

Christ Church News

DECEMBER 2019



EDITION 20/2019

Welcome to our Christmas Edition



Preparing for Christmas



As well as a tree this is the time when we also put up a crib or some representation of the HOLY FAMILY. This year we have put the crib in the entrance to the church and as you look at it you might consider your part in the tableau after reading the article by Eleanor Williams our reader in training.

It has been another difficult month for many in our congregation. Christmas is a time for family, and a number of our members have suffered a bereavement this year. There will be that empty place at the table and our prayers go out to you at this time.

Our tree looks so realbut it isn't
and we thank our older youth
for putting it up
this year.



There are a number also who are suffering sudden illness and we pray for you too.

Our Vicar, Trystan has written a profound piece about the baby Jesus and we pray that your faith will increase this Christmas, as you ponder on the truth which is *Jesus come to be with us*.

**We wish all those reading this news sheet,
a peaceful and contented Christmas
from all your family at Christ Church**

 **ChristChurchCardiff**
www.christchurchcardiff.co.uk

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CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS by OUR VICAR, TRYSTAN

When we think about Jesus at Christmas time, we must always remember the question: “what will he grow up to be?”

In the comedy film *Talladega Nights* when a family sit around a table and say grace before eating. The dad starts to pray: “Lord baby Jesus, you do not even know a word yet, you are just a little infant, you are just so cuddly”. At that point, the mum cuts in – “Sweetie, you do realise that Jesus grew up”. The dad answers, “yes, but I like the Christmas Jesus best”. The reality is, though, that we don’t get a choice what Jesus we like best. In the gospels, the baby Jesus is all about the grown-up Jesus, and the grown-up Jesus is all about the Jesus who transforms lives **now**.

In fact, everything in the Christmas story that we will be hearing in the coming weeks answers the question – “what will he grow up to be?”:

- * Mary, when she is expecting, talks about Jesus’s future when he will bring good news and freedom to the poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden, and the suffering.
- * The name given to him as a baby, Jesus, tells in Hebrew of someone who would save others.
- * Jesus’s place of birth, Bethlehem, was linked to an expected Messiah who would transform lives.
- * The angels proclaim a message to the shepherds that is the very same message of peace, joy, and hope that Jesus would preach as an adult.
- * Those same shepherds, the first missionaries, then told others of the wonder and glory of this child.
- * The wise men were the first to bow down and worship Jesus.
- * And then, of course, we have the gifts the wise men gave to Jesus, which again point to his future – gold is a symbol of his divinity, frankincense his holiness, and myrrh his suffering and death.

The Christmas story doesn’t let us remain gazing at the baby Jesus, but challenges us to face the teacher Jesus, the loving Jesus, the healer Jesus, the crucified Jesus, the resurrected Jesus.



“God’s message transcends time”

Every part of Jesus’s story, then, relates to the whole – to his message of hope, love, and peace, and to his death and resurrection. After all, God’s message transcends time. And that’s why Jesus’s church is as much for a 6 year old as it is for a 60 year old, as much for 9 month year old as it is for a 99 year old. God is all about eternity, where every person is precious, whatever their background, whatever their gender, whatever their nationality, whatever their ethnicity, whatever their age.

So, yes, this Christmas we are celebrating a beautiful newborn who couldn’t talk, walk or look after himself. But, in light of eternity and in light of our faith, we remember much more than a cute baby and a quaint story.

“when we look at that Christmas baby, we are actually contemplating eternity”

At Christmas, we remember a journey that started in the wonder of Bethlehem, but ended up in Jerusalem with the pain of Holy Week and the joy of Easter.

And so when we look at that Christmas baby, we are actually contemplating eternity... because in that baby is hope, in that baby is compassion, in that baby is justice, in that baby is love, in that baby is peace, in that baby is sacrifice, in that baby is joy, in that baby is resurrection.

Have a wonderful Christmas

Trystan



Christmas Crib by Eleanor Williams

I don't have a tree at Christmas. Instead, I have a crib. Funnily enough, it's thanks to the French Revolution I have this tiny crib, where each figure is less than an inch tall. In 1789, the churches were declared 'the property of the State'; and in 1792, they were closed altogether.

The people of Provence, unable to attend church at Christmas, made diminutive nativity scenes for their homes. They did so at risk of the guillotine, which is why the cribs were made to be small and easily hidden away. They comprised the traditional Mary, Joseph and Jesus with local Provencal characters – a lady selling flowers, a baker, a mayor, someone scaling a fish, sharpening a knife, lighting a lamp, a man with a dancing bear - who were on their way to visit the manger.

"They did so at risk of the guillotine"

Together, they were called 'santons' or 'little saints'. Every year, when I come to put my set out, I do find myself imagining that I am one of the townspeople on my way to the manger.

Who, I think to myself, are my fellow 'santons'? Who is in my community? Well, this year, of course, there is Christchurch, where I have been stunned by everyone's warmth and friendliness; there are my elderly parents in Newport, and my sister with her family (including my adored nephew, Jonathon) who live in Durham; there is Lucy, a nurse married to a chicken farmer in Monmouth, with whom I was threatened with being expelled from Brownies. She is there with her sons who are my godsons; there is my Auntie Din from Abertillery, who passed on to me her love of literature and travel; there is Ali from school at whose wedding I

was thrilled to speak; there is Miss Thomas, who taught me O level maths (and is therefore a true saint); there is Bill Sykes, my college chaplain, who

"Who, I think to myself, are my fellow 'santons'?"

taught me that people are the most important;

there is Jo, to whom I dictated my final exams when we were incarcerated in a monastery on Boar's Hill; there is my dear friend Nigel whom I met in the college of law in York, but who hailed from Barry the whole time; there are Girl Guides as I'm an ambassador for their wonderful organisation (they have thankfully overlooked the Brownie incident).

What a diverse lot my 'santons' are! Some on Earth; some not. Some personal; some corporate. Some Christians; some staunch atheists. But all of us, at this time of year, either by attending church or by exchanging presents, or by singing carols, stopping for a look in the stable.



"What can I give him, poor as I am. If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. But what I can, I give Him.... GIVE MY HEART"

Thank you Eleanor for this piece of living history.

We love having you with us as you train to be a Reader in the Church in Wales. Ed.

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Lay Reader Dominic De Saulles

Parish Secretary Denise Searle: at Parish Office (Monday and Wednesday mornings)

Parish Office/Hall Enquiries Tel: 029 20763151

Church Wardens

Haydn Hopkins Tel: 029 20621280

Colin Francis Tel: 029 20751773

PCC Secretary Judith Hill: 029 20758080
Treasurer John Hodgson: 029 20764485
Gift Aid Secretary Gerald Bradnum: 029 20751177
Electoral Roll Officer David Alexander: 029 20759704
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IT support Richard Hill: 02920 758080
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Music at Christ Church is coordinated by Sue Hurrell & Jane Roberts [Youth choir and main choir rehearse separately once a month: youth choir on Tuesday evenings and main choir after the 10am Sunday service]. We'd be delighted to welcome new musicians and choir members.
email : hurrell.sue@gmail.com

Church Society (Talk & Buffet)

As advertised, on various Wednesdays in the Hall. Open to all, family and friends. Contact: Howard Kilvington: 02920 317301

Ladies Keep Fit Light exercise. Mondays 7:30pm
Contact: Gill Kilvington: 02920 317301

Choir and Youth Choir : Contact Sue Hurrell: 029 20485171

CHILDRENS & YOUTH WORK

Chatterbox Parents & Toddlers – every Thursday
1:30pm – 3:00pm in the hall.
Contact: Ann Francis: 029 20751773

FUNKY Church age up to 11 meets each Sunday during the service except for Family service.
Contact: Val Jones: 029 20747021
Sandra Hughes: 029 20758588

Messy Church
Contact: Linda Alexander Tel: 07814759559

Youth Club J Walkers age 11– 18
Sandra Hughes: 029 20758588

Child Protection Officer
Contact: Colin Francis: 02920 751773

ConneXion Groups.....

Meet monthly at various times and in various houses. Contact the Parish office for more information.

Good Companions Tuesdays 2:00pm– 4.00pm
Contact: Val Jones, Alison Peters or Julia Matthews
Val Jones Tel: 029 20747021
Alison Peters 029 20761277
Julia Matthews 029 21157213

SCOUTS

Beavers
Monday 6.30pm

Cubs
Wednesday 6:15pm
Scouts – 84th Cardiff
Wednesdays 7:30pm

ALL INFORMATION FROM
Geoff Payne
Telephone: 02920 756577
OR Caryl Roach: 02920 754463

Rainbows in the church hall
Tuesdays 5:00pm
Contact: Emma Lane Tel 02920 750675