



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



Wishing All Ch@t Readers a Peaceful and Happy Christmas

Christ became what we are that He might make us what He is. –
Athanasius



I have heard many times over the past weeks that 'Christmas is cancelled.'

No doubt many of us are struggling with what Christmas may look like for us this year. It is certainly very different from anything we have known before. Lots of our services will be online. Carols will have to be sung solo in the living room. We will also find new and exciting ways to recognise the season. Zoom gatherings of friends and family we might not have shared Christmas with before, and times of rest and recovery with those with whom we share our homes.



At the same time, I get the great pleasure of reminding people that cancelling Christmas isn't even a possibility...

Jesus was born already!! (And thousands of years have passed since then). So, if we were planning on cancelling Christmas, we have come a little late! Instead, at Christmas, we remember that Jesus was born. With his birth Jesus reminds us of the heart of God, Emmanuel, which means, God with us'.



So, I pray that each of us would find new ways of celebrating that this year. I am praying each and every day for connection, and fellowship, and relationship, and love - all part of the message of this season. But mostly, I am praying, that whatever we might do this year to mark that day we would know that the day itself marks a memory of a truth that is universal and unending. A memory of the God who is with us in everything.



**With my prayers and blessings for a peaceful and wonderful Christmas,
Revd Joy**



*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. We hope they have a LOVELY Christmas and that it will be not too long before we are singing **'Hello Children, Hello Carers. Welcome All, welcome all, Very pleased to see you. At Hopscotch time.'** (see below)

Dads and Kids

-So sad we cannot meet due to Covid restrictions!

Meanwhile we are thinking of new and exciting ventures when we return - with pull-back racing cars, catapults, volcanos!

And lovely bacon butties!

Blessings from Dads and Kids Team!

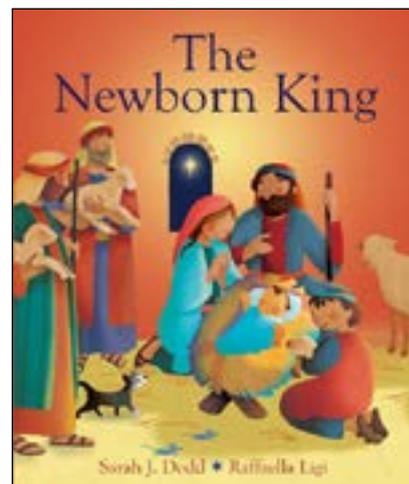


The Newborn King

By Sarah J Dodd and Raffaella Ligi,

An engaging retelling of the first Christmas, with bright and appealing pictures that bring the wonderful scenes to life for younger children. A new king is born! His name is Jesus. See the gladness of Mary, the joy of the shepherds, and the journey of the Wise Men.

A lovely Christmas book!



**We hope our
Hopscotch children and carers
have a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.**

And here is our Nativity story !

The Night was nothing special - just an ordinary stable.

Filled with ordinary stable sounds.

The deep 'moo, moo' of a big black cow.

The noisy 'hee haw' of a little grey donkey.

The 'coo, coo' of a dove.

The 'baa, baa' of a lamb,

The 'scrickety scrack' of a spider skittering along the wall.

But then there was another sound.

An out-of-the-ordinary sound.

A sound that had never been heard in this stable before,
the cry 'waa-waa' of a newborn baby.

It was Mary's baby of course.

The baby the angel Gabriel had promised her.

But there was nothing ordinary about him.

For this was Jesus - God's own special Son.

Then the stable door opened and there were new sounds

Angels flew in singing 'Gloria, gloria'

Shepherds ran in laughing and chattering.

Then it went quiet and everyone watched as three Wise Men glided in calling 'gifts, gifts for the baby king' and kneeling, lay gifts 1,2,3 on the floor by the baby boy.

The cow went 'moo'

The donkey brayed 'hee haw'

The dove called 'coo'

The lamb cried 'baa'

And the spider skittered

'scrickety scrack' back into his web.

It was just an ordinary stable.

With ordinary sounds...

And one extraordinary baby boy

– the baby Jesus!





A Message from St Mary's School

Headmaster Karl Joyce writes

On behalf of St Mary's CEVA Primary School, every good wish for the New Year! We know that this past year has been very difficult for you, and we pray that the coming year brings more certain times for your family- and for all of us!

We send all our good wishes for better days ahead!

Ed. Our special thanks and good wishes to Karl Joyce and St Mary's School Staff for all their efforts during the last year- making our Church School so Happy and Successful during such difficult times!



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

We are taking this extra opportunity to wish all our Members and friends every blessing for this Advent season; we hope and pray that you have kept well throughout this difficult time - and that you will continue fit and well into 2021.

We eventually took the sad decision to cancel altogether our Candleglow service for this year; but that should not take the lovely light of the season out of our thinking.

**"Like a candle flame
flick'ring small in our darkness
Uncreated light shines through infant eye
God is with us, alleluia
Come to save us, alleluia!"**



Martin received the latest Christmas coronavirus regulations from the diocesan office.

Your Committee have been busy planning for the 2021 programme, and we hope that lots of it can go ahead; - the cards are being printed and are being distributed. Please watch the newsletter for information about plans for the year.

There is also a 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) all of whom have stayed in post for another year.

Christmas Mission: **The Children's Society - Keeping Hope Alive**

For many children and young people Hope is hanging by a thread. Their lives are overshadowed by abuse, exploitation and neglect. This year has turned children's lives upside down. The Children's Society is there for them at Christmas and throughout the year. It doesn't let them down. It is there to help children overcome their toughest challenges, restore their Hope and help them find happiness. There is going to be a brighter future. If you would like to send a message of Hope or to find out more, please go to www.childrenssociety.org.uk.



Christine Dadd, Chair, Missions: G1lobal and Local Concern



The story of mince pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food.

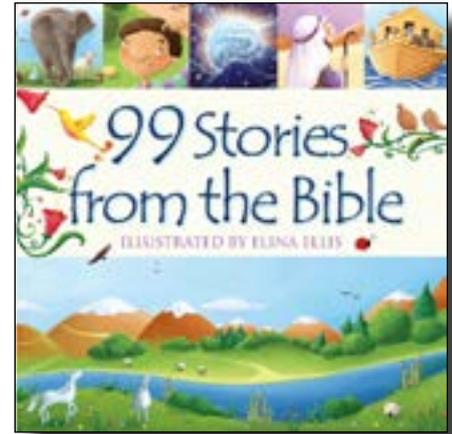
Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top!



99 Stories from the Bible

By Juliet David and Elina Ellis, Candle Books, £9.99

Here is an excellent way to introduce young children to the great Bible stories. Each story is told across a double page spread and there is a mixture of full-page art and spot illustrations throughout the book. The stories cover: At the Beginning, Samuel Listens, Esther, A Blind Man Sees, and Jesus Walks on the Lake, right through to One Day Jesus Will Return.



Thank Dickens for Christmas as you know it!

Ever wonder where many of our Christmas traditions come from?

A surprising amount of our modern Christmas celebrations can be traced back to the well-loved story of 'A Christmas Carol', by Charles Dickens.

When you read 'A Christmas Carol', you discover almost a template of the 'ideal Christmas' which we still hold dear today. Dickens seems to have selected the best of the Christmas celebrations of his day (he ignored some of the odd excesses) and packaged them in such a way as to give us traditions that we could accommodate and treasure – more than a century later.

So, for instance, in A Christmas Carol, Christmas is a family day, with a family-centred feast. In a home decorated with holly and candles the characters enjoy a roast turkey, followed by Christmas pudding. They give their loved ones presents. Scrooge even gives donations to charity (!).

And all the while outside, there is snow and frost, while church bells ring, and carol singers sing, and hope for mulled wine. In 'A Christmas Carol' there is even a Father Christmas – in the shape of "Christmas Present". Only the Christmas tree itself came later, when Prince Albert imported 'a pretty German toy' that won the heart of the English court, and hence the rest of Victorian society.!



'Christmas may look different, but the story is still the same!'

Coronavirus will make our celebrations this year look very different from usual. However, the message of the baby born in Bethlehem is still relevant!

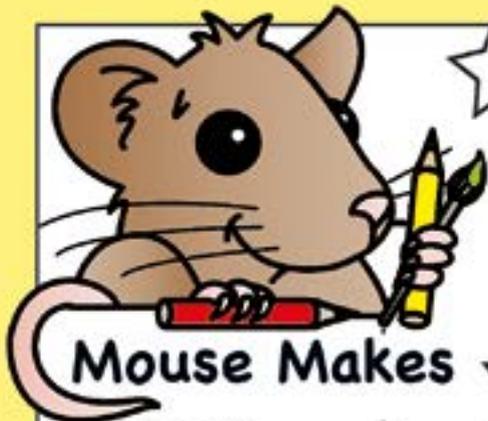
In one nativity play, the highlight was to illuminate Jesus, with a light in the manger, when all the other lights were turned off. At the appropriate time, all the lights went out, including the manger one. The silence was broken when one of the shepherds loudly whispered: 'Hey, you turned off Jesus.' Of course, nobody can turn off Jesus this Christmas!



The angels announced, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.' (Luke 2: 10,11). The birth of this baby brings great joy and good news for everyone! As the king of the universe, He has come as our Saviour. In an uncertain world, He offers joy and hope, because He holds this pandemic in His hands. This is a real cause for joy!

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests.' (Luke 2:14). We may feel anything but peace amid the anxieties over our current circumstances. How can a Jewish infant born to a peasant family in first century Pales-tine bring peace to our lives today? But Jesus established peace with God through His death on the cross. Trusting the Prince of Peace for our lives brings God's peace amid the huge uncertainties we face.

As the carol says, 'Joy to the world, the Lord has come, let earth receive her King.'



"I bring you **good news** that will bring great **joy** to all people. The **Saviour** has been born today! ...

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased".

from Luke 2 vs. 10,11,14

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Read the Christmas story in Luke 1:1 - 2:21



A picture to colour for Christmas. Colour in one star each day as you count down to Christmas!



Remembrance 2020

Due to the restrictions surrounding the Covid pandemic this year's Remembrance Ceremony on Sunday 8th November was very limited.

There was a simple gathering after the Morning Service at St Mary's, and a brief service, followed by the two minutes silence.

The Last Post was sounded as our Mayor, - and later one or two representatives of local organisations - laid wreaths on our War Memorial in memory of those who had fought and died in past conflicts, on behalf of us all.



Church Warden's Update

Church Services

Once again, we have had to suspend services in Church. However, Revd Joy is posting a full morning service every Sunday morning on Zoom,

followed by Zoom coffee. Joy is also posting her Sunday reflection on Facebook. Details are in each weekly Newsletter.

As the current lockdown extends until Wednesday 2 December, this will mean that the Service of Light on Sunday 29 November will now also be via Zoom. Advent and Christmas services are all under review and awaiting information on the Government regulations after 3 December. **See diary on page 8 for details.**

St Mary's – Fabric

Porch Doors. The GEZE automatic door closers are now fitted. This means that the glass doors can now at long last be put into manufacture.

Audio-Visual. Noiseboys started work on Monday 23 November. So, with luck, we will be able to live stream services to YouTube once we are able to hold services in Church again. We have had to have the internet connection to the Church up-graded to allow for the live streaming.

Memorial to Cornelia D'Arville. Centreline has now taken down this memorial and partially made good the wall behind. However, on one side, remnants of an **old**

wall painting were discovered. After discussions with Adam Klups (DAC Secretary), we have to preserve this remnant. This will require a wall paintings conservator to carry out a survey, prior to cleaning and stabilising the painted plaster.



Tower Clock. This is scheduled to be reinstalled on 8, 9 & 10 December by Cumbria Clocks.

Jack Hainsworth's memorial bench has now been installed in St Mary's Churchyard by Thornbury Town Council.

Stained Glass Windows. We now have some quotations for the required work to the stained-glass windows. These will be examined, and a report prepared for the PCC in the New Year.



St Paul's - Fabric

We have now received the 5-year insurance inspection report from Ecclesiastical. Nothing major arose. We have already removed some loose / spare roof tiles away from the building, as required by the Inspector. A quotation for a new notice board is being obtained.

Robin, Jenny and Mike

Smile Lines

The teacher asked her Sunday School class to draw a picture of a Bible story with a Christmas theme. She was puzzled by Kate's picture, which showed four people on an air-plane. She asked her which story it was meant to represent. 'The Flight to Egypt,' was the reply.

Pointing at each figure, the teacher ventured: 'That must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. But who's the fourth person?' 'Oh,' explained Kate happily, 'that's Pontius – the pilot!'

Next Christmas

The grandson had just taken a photograph of his grand-mother who'd come to stay for Christmas and her 89th birthday. 'Grannie, I sure hope I'm around next year to photograph you on your 90th birthday,' he said tactfully.

'Why not?' his grandmother shrugged. 'You look healthy enough!'



The Choir write about their Favourite Christmas Music!!

The Lamb by John Tavener (words by William Blake)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYpVGBSS65o>

I have loved this carol since I first heard it a long time ago. It was written in 1982 by John Tavener. It is so simple - beautiful and transcendent. I love singing it, especially the very low bass notes! **Mike Elcock**

Illuminare Jerusalem by Judith Weir (15th century words)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAFH-uHWSLU>

This was one of Helen's favourites. It is modern (1986) and haunting and I would love to sing it myself some day. (How about it Malcolm?). **Mike Elcock**

Paul Carr's 'Requiem for an angel'. It is not well known but deserves to be, in my opinion. It has some lovely melodies and is very sing-able and listen-able. I have happy memories of performing it with The Alveston Singers 9 years ago, with the composer in the audience! Here are the first 2 movements. **Kate PM**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RzPhwGNhIo>

Carol Symphony by Victor Hely-Hutchinson. In the days of Children's Hour on the Home Service(that's going back a bit) there was a serial called the Box of delights . I loved signature tune. And then a few years ago the Thornbury Orchestra gave a concert and as they played Hely-Hutchinson's Carol Symphony I suddenly recognised the tune from long ago. So I bought a CD of it and have enjoyed listening to it many times. Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors. **Mandy Clapp**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYOu2ke1rRc>

Fantasia on Christmas Carols by Ralph Vaughan Williams because it's lovely.

If you wanted Carol choices **O come all ye Faithful** and **In the Bleak Midwinter** arranged by Harold Darke

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wl9T3r8UyGA>

Mandy

I am looking for a Christmas Card that contains inclusive language, and yet retains the richness of 16th century English and is overtly Christian whilst being sensitive to the multi-faith patterns of our day.....any suggestions?



Some long time ago, during the Christmas period the BBC broadcast a recording of Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors. I liked it because it was so different. A mother at her wits end with a child who seems to tell fibs and has a lively imagination, a child so full of love for his mum that the roles of parent and child are reversed at times, three kings who seem ever so slightly dotty. It is touching, sentimental in parts and funny.

<https://youtu.be/qKxXokRNaro> **Ruth**

A very different piece that I really love is **Britten's Ceremony of Carols** <https://youtube.com/qKxXokRN> I remember singing it at Olveston Church with a fabulous harpist. It is just so haunting. Its use of medieval language reminds us just how long Christians have been celebrating this wonderful feast. However if you are wanting just a favourite carol for me it has to be **Harold Darke's version of " In the Bleak Midwinter"**. The words are so moving and the alto part is wonderful unlike a great number of hymns and carols where the altos sing a whole series of "d"s! <https://youtu.be/GPpy3XSk6c0> **Ruth**

For many people, John Rutter is 'Mr Christmas' when it comes to writing carols, but I would give that accolade to Peter Warlock. I have a disc of his carols which always brings me pleasure at Christmas, though ironically Warlock himself was usually miserable at this time of year. My personal favourite is **Bethlehem Down, a setting of beautiful words by Warlock's friend Bruce Blunt**. It is a wonderful piece, full of the mystery of Christmas, with a simple, haunting tune and gorgeous harmonies. The carol first appeared in The Daily Telegraph on Christmas Eve, 1927, and Warlock and Blunt used the proceeds for a massive drinking session! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yefnj5kvJTw> **Mark**

The Pickled Boys from Benjamin Britten's **St Nicholas** <https://youtu.be/oHEe5k3ezq8> **Jenny**

Bach Double Concerto. When I was young, many years ago I saw a performance on black & white TV by David & Igor Oistrakh standing and playing back to back. It made a very strong impression on me then, and I don't think it has ever been surpassed. Both the music and players were outstanding. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mcucvplatY> **Ian PM**

Ed. To follow the Music Links in article above, press Ctrl and Click on the link.

Let us know after Christmas how you get on with the link.

If you are not yet able to access the above Recordings on your computer using the codes, there are members of the congregation who may be able to help.

We may be asking later for Easter music (or favourite hymns if this works! Or children's favourites)



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 December 2020 January 2021

Service Social Distancing Arrangements



Due to Covid Crisis Services will be much curtailed. Numbers are limited by the need for social distancing. If you wish to attend please first contact Jenny Ovens (414727 - Jennyovensbb@tiscali.co.uk) by the Saturday before at the latest. We have to record contact details for all those at-tending in order to allow tracing should someone present later test positive for Covid-19.

Similarly contact the Oldbury Wardens to book places at St Arilda's.



December/January. Special Service Schedule For St Mary's Thornbury and St Arilda's Oldbury from 13th December to 3rd January inclusive



We know that there will be services missing, and that some of your favourite services may not be available, or may fill up fast this year. Hopefully there will be plenty online and from home with which to engage. These plans may also need to change further in light of ongoing restrictions. However, this comes with all our prayers and blessings for the season.

To check details of services nearer the time, and to book a place in the church (*see box above*), do please keep up to date with the Parish newsletter, on our Parish Facebook page, and on the church website <http://www.thornburycofe.org.uk/>. Do also follow our YouTube page, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA> where many of our services will be either streamed live or posted afterwards:

Sunday 13th December - 10am Morning Prayer at St Mary's. We are encouraging families to be part of the national Christingle Service which will be available on the Church of England website from 9am this Sunday. **If you have made your own Christingle please also post a photo for us on our Facebook page!**

Sunday 20th December - 9am Morning Prayer with Carols at St Paul's

11 am Morning Prayer with carols at St Arilda's. 6pm 'Some' lessons and carols live-streamed from St Mary's

Thursday 24th December Christmas Eve - 11.15pm Midnight Mass at St Mary's (live-streamed for those who want to join in their pyjamas)

Friday 25th December Christmas Day - 9am Communion at St Paul's, 11am Communion at St Arilda's

Sunday 27th December - There will be NO Sunday service in the Benefice, and instead we are encouraged to join with services being held online for Gloucester Cathedral or the Church of England

Sunday 3rd January - 10am St Marys details to be confirmed



We are also hosting a **Nativity Trail around Thornbury** (in the roads near St Mary's) from 19th-23rd December, and outside the Church on 24th. A copy of the walking trail (once available) will be put up in the new notice board outside St Mary's. This is a work in progress so all tbc. With luck, there will also be a separate trail in Oldbury and the surrounding villages. Ribbons will be available in the porches of both St Marys and St Arilda's through the season to tie on to the yew trees outside for those passing by.



If Ch@t magazine is delivered to your home, and you no longer wish to receive it, please contact the church office to let us know: 01454 281900, or thornburyparish@btconnect.com.

Ch@t

The Editorial Committee of Ch@T is: Angela Swan (Editor)
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