



Ch@t



Parish Church of St Mary, Thornbury with St Paul's The Hackett

Living God's love for all

Welcome to Ch@t (Church at Thornbury)

The newsletter of the Parish Church of St Mary, Thornbury with St Paul's at the Hackett

February 2021

Once more we are in a time of National lockdown, but as Rev'd Joy writes, we can look back with pleasure at a lovely Christmas season helped by live streaming of services and music and the wonderful out-door Nativity trail, - thanking all those responsible, and looking forward to the future with hope!



Revd Joy Ludlow writes:

February – and we are in another period of National lockdown, with the question again of what this means for us, and for our communities! We have made the difficult decision to close our church buildings, and move services online, endeavouring to keep everyone as safe as possible.

At the end of this month we come again to Candlemas, when Jesus is presented at the Temple – such a tiny moment yet filled with the glory of God! I am reminded that we are called to be grateful, and respond in wonder to all good things around us, large or small.

So, this edition of Chat comes with huge thanks to all those who made our Christmas season this year so special — from organising carols, to building Nativity figures, to reading at on-line services and much more.

But special thanks to those who have recently made the transition to live-streaming of services from St Mary's possible! To Robin, Malcolm, and all from "NoiseBoys" for this huge step forward! Services in these coming weeks may now be live streamed enabling us all to join in from our homes (Ctrl Click Link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA>

As we continue to head through the season of light, and into the beginning of Lent, I hope we continue to find moments of joy, community and celebration! I look forward to us sharing simple services of prayer (on Zoom) and to Sunday services with cups of tea in hand (on You-Tube). And the smiles as we pass one another in the town.

LENT

Where ever we are, and however we share together, I pray we continue to see and name the light of God present in the world around us.

Revd Joy



February 17th, 2021

Save the date...

9th-11th July 2021 we are hoping to celebrate together a weekend of **'Vision and Hope'**.

A Benefice weekend 'away' with a difference, all here at home! Plans are flexible for how much will be online or in person! But we promise a weekend of fun, fellowship and wonderful teaching.

Hoping to see you all you there!

Hopscotch!!!

Like our mouse Hopscotch is sleeping during "Lockdown"



Hopscotch - for babies and little ones under school-age and their parents and carers. 9am at St Mary's every Thursday in Term-time.

Info – Hilary Craig

At present Hopscotch is suspended due to the difficulty in socially distancing toddlers and the seniority of many of the helpers! We miss seeing the Hopscotchers with their smiling faces.

To all our Hopscotch families, we wish you a very Happy New Year and let's hope we can all meet up again soon. Meanwhile, below is our Story—about Noah and his Ark

Story of Noah

My name is Noah, and God has told me it is going to rain.

I have made this great big boat Oh dear, I see a nail that comes loose.

Anyway, I have here a long list of animals that God has told me to collect and keep safe in my boat when the rain comes.

I'm glad we're all safe in the boat, because the rain has started.

It's raining so hard there is water everywhere.

Oh, can you feel it?

The boat is beginning to float!

It's still raining.

It's been raining for weeks and weeks.

It's hard work feeding all you animals

And clearing up after you!

Oh look!

The rain has stopped! How lovely to see the sun!

Do you know what He has put into the sky?

It is a beautiful rainbow

God has kept us safe, and he promises he will never flood the whole earth again.



Nativity Story Figures



Shining a Light for Candlemas

by Christine Dadd

January is such a bleak month, dull, grey and, to be honest, miserable. The joy of the celebrations and beauty of Christmas is behind us and it's a long time before the hope of Easter. I miss our colourful, cheerful Christmas decorations and twinkling Christmas lights. I especially miss our Nativity. I have always felt sorry for the Kings. They travel round our lounge on their way to the Manger. Just as they arrive on Epiphany, they are immediately whisked to the attic, as Twelfth Night demands. Well not this year! We have Rebelled!! No longer is the debate over when is Twelfth Night, is it the 5th or 6th of January?! It doesn't matter because we have discovered Candlemas.

Traditionally, Christmas decorations were left up until Candlemas (2 February). Others just left their Manger up, including Pope John Paul II who started leaving the Nativity in St Peter's Square, Rome until Candlemas. In these even darker times of Lockdown, whilst we await the vaccine, I look at my Manger and twinkling Christmas lights, pray 'Lighten Our Darkness, We Beseech Thee' and feel hope. You may wish to light a candle and do the same (or even get your Nativity back out of the loft!).



This is our family's Nativity, with Kings. The figures above are from Chile. The three small Nativity scenes are from Oport, Portugal, made of cork (left); from Bethlehem made of olive wood; and Assisi, Italy made of clay.

Thornbury Nativity Trail

On Saturday 19 December, all sorts of amazing nativity figures began to appear around the area of St Mary's Church! Mary and Joseph could be found by the school gate, the Innkeeper and a king were part way up Church Road.

A shepherd, camels and sheep were found in Tilting and Chantry Roads, an angel took up residence in Castle Street along with a king and another king was in the High Street. The donkey found

his way into Chantry Road too. The cutest little camel (name Kevin) lived in Clare Walk for the week and a shepherd took up residence in Orchard View, the star was on the Vicarage driveway and another angel stayed in the porch as she was rather delicate!

On Christmas Eve all the characters assembled at St Mary's churchyard and the baby Jesus arrived at midnight so all at the communion service were able to see him on their way home in his bright red baby-grow outfit. A map and list of characters was available so people from around the town could view the trail.

Even though it was a week of almost non-stop rain plenty of

families took a map and went off on a search.

Many thanks to everyone who helped make the characters; and thanks, too, to the hosts

Jenny Ovens



Oldbury Nativity Trail and Carol Singing

Meg Adnams writes

Carols in the cold wind, despite the beautiful day were much enjoyed by an all ages congregation of about 50 outside St Arilda's church gates at Oldbury. Joy led the worship from higher up the path while the families attending gathered. There was also an accomplished trumpeter. The Nativity figures had been gathered up from around the village and placed there ready for the service. Our thanks go to Steve Hogan, assisted by Andrew Gazard, for putting up the sound system for the event.

The Christmas Day morning service was also well attended but sadly some of our regular visitors were missed as they were unable to travel to Oldbury from the Tier 4 areas where they live.



Our thanks to Joy for the meaningful worship and for her beautiful solo singing in the last carol which was sung outside before everyone departed.



Silver Eco Award

Congratulations and many thanks to all of you, both clergy and congregations for your work during 2019 & 2020 in achieving the Eco Church Silver Award.

Our continued environmental work in our buildings, Church land, our Worship, community and global engagement and our personal lifestyle choices has earned us the award.

In Thornbury we look forward to receiving our handmade recycled wooden Eco Church Plaque in the coming month which we will display in church for us all to see. *Marian Stephens*

A Rocha UK (arocha.org.uk) is a charity committed to helping Christians in the UK to care for the natural world. We believe that God made the earth and that it is important to him. That is why we want to make nature – enjoying, nurturing and protecting it – a part of life for all Christians. The biblical message is simple: God loves everything he has made and wants us all to work together to value and

protect it. There are many urgent reasons why we need to protect and care for nature today, including climate change, loss of species and the devastation of habitats. Human activity, or inactivity, is directly responsible for much of this destruction and loss.



Christmas and Carol Singing at St Paul's

Here is a photo of us all singing just one carol outside St. Paul's after the Eucharist on Christmas Morning! (NB socially distanced! with masks!). Thanks to all who had worked so hard to make the church available!

And thanks to Richard Usherwood for playing the organ and accompanying us on trumpet as we sang after this Service!

Blessings! Tom Keates



February 2021 Mission – Church Urban Fund

The Church Urban Fund (CUF) was set up 30 years ago by the Church of England to work through local parish networks to bring about positive change in communities throughout the UK. By building trust, they are

empowering local people to have a go at addressing the areas of greatest need in their communities, and to speak out against injustice. They are committed to bringing about long-term sustainable change. They do this by focusing on three areas: the Together Networks to tackle social inequality, for example, by setting up and running Foodbanks; Near Neighbours to help people make their communities stronger; and through the Just Finance Foundation where they want to create a fair financial system for everyone, by addressing debt.

Find out more at www.cuf.org.uk.

Food for Thought: According to CUF, our parish ranks 10,357 out of 12,382 parishes, where 1 is the most deprived parish. This means that our parish is among the wealthiest in the country – and we still have, and need, a Foodbank. *Christine Dadd, Chair, Missions: Global and Local Concern*

*Even in the darkest moments,
Love gives hope.*

*Love compels us to fight against coronavirus
alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty.*

*Love compels us to stand together in prayer
with our neighbours near and far.*



Helen Ann Giles RIP

We are very saddened to announce the sudden death of Helen Ann Giles—widow of the late Timothy. **(More details in next Edition)**

Our deepest Sympathy to Helen's three daughters and their families.

The photo above was taken at the dedication of the stained glass window in St Arilda's crafted by Helen's late husband and presented to the Church in his memory.



A Christmas Message from St Mary's School

Headmaster Karl Joyce writes



It continues to be an interesting time for us all! Although different we did have a good Christmas at St Mary's.

Our wonderful PTFA provided each class with a real Christmas tree and the children had great fun decorating them.

We celebrated Jesus as the 'Light of the World' with our Christingles and the younger children did an **online nativity** which was a great success. The children enjoyed an **online panto** and loved making nativity scarecrows for the nativity trail around Thornbury.

Parents were very supportive and helped a lot with what we needed for the events and in class. I must say the support they have given to the staff also has been really appreciated, they have understood the pressures the school is under which underlines our strong school community.

We are looking forward now to the new year, school is semi closed and so we have moved to remote learning which is both challenging and an exciting development for the school. We have about 40% of pupils in, which is significantly more than the last lockdown but all schools have found this to be the case. Everyone is in, as we have reverted to 7 class bubbles which is safer both for the children and adults.

Hopefully by Easter, restrictions will be lifted and we can look forward to enjoying the summer term!.

*K Joyce, Head teacher
St Mary's CEVA Primary School.*



School Activity Packs

We made **260** Activity Packs which went to every child attending our Church schools at St Mary's Thornbury, and Oldbury. Each bag contained various craft materials, plus an instruction leaflet for a range of items to be made during the Christmas period! Also included were a card from our church communities and bag of sweets!

We are hugely grateful to those who made this possible, both those planning on our various all-age ministry teams, and those who volunteered to come and be part of the production line!



Hello everyone!

This year MU Members have received an annual Prayer Diary.

Today (8 January) the prayer was *"Thank you Lord for giving us trust in you. We place our future in your hands as we follow where you direct us, inspire us with your vision and em-power us with your Spirit. May we walk together into the future knowing you are our guide"*.

It seemed to me that this prayer was good for everyone, not just MU members – I am sure you will agree as we open 2021 with another lockdown, that we need God as our Guide and Companion.

The Committee has planned the 2021 programme. They are hoping to produce a Meditation for the Quiet Hour (Feb 16th) as we will most likely still not be meeting 'face to face'. The Meditation will be emailed to members or we can provide hard copies if requested. *Please watch the newsletter for information about each month's meeting. Don't forget the new "Chitchat" email message being prepared from time to time. If you have news you would*



like to share please send it to Anne Ellis, (avellis8@btinternet.com) and if you don't get emails but would like to receive a printed copy please ask.

If you are not a member but would like to find out more, please speak to anyone of the Committee Members (Monica Mullinex, Ruth Parker, Angela Edwards, Rosemary Keavey, Anne Ellis, Margaret Woodford and Pippa Davey), they will be happy to hear from you.

Very best wishes for 2021. *Jenny Ovens*

Staying connected through Midday Prayers

Our UK members who don't have access to the internet at home will still be able to hear our midday prayers thanks to the Church of England's Daily Hope line. Just call 0800 804 8044 from a UK mobile or landline and press option 4, then option 8.

Traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Mary's

A very welcome Carol Service!
From our old friend, Chorister Mark Hoskins!

One lesson I have definitely learnt from the past year is to appreciate
and treasure the things I have always taken for granted!!
(Ed. Yes, Mark, many of us join you in this sentiment!)



Socially distanced choir

Down here in Bristol I am very much a creature of habit, with a regular round of activities (not quite all of them rugby-based! taking place every week. It has been difficult adapting to the unpredictability of the last few months, so it was particularly cheering to discover that, against all the odds, we

were going to have a **service of Christmas readings and carols at St Mary's with the choir involved**. It would be an understatement to say that it wasn't quite the same as usual – **no congregational singing, precious few in attendance and no choir Christmas social afterwards (!!!)** – but we managed something, and to me that was very special.

The church itself looked reassuringly Christmassy with the candlelight creating a lovely atmosphere. As a choir we were suitably spaced on the podium, with a (**very**) small congregation dotted round the church. We sang five congregational carols, and from a personal point of view it was lovely to sing ***God rest you merry, gentlemen***, a splendid traditional carol which doesn't seem to be sung as often as it used to be.

Our three choral offerings began with Andrew Carter's attractive arrangement of the French carol ***A maiden most gentle***, and we followed this with the rousing ***Glory to God*** from **Handel's *Messiah***. The preceding recitative and accompaniment was beautifully sung **by Rosie Evans – a real highlight of the service**.

Our final item was ***O magnum mysterium***, a contemporary work by the American composer Morten Lauridsen. This has become very popular in recent years, and it seems to be played on the radio all year round, suggesting that many people don't appreciate that this is very much a Christmas piece. The ancient words actually refer to the animals seeing the birth of Christ in the manger. Lauridsen's setting is very atmospheric, and incidentally a surprisingly difficult sing!

In between the carols we listened to various readings, not all of them biblical. We had a number of the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols texts, including the wonderful opening words of John's Gospel, **but we were also treated to two magnificent Christmas poems**. The first was **John Betjeman's *Christmas***, a superb work which creates a series of vivid often amusing pictures of the festive season, but which changes mood brilliantly at the end to emphasize the significance of Christ's Birth. Secondly, we had **T S Eliot's *Journey of the Magi***, a wonderfully earthy and realistic first person account of the journey to Bethlehem. In common with Betjeman's poem, this one too changes mood near the end as the narrator reflects on his experience of the Nativity.

We all hope that the 2021 Service of Nine Lessons and Carols will feature a packed Church full of enthusiastic worshippers! Cheer-fully singing in praise of Christmas. But we should always treasure our unique 2020 carol service which I hope brought some comfort and a spark of normality to many people's keeping of Christmas. **Sincere thanks go to Revd Joy and Director of Music Malcolm Kittle for preparing this very welcome and special event.**

Mark Hoskins

Streamed Music and Services from St Mary's may be found on YouTube by
following the link below (Ctrl+Click to follow link)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA>



Church Warden's Notes



Roof Intruder Alarm:

Our churches were recently inspected by our insurers The Ecclesiastical Insurance Company. They made a number of recommendations but one in particular required timely attention - that we should install an intruder alarm on the St Mary's roof to guard against theft of the roofing material.

Some years ago the lead was stripped from the nave roofs by thieves. The cost of the replacement copper roofing was met on that occasion by The Ecclesiastical and a grant from English Heritage. Given the large amount of theft now occurring, Ecclesiastical will only pay £7,500 towards making good roofing unless an intruder alarm has been fitted. An alarm with video and remote monitoring has therefore been installed at St Mary's.

St Mary's Clock Refurbishment

From Churchwardens

The clock mechanism in Thornbury Church Tower has recently been refurbished by Cumbria Clocks and generations of "clock winders" will be pleased to hear that the winding mechanism has at last been automated.

The clock is "powered" by two sets of weights, one for the clock and one for the strike, both of which had to be wound to a position just below the bell frame from where they descended under gravity to a position at the foot of the ringing chamber. These needed winding twice a week by a team, in recent times consisting of Tom and Sharon Usherwood and Andy Watson, if both the clock and the strike were to continue uninterrupted. The photograph shows the refurbished clock with the new winding motors above.



The clock will still require periodic attention to correct the time and adjust pendulum, the latter being made of wood and is affected by the ambient humidity.



Christmas Sunday Concert

4pm Sunday 27th at St Mary's

Mark Hoskins tells us how good it was to once again hear music in St Mary's over the Christmas period. Covid brought our regular 4th Sunday Recitals to an abrupt end in March so it was a very welcome return to hear a lovely "home-grown" Christmas Concert streamed from St Mary's on the Sunday after Christmas.

This featured the beautiful soprano voices of our "own" Revd Joy Ludlow and Rosie Evans, and St Mary's Director of Music Malcolm Kittle at the piano and organ.

Malcolm also sang Counter Tenor in the unaccompanied last piece.



Programme below

Maria Wiegenlied - Max Reger (1873-1916)

*"Mary sits by the rose bower
And rocks her little Jesus,
Softly through the leaves
The warm wind of summer blows.
A brightly coloured bird
Sings at her feet:
Go to sleep, sweet child,
It's time to go to sleep!
Your smile is lovely,
Your happy sleep lovelier still,
Lay your tired little head
Against your mother's breast!
Go to sleep, sweet child,
It's time to go to sleep!"*

I wonder as I wander - Traditional arr. Graham Garton (b.1929)

Walking in the Air ("The Snowman") - Howard Blake (b.1938)

I sing of a maiden - Patrick Hadley (1899-1973)

Prelude on "In dulci Jubilo" BWV 729 - J.S. Bach (1685-1750) (Organ)

He shall feed his flock ("Messiah") - George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

O Holy Night - Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

In Dulci Jubilo - Traditional arr. R. L. de Pearsall (1795-1856)
& John Rutter (b.1945)



Contact details:

Priest in Charge: Revd Joy Ludlow 01454 853646 E: joyeludlow@outlook.com (from Oct 7th)
Churchwardens 01454 413650 / 01454 419082 / 01454 414727
St Mary's C of E School
Head Teacher: Karl Joyce E: Karl.Joyce@sgmail.org.uk

Restricted Service Dates for January - February 2021

Sunday mornings

10.00 am Morning Prayer

There are no congregations in church at the present time - see below:

These services will be streamed live from St Mary's for the time being

Coffee and Fellowship continues after these services via Zoom

See Weekly Newsletter for Link



Services will be much curtailed due to COVID Crisis. No congregations at present. To check details of online services nearer the time, do please keep up to date with the Parish newsletter (thornburyparish@btconnect.com), on our Parish Facebook page, and on the church website.

Do also follow our YouTube page, where many of our services will be either streamed live or posted afterwards:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA>

From Shrove Tuesday and on each Tuesday through Lent, we will open the Stafford Chapel for private prayer between 2pm and 4pm, provided the current situation remains unchanged.

All of our services for the coming weeks will be ONLINE only either lived-streamed to our YouTube channel, or shared via ZOOM. We will be reviewing this each and every week, so do please check your weekly newsletter for links, details, and changes along the way.

- 10.00am each Sunday there will be a service of Morning Prayer streamed from St Marys

In addition to this please do watch out for:

- Tuesday 19th January 7.30pm MU evening
- Friday 22nd January 7.30pm Night Prayer for Christian Unity

There will also be a number of bible study evenings in the coming months. Everybody more than welcome to any or all of the sessions:

- Tuesday 26th January, Monday 1st February and Tuesday 9th February Revd Joy will be running a study on 'Ministry in balance' 7.30pm (where you can learn a little about her week Monday-Saturday)
- In Lent TCT will be running a short bible study series for five weeks beginning on 23rd February

And save the date... Something to look Forward to !! A Parish Weekend!

9th-11th July 2021 we are hoping to celebrate together a weekend of 'Vision and Hope'. This will be a benefice weekend 'away' with a difference, ALL HERE AT HOME! Plans are flexible for how much of this will be online or in person, but however we manage, it should be a weekend of fun, fellowship and wonderful teaching. Hoping to see you all you there!