook, Twitter and so on, virtually error free.

In December it can also be hard work to tell the Christmas signal from the background noise. Red-nosed reindeers; fat, jolly Santa's; sparkly decorations all over Eastgate from about the 31st October; children writing very long Christmas lists; a 4-foot-high pile of cards for Jackie to write. Are these the noise? Or the signal? And what about that advert which seemed to feature a real-life Mary giving birth while surrounded by astonished onlookers. I read that it was only shown three times before the number of complaints to the advertising standards authority reached a new record high. I think I read that it was advertising cakes, though don't ask me how that scene was supposed to sell cakes.

Regular Meetings

Sunday

10.00am - Morning Service

18.30pm - Evening Service

Monday

10am-12pm - Coffee Pot (Term Time)

4.30pm - 1st Laindon Rainbows

6.15pm - 2nd Laindon Guides

Tuesday

5pm - 4th Laindon Brownies

7.45pm Bible Study/Home Groups

Wednesday

1.45pm - CAMEO (Term time)

4.15pm - 3rd Laindon Rainbows

Thursday (Term Time)

5.30pm - 7th Laindon Brownies

8pm - Xplore Youth Group

Friday

7pm - Harlequin Rangers

Second Saturday of the month

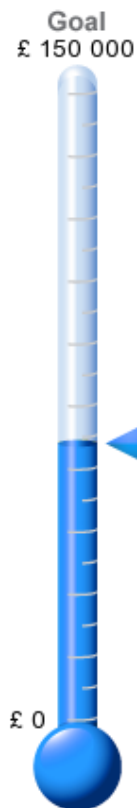
3pm - Disabled Christians Fellowship

Services at local residential homes

(Both at 3pm)

1st Sunday of the Month - Ghyll Grove

3rd Tuesday of the Month - Evelyn May



Building Fund

Thank you to everyone who has been praying for and contributing to the back hall fund.

At the last trustees meeting, we looked at how much had been put in the building fund slot itself (over £3000!) in the last few months and decided to top it up to £5000 from the general funds. This means that we're now at £65482.

Thank you all for your generosity.

The colour prayer—Provided by Pat

- Red is for the blood He shed
- Green is for the grass He made
- Yellow is for His sun so bright
- Orange is the edge of night
- Black is for the sin we make
- White is for the grace He gave
- Purple is for His hour of sorrow
- Pink is for our new tomorrow.

I used to really struggle with Christmas. The noise had overwhelmed me. I'd completely lost the Christmas signal. All those relatives I didn't want to see. And all those presents I had to buy. Ok, I'm lying about the presents – I had Christmas down to a bare minimum: a handful of cards and two presents, one for Jackie and one for Graham (my brother). Jackie could get the rest; well "...she's a woman, and women like Christmas..." I told myself.

Happy minimalist Christmas. No noise. Unfortunately, no signal either.

Only it wasn't a happy Christmas of course. Every Christmas was an empty Christmas.

Then it all changed, because God hadn't given up on me.

Psalm 102:17 (NIV)

"He will respond to the prayer of the destitute; he will not despise their plea."

I was spiritually destitute, and He did not despise my plea.

Now Christmas is much better than any I remember. No small part of that is because I can come here, to the Mission, and worship God and celebrate the birth of His son with you all. We can tune into what's real at Christmas together.

John 1:14 (NKJV)

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

So, I'd like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas. May you keep in touch with God's true signal and never lose it in the noise, and may His peace and joy fill all your hearts, now, at Christmas, and forevermore.

John

Advent Prayer and Activity Planner!

For each day in December up to Christmas have a look at the calendar below and consider whether you can pray for the issue, read the passage or do the action suggested for that day. Hopefully it will help prepare you for the real 'signal' of Christmas.

1 Pray for the whole church to grow closer to God as we go through Advent.	2 Read Isaiah 40:9-11	3 Choose an item to contribute to the collection on the 8th for the resource centre.	4 Read Isaiah 9:2-3	5 Who has done something special for you? Let them know that you're grateful.
6 Read Micah 5:2-3	7 Message someone you haven't seen in a while	8 Pray for the collection of goods, that they'll be useful and well received by their recipients.	9 Do something randomly nice for someone.	10 Read Isaiah 40:3-5
11 Do something nice for yourself.	12 Read John 1:1-8	13 Read John 1:9-18	14 Pray for the mince pie giveaway - that people will accept the invites to the services and attend.	15 Pray for the world and the many conflicts and issues that face people around it.
16 Read Luke 1:5-13	17 Pray for the retail workers as they try to serve people as best as they can.	18 Read Luke 1:39-45	19 Pray for the safety of the young people as they start their Christmas holidays.	20 Read Luke 1:46-56
21 Sing or play your favourite Christmas Carol.	22 Pray for the work of the Night Shelter and those who volunteer in it.	23 Pray for all of those who need to work over Christmas.	24 Read Luke 2:19. Stop for a minute - sit and reflect on what Christmas means to you.	25 Happy Christmas!! Praise God for giving us Christmas.