

Contact Information:

The Partnership office is open:

Monday, Tuesday, Friday 9:00 – 1:00pm
Wednesday 1.00 – 4.00pm
Thursday Closed

There will always be an up to date message on the Partnership Office telephone giving any changes.

The office number is 01793 874221. The office e-mail is:
wspartnershipoffice@gmail.com

To publicise any News or Events in the next edition of In Partnership covering January, please send them to the office no later than 15 December.

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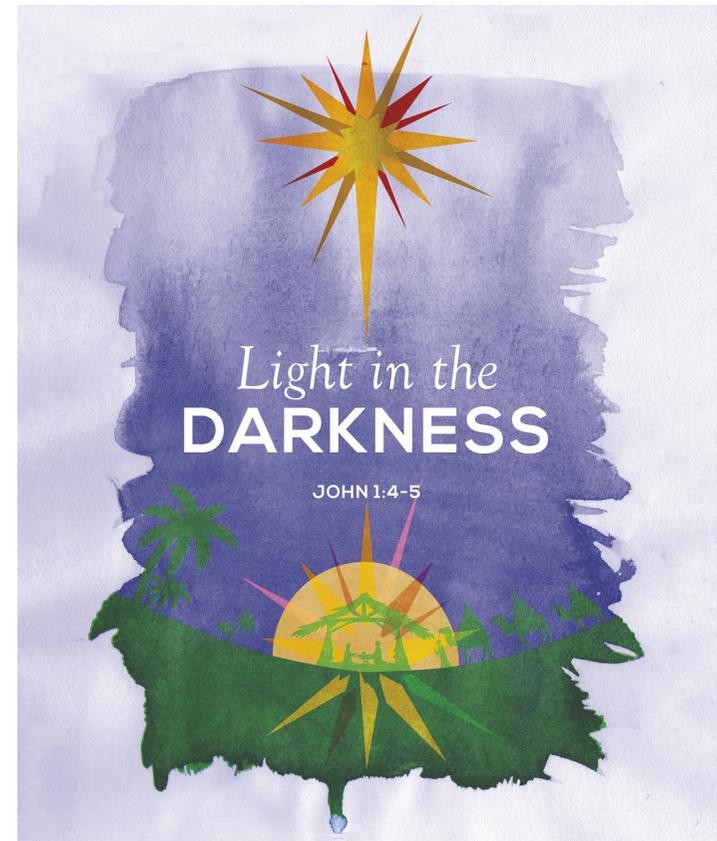
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In Partnership December 2017

Looking outwards and growing together



Travelling Together

As it is the Christmas season I have many piano pupils learning Christmas Carols, and a few weeks ago I listened to an extremely timid performance of 'We three Kings'. This led to a discussion with my pupil about the Stargazers, their amazing journey across field, fountain, moor, mountain and the sort of character that they would have needed to be such explorers. To inspire her playing I described the Wise men as courageous, brave, and confident travellers, willing to risk all for the adventure of following the star to a yet unknown destination. I encouraged her to play the carol with increased rhythmic energy, lively dynamics and a lilting ballad style to more accurately give a sense of the Magi's quest. She was amused by my enthusiasm, but as each week of practice unfolds her Wise men are gradually becoming increasingly plucky and bold. But it did make me think why do I assume the Wise men were the Bear Grylls characters of their day? Why couldn't there have been a timid Stargazer?

The Bible tells me the wise men were from the East, they studied the scriptures, saw the star rise and followed it. My assumption that they were all fearless trailblazers has no foundation, whether brave or timid, all we know is that something about the timeless light they saw, the star dying as it gave light, reached out to them and pointed them on a journey.

This timid performance of We three Kings has got stuck in my thoughts over the last few weeks, and I have been pondering why it resonated deep within me. I love the idea of a pilgrimage, being dazzled by a star, and following wherever it leads. But the reality of setting off on a journey where I don't know where I am going and having no idea what I will find at my destination's end fills me with high levels of anxiety. I could cross fields, if there are no scary horses or cows in my path. I could pass fountains, but not if I would need to walk along a thin ledge with any sort of visible drop. I could walk across the moors, but I wouldn't want to get stuck in cold, dark boggy areas. Mountains, I love, but heights terrify me, and if any serious clambering is required then I am a quivering shaking wreck.

My epiphany moment, when I read my own writing, is that 'I' features far too often. 'I' seem to be the centre of my own universe, 'I' seem to think, that I need to go it alone, and 'I' seem to think that I would not be up to the task. For some guidance I look back to Matthew 2, and read that the wise men, whether brave or timid, did not travel alone, they travelled

From the Registers

Baptism

29 October 2017 Molly Mae Fox
29 October 2017 Tyler James Fox
26 November 2017 Ada Betty Clews

Funerals

16 November 2017 Anthony Mervyn Collis
27 November 2017 Delphyne Parkin

PRAYERS

Please pray for:

All those suffering, as more than 390 people are dead and tens of thousands affected following the recent earthquake in Iraq and Iran. Also pray that the needs of conflict affected populations are able to continue to be met across the country.

The Nativity workshop at HTS on 17 December

Open Air carols at Lydiard on 20 December

All Schools Work

St Marys Anglican Rodbourne Cheney	Week beginning 03.12.17
Emmanuel URC	Week beginning 10.12.17
St Andrews Moredon Methodist Church	Week beginning 17.12.17
St Marys Roman Catholic Rodbourne Cheney	Week beginning 24.12.17



Folk at the New Room

Christmas Concert

The New Room (John Wesley's Chapel)

36 The Horsefair, Bristol BS1 3JE. (please use Horsefair entrance)

The next concert will be on December 14th at 7.30pm. This will be a seasonal evening of traditional folk carols, featuring Bristol folk singers and some special guests.

"A Christmas Carol"

Friday 15th December

Highworth Methodist Church

4:30pm

Highworth Church has once again invited Silhouette Theatre Co. this December:

"A Christmas Carol" suitable for children (6 years+) and adults.

Tickets £4:50 from The Lighthouse Bookshop.

Night of hope in Jesus

The Last Friday of each month starting 27th October

Gorse Hill Baptist Church, Cricklade Road, Swindon SN2 1AA

10.00 pm – 6.00 am

'Night of hope in Jesus' this is a night of prayer from 10.00 pm – 6.00 am. Starting with Praise and Worship then prayer in 2 hourly sessions,

Walking the Way

Saturday 27 January 2018

Emmanuel United Reformed Church,

81 High St, Swindon SN25 1HU

Time: 10am – 4pm

The day will be led by David Lawrence, Imagine Church Life Consultant in the South West. David works for the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, and will be helping us to focus on the URC programme, Walking the Way, and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus today

alongside each other. We don't know how they each reached the decision to risk all and follow the star, but we know that they followed together. Whether they discovered the star as an individual discovery or a collaborative one, they came together in their journey of faith searching for the truth of the star. They shared the arduous adventure, the ups and downs of the journey from their home land to Jerusalem. They left their homes in unison following prophecies, promises and a bright grace filled star, not knowing what they would find and whether they would ever return.

Side by side, they discovered the child, a perfectly human child, the Christ child, God's presence among us. The destination, I guess was not what any of them expected, they had taken a long dangerous journey to discover an ordinary child, in a normal home, born to poor parents, there was no palace, no riches and no show of power. Their expectations were turned upside down, and in that moment of wonder, comprehension, or complete surprise, they collectively bowed in worship recognising the presence of the with us God.

We live in a culture of 'I', and whether we are timid, or brave, or anything in between, we are led to believe we can have everything we want, including our own spiritual journey and faith. Though we may not want to admit it, the 'I' culture permeates into our Churches, and is the cause of disagreement and conflict. But the wonderful hope of Christmas is that the timeless light that shines on our world, the star dying as it gave light, reaches out to each, and every one of us. The Christmas message is that 'the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned'. Jesus, the gift of light and grace, comes to rescue us, and points us on our journey. To accept this Christmas gift, we need to give up control of our own lives, and seek only to follow the pathway Jesus unfolds before us. Jesus descends to earth, right into the messiness of our world, to live with us and to invite us to walk with him. Like the wise men we need to commit wholeheartedly to the journey, work together through the struggles, and be prepared to be transformed, as our world is turned upside down.

Returning to Matthew, it tells me the wise men opened their treasures and gave gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, rare and precious gifts, symbolic, and yet practical. Together, as one, they give their gifts of wealth, worship, and witness. They are then prompted to return home by a different route, and a new road stretches out before them. As Mary and Joseph also flee from the grasp of Herod, I surmise correctly or incorrectly that the gifts that they were given, kept the family alive while

Travelling Together - continued

they were refugees, hope, currency, and medicine, a need in every time and place.

These wise men, foreigners, strangers, outsiders, should inspire us to surrender all to Jesus, and travel willingly with others wherever we are guided.

Timid or brave, may we go carolling together with energy, across field, fountain, moor and mountain in pursuit of the star. May the star lead us on a new journey, on a pilgrimage of risk and adventure, with God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit steering us, and walking with us every step of the way.

A Blessing by Ruth Burgess

New roads
When the star stopped
And they had seen the baby
They took a new road.

When the decorations come down
And we have heard the story
We can take a new road.

New roads can be scary.
New roads are exciting.
New roads are risky.
It is time to go.

Star-maker,
Light-bringer,
Holy spirit of adventure,
We travel with you.
Amen



PILGRIM HOMES
SERVING OLDER CHRISTIANS

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

9:30am to 11:30am
Saturday 2nd December 2017

**Framland Pilgrim Home, Naldertown,
Wantage, OXON. OX12 9DL**

**Cakes Cards Christmas Hampers
Crafts Gifts Refreshments**

All proceeds in aid of the Framland Pilgrim Home
Registered Charity Number 242266

Pilgrim Homes
115, Great Woodhead, London SE1 2JL
01753 201 7400 Fax 01753 201 7410 Email info@pilgrimhomes.org.uk
www.pilgrimhomes.org.uk
Pilgrim Homes is a registered charity in England and Wales. Registered Office: The Agnes (Pillar) Building
115, Great Woodhead, London SE1 2JL. Registered in England. Charity No. 242266. CIC No. 1042747

26 December Look out for Wenceslas

Most of us probably know that on December 26th (the Feast of Stephen) 'Good king Wenceslas' looked out, *writes David Winter*. We probably also know that the snow lay round about, 'deep and crisp and even'. Beyond that, he's just someone in a carol that's not often sung nowadays.

However, Wenceslas was a real person, a duke, and effectively king of Bohemia in the 10th century. In modern terms, he was Czechoslovakian. He was known as a generous and kind monarch, deeply Christian and given to good works. So the story in the carol by the Victorian hymn-writer J.M. Neale, while possibly fictitious, is at least in line with his recognised character. 'Page and monarch' braved the 'bitter weather' and the 'cruel wind's wild lament' to take food and fuel to a poor man living rough.

Neale's carol was enormously popular in the 19th century, because it perfectly expressed Victorian Christian ideals of benevolence and almsgiving. Christian men of 'wealth and rank' are urged to help the poor, and so 'find blessing'. Ignoring the 'wealth and rank and men' bit, it's still good advice, at Christmas or any other time.

Christmas Care 2017

Caring For The Homeless And Lonely

www.christmascare.co.uk Charity Number: 1131756

As a small charity, we have always been immensely grateful for the generous donations from both individuals and local businesses.

- We can only accept donations in kind during the run up to the Christmas period.
- However we are very grateful for donations of money at any time of the year.

We have two donation days in the run up to Christmas, both of which will be at Buckhurst Park Community Centre:

- Saturday, 16th December 10am - 3pm; and
- Saturday, 23rd December 10am - 3pm.

If you would like to make a donation for the coming Christmas, please read the notes below.

Adult clothing ONLY – warm, clean and in good condition: Coats & jackets: Trousers & jeans: Tops, shirts & jumpers: Underwear & socks (new & unused): Shoes & boots

Sleeping bags – clean and in good condition. We do NOT need any standard bedding.

Toiletries & towels - shower gel, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, shaving items, shampoo and towels in good condition. The small samples of these (often provided in hotels) are particularly useful, but they must be unused.

Cleaning materials – for the kitchen, dining tables & WCs eg, washing up liquid, bleach, tea towels

Food (which must all have “Use by” dates which are after Christmas):

Tinned food – meat & fish, beans, tomatoes & other vegetables, rice pudding, etc

Dried food – rice, pasta, breakfast cereals, biscuits, tea, coffee, sugar, drinking chocolate, etc

Long shelf-life packets – mince pies, Christmas puddings, jams & marmalade, cook-in & table sauces, sandwich fillers, custard

Soft drinks & long-life fruit juices.

Perishable & frozen food – we can only accept these very close to Christmas: Breakfast ingredients – bacon, sausages, eggs, Cheese

Fresh vegetables

Books & board games

Any queries at all please contact Diane Killick on 01793 336420

Regular activities

2nd Sunday each month

Messy Church	10 December 4 - 5:30pm @ Shaw
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Every Monday

After School Youth Group Contact Claire Camm 07981951381	3:30 – 6:00pm @ Holy Trinity Shaw
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Every Tuesday

Bell Ringing	7-9pm St Mary's Bell Tower
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2nd Wednesday of each month

Mothers Union Contact Jean Brock 01793 539456	13 December 2pm @ St Mary's Stable Room
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Every Thursday

Toothill Tinies	10 -11:30am @ Toothill
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Home Group

HTS led by Sue Green Contact Sue on 01793 872056 for details	Thursday 7.30pm
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TOOTHILL led by Rev Jan Partridge Contact Jan on 01793 534992 for details	3rd Monday of each month 2.30pm
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WESTLEA led by Pete Gilder Contact Pete on 01793 878823 for details	Alternate Tuesdays 8pm
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Nativity Festival

at

ST MARY'S LYDIARD TREGOZE



Come in and see

**Nativity scenes from around the World
and those created by our local Schools**

3rd – 11th December 2017

10.00am – 3.00pm

Admission: Free

Kindly supported by



92 Ermin Street, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4NN. 01793 832072

St Mary's is part of the West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership

You see this wasn't just a musical note, this note was the note of hope and whenever anyone heard it, that note of hope for the world, they couldn't help themselves but sing. This sing note was the star of a great worldwide symphony that has been singing ever since. The note was not meant to sound a perfect pitch but was the sound of a great cry of hope that came deep from inside people's souls, and the whole of creation began to sing because it had finally heard this one, solitary, forgotten note of hope.

from Mucky Paws Volume 9 by Roddy Hamilton

And there were shepherds

Luke's story of the birth of Jesus is brilliantly told – the angel's visit to Mary to tell her she would be mother of the long-promised Messiah, the old priest in the Temple told by another angel that his wife would have a son to be called 'John', who would prepare the people of Israel for that event, and then Mary and Joseph making the 60 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, as required by the Roman census. When they got there, no room at the inn, and they settled instead for a convenient stable, where Mary gave birth to a boy child.

Suddenly, Luke changes the tone. 'And there were shepherds ...' – that's what he actually wrote, just like that. 'And there were shepherds', doing exactly what shepherds do, looking after their flocks by night. But this night was different: yet another angelic message – a call to abandon their sheep and go into Bethlehem to see the baby Messiah. They were given directions and a 'sign' to identify Him. He would be lying in a feeding trough. Well, at least they would recognise that.

And why the shepherds, in this glorious story of our salvation? Because the event needed witnesses, and the chosen witnesses would be this bunch of scruffy, smelly shepherds straight from the sheep-pen. Nothing could speak more eloquently of God's purpose than that. This was not a Saviour for the strong, rich and powerful, but for everybody. The carpenter and his wife guarded the Saviour of the world, and the very first witnesses were not kings or priests but a handful of shepherds.



The Note

Once there was a musical note that didn't have a chorus or a symphony or song to belong to. It just hung there, a little out of tune and a bit flat. No one wanted it. All the songs had the notes they needed and an extra one would ruin their structure and sound and rhythm. So, it was left discarded by the edge.

Every so often it tried to make a sound, a beautiful sound that great singers would want to imitate, or great composers would want to use, but it was no use, whenever it tried so make it's sound, it just coughed and spluttered and whimpered. It decided never to make a sound ever again.

But suddenly everything went very quiet. A hush that descended across the whole world. People could talk but all they talked about was how quiet everything seemed to be. Musicians could play their pieces and they all sounded wonderful but there was a deeper hush, a silence that went right down to the insides of people. And people noticed.

The note was very sad. It noticed the great big silence. It didn't know why it had happened or what to do to make it better. it just knew it was very quiet. The music the musician played was beautiful, but it seemed empty and the words and songs people sang were lonely but again they seemed very empty.

One day the note was wandering through all the music one Christmas time. It had never listened all the way through a piece and decided to listen. And it heard of stars gathering and angels singing, and it wondered 'why?' Then it heard of ancient words telling of a special birth and it wondered 'whose?' Then it heard about shepherds travelling and wise men journeying, and it wondered 'where?'

And it listened right to the end to find out and suddenly it couldn't help itself. It sang out as loud as it could when it heard about a baby called Jesus being born in a stable and all the hopes that rested on him. And the note sang as loud as it had ever sung. It went through long cadences and scales and arpeggios as it heard the news. It trilled with vibrato and with a great crescendo filled the air around it with all the music it could muster. It just couldn't help itself.

And suddenly the whole world was singing again. The sheep bleated, and the cows mooed, the wind whistled, and the trees whispered, the waves roared, and the earth groaned the birds sang and the baby cried.

Sat 16th December 2017, 4pm
Shaw Church

EMERGE Christmas Show
"Light in the darkness"



Christmas stalls

Tickets: Fam £6.00
Adult £3.00
Child £2.00
(inc refreshments)

In aid of Tearfund

EMERGE CHRISTMAS SHOW

The young people on the emerge youth project this term have been busy preparing for our Christmas show on –

Saturday 16th December, 4pm at Shaw Church.

We have had a great term with some good discussions on topics chosen by the young people: the future; forgiveness; death; evil; eternal life; music; family; love. These are all topics which we have looked into on Mondays with the help of the Youth Bible and The Message. They also fit very well with our Saturday theme this term which is 'Narnia' and on which our Christmas show is based.

The Monday group has also been finding out about 'Toilet Twinning' charity (part of Tearfund) and have taken part in some thought-provoking and fun discussions and activities around that. We have decided to raise money to twin some toilets at Shaw with those in developing countries – this costs £60 per toilet.

Please come and support our Christmas show and help us in this really worthwhile effort.

Thanks
Claire



Nativity Workshop

Holy Trinity Church Shaw
Sunday 17th December 10am-4pm.

Travelling Together Nativity Service at 4pm.

This is a free event for all Primary school aged children.

To register to take part email Gayle Bryon on
gayleschoolswork@gmail.com or phone Partnership Office 874221



Caring
Listening
Helping

Street Pastor Information Evening December 15, 2017

Are you passionate about serving Christ and our community? Street Pastors engage with people on the streets to care for them, listen to them and help them. They work together with other partners in the night-time economy to make communities safe.

Swindon Street Pastors are looking to recruit more local Christians to expand our team.

**We have teams going out Friday and Saturday nights.
Could you consider committing yourself once a month to put God's work into action?**

We are holding an information evening to answer any questions that you may have about Swindon Street Pastors. Come and find out more on how we serve Christ on the streets of Swindon! Freshbrook Church, Worsley Road, Freshbrook, Swindon, SN5 8NU

7:15 teas and coffee
7:30 start

For more information and an application pack, contact:
Nancy Williams, Swindon Street Pastor Co-ordinator, 07825202005
Or email: swindon@streetpastors.org.uk

RAINBOW BOOK SHOP

A vacancy will soon be available for an assistant sales person. The job will offer 2 days each week and 1 Saturday in four from 9.00am to 4.00pm; the shop is closed on Sundays. Interested parties are invited to submit their CV and request an application form from the following address:
Bookshop Manager, Rainbow Bookshop, St. Aldhelm's Centre'
Edgware Road, Swindon, SN1 1QS

Christmas Schools Work Activities – continued

Tuesday 19th **Christmas Unwrapped** in Shaw Ridge for Year 1. This will be a really fun session to finish our Christmas activities in schools this year. The children love exploring the Christmas Story by opening the boxes and doing the craft activities.

Wednesday 20th **Community Carols** in Lydiard Park at 6pm, an evening of joyful singing and story for all the community. We hope to see lots of children and families who have taken part in our school's sessions.

Carol Services that we are involved in supporting:

Tuesday 12th 6pm Brook Field Carol Service at HTS.

Thursday 14th 1.30pm LPA Carol Concert with children attending from local primary schools. Brookfield and Oliver Tomkins singing with LPA.
7.30pm Carol Concert for parents.

Monday 18th Oliver Tomkins Carol Service at St Peters

Tuesday 19th Tregoze Carol Service St Marys

Please hold all these events, the schools, the children, and all our volunteers in your prayers.

With Every Blessing

Gayle

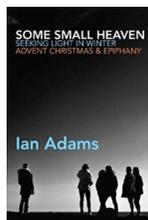
Some Small Heaven – a spiritual path through Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

By Ian Adams, BRF, £8.99

In this Advent book, seasonal meditations with various striking reflections and images combine. Advent is a time of waiting, which can occur in our lives at any time. Learning how to wait in Advent will enable us better to understand how to negotiate the waiting times whenever they come.

Christmas can nurture within us an openness to new possibilities. We are helped to capture the wonder of God coming towards us, making a home in us.

Epiphany is a time of revealing, and so this invites us to look up and look out and see larger patterns at work in our world, to see the holy child Jesus as a gift for all. In seeking light we discover how we too can be bearers of light.



Open Air Carols

by
Lantern light
at
Lydiard Park 7.00pm
In front of the house or in Church if raining

Wednesday 20 December 2017

*You are warmly welcome to join us
singing Christmas Carols.*

*Please bring your own
Lanterns and Torches*



The man who married Mary

The traditional Nativity scene on our Christmas cards has Mary with the Holy Babe. Around her are the shepherds and Magi. We may also see stable animals, angels and a star! While Joseph is often included, his presence seems to be of minor importance. After all, we praise God for Jesus with our familiar Christmas carols, mentioning angels, shepherds, Wise men and Mary but the name of Joseph is absent! Why is Joseph given a low profile? For he is a man to be remembered.

Joseph was a resident of Nazareth. He worked as a carpenter and his skills would have included making furniture, repairing buildings and crafting agricultural tools. Although Joseph had an honourable profession, he would not have been a man of great wealth.

The gospel writers Matthew and Luke give Joseph a few brief mentions. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary go to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate the Baby to God. Afterwards, they flee into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod and much later return to Nazareth. Twelve years later, Mary and Joseph go with Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. Here they lose Jesus, and find Him in the Temple talking with religious leaders!

Apart from these verses, the New Testament is silent about the rest of Joseph's life. However, we do know that Joseph was father to other children by Mary. His four sons are named and they had at least two daughters. (See Matthew 13:55)

And we also know that Joseph was someone who quietly and humbly took on the awesome role in caring for the early life of the Son of God. Joseph would have taught Jesus many things – not just the skills of a labourer, but the lore of the countryside which was evident in our Lord's teaching. Jesus grew up within a loving family and described God as 'Father', knowing also the good fatherly qualities of Joseph.

In the Christmas story, Joseph is placed into a situation that brought him misunderstanding and suspicion. But Joseph remained faithful in the knowledge that as long as God had spoken, the opinion of others mattered little. Before Jesus began His ministry it is believed that Joseph died. It is likely Jesus took on many of his father's responsibilities before He left home.

In the eyes of the world, Joseph was a nobody. He was not a man of valour, fame and fortune. But he was the one who had parental responsibility for the greatest person who has ever lived!

30th November '**The Greatest Journey**' Launch with the Bible Society. A special Pop-up Nativity in Oliver Tomkins in the morning and in Brook Field in the afternoon, with the gifted Dai Woolridge. This is going to be a fantastic new experience for us all. A day of amazing storytelling and dressing up. I hope my costume arrives in time!

30th November '**Journey to the cradle**' an evening with Dai Woolridge and The Sound of Wales. 7.30-9.30pm at Holy Trinity Church, Shaw. What a terrific opportunity for all of us to start our Advent Journey with a fresh exploration of our faith through powerful spoken word and musical performances. It is going to be an amazing evening for us all.

Friday 1st December '**A Ugandan Christmas**' in Oliver Tomkins for KS1. I have had a great time researching and writing this new Christmas session, and am eager to try it out with the children. I have been blessed with the amount of people from the Diocese who have offered clothes, material, music and information about Uganda.

Sunday 3rd December – Monday 11th December '**Nativity Festival**' at St Marys. We have school groups visiting each day to take part in what we are calling The Star Trail. The children will look at the Nativities from around the world, take part in some storytelling about the Stargazers and make a star as a gift for someone.

The schools we have visiting are :

Monday 4th morning Tregoze Year 1 and 2
Monday 4th afternoon Oliver Tomkins Yr 5
Tuesday 5th morning Oliver Tomkins Year 4
Tuesday 5th afternoon Oliver Tomkins Year 3
Wednesday 6th morning Oliver Tomkins Year 6
Wednesday 6th afternoon Tregoze Year 3+4
Thursday 7th morning Tregoze Reception
Friday 8th morning Shaw Ridge Year 5
Monday 11th morning Tregoze Year 5 and 6

Tuesday 12th Hazlewood Academy Reception and Nursery are visiting Toothill Church for **Christingle** and Year 1 are visiting to take part in '**A Ugandan Christmas**'.

Friday 15th **Christingles** in Brook Field and Peatmoor Primary school for their reception children.

Sunday 17th '**Travelling Together**' Nativity Workshop 10am-4pm and Service at HTS at 4pm. We hope to be welcoming lots of new children to our Partnership Nativity Workshop this year.

Monday 18th **Christmas Assembly** Shaw Ridge

Christmas Schools Work Activities –

Star Gazing

This Christmas I hope we can all be like the Stargazers in the Christmas Story, that we can take time to stop, look, wonder, pay attention, and then be moved to journey and investigate the Star of Christmas close-up. At that first Christmas God shone his spotlight over Bethlehem, onto a house, where the Stargazers found Jesus. What a surprise! What a revelation! The Stargazers discovered the most amazing secret, that God had descended, and come to earth to be with us all. The Bible tells us they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy, as they fell down in the presence of the Christ Child. I pray that we will all have our own personal epiphany this Christmas, a moment where the light and life-giving energy of Jesus, illuminates and radiates us.

Children, invariably seem to be the source of many of my special moments and revelations. They innocently ask the questions I as a grownup am too scared to ask, they voice the truth I am too scared to voice, and they express the feelings that I am too scared to express. As we seek to share the Christmas story in different ways with our schools this Christmas I hope to be surprised every day, by the insights and understanding the children will reveal to me about the Star of Christmas.

May the love of Christ rise in our hearts like the morning star this Christmas time.

I would like to offer a celtic **céad míle fáilte** (a hundred thousand thank you's) for all those who are helping with the various activities, and I would love to welcome any further offers of help with any of the sessions.

Our school's sessions Christmas 2017:

24th November '**The Jesse Tree**' Storytelling Day in Westlea School. We are telling a different story with each of the 10 classes, including Abraham, David, Samuel and Rahab.

27th November **Posada** Assembly in Brook Field. Once again Mary and Joseph are going to travel round Brook Field, with other visitors popping up around the school over the last few weeks of term.

29th November **Posada** Assembly in Hazlewood Academy. For the first time Mary and Joseph are going to travel round Hazlewood Academy. Hopefully, the children will have a fun and exciting time spotting all the visitors to their school.



It is sad that we often equate ordinariness with ineffectiveness. Down the ages, God has used many ordinary people to accomplish great things. God continues to use ordinary people. Like Joseph, we need to know that doing God's will is the most important thing in life. May we, this Christmas, respond to God's call to us and please Him in all that we do.

The Christmas Message

The date was set in heaven above
When love come down upon this earth,
A stable bare, a bed of straw,
The setting for the Saviour's birth.

Shepherds out upon the hillside
'Watching o'er their flocks by night',
When angels telling of a baby
In splendor, burst upon their sight

Signs were seen in distant lands
With wise men travelling from afar
Having searched the skies at night
Came following His natal star.

As we hear the Christmas message,
If we think these things are true,
We could come to seek this baby
We could be like wise men too.

By Megan Carter



Church Services in the Partnership St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze

Date	Time	Form
03 December	10:00am	Advent Sunday Partnership Service
10 December	10:00am	Christingle
13 December	2:00pm	Mothers Union Service
17 December	6:30pm	Carols by Candlelight with organ
Weds 20 Dec	7:00pm	Open Air Carols @ Lydiard Park
Friday 22 Dec	7:00pm	Carols @ Hook
Christmas Eve	4:00pm	Family Crib Service
Christmas Eve	11:00pm	First Communion of Christmas
Christmas Day	10:00am	Family Service with Communion
Sunday 31 Dec	10:00am	Partnership Carols with Communion

Holy Trinity Shaw

Date	Time	Form
03 December	10:00am	Partnership Service at St Mary's
10 December	10:30am	All Age Communion
10 December	4:00pm	Messy Church
10 December	7:00pm	Carols by Candlelight
17 December	9:45am	Partnership Nativity Workshop
17 December	4:00pm	Partnership Nativity Service
Christmas Eve	3:00pm	Crib Service
Christmas Day	10:30am	All Age Communion
Sunday 31 Dec	10:00am	Partnership Carols with Communion at St Mary's
8.45am Morning Prayer on Fridays during term time.		

Toothill

Date	Time	Form
03 December	10:00am	Partnership Service at St Mary's
Weds 06 Dec	11:30am	Midweek Worship
10 December	4:00pm	Carols by Candlelight All Age Service
Weds 13 Dec	11:30am	Midweek Communion
17 December	10:30am	Wednesday Style Reflective Service
Weds 20 Dec	11:30am	Midweek Communion
Christmas Eve	10:30am	Carol Service
Christmas Eve	11:30pm	Christmas Eve Communion
Christmas Day	10:30am	Christmas Day Family Service
Weds 27 Dec	11:30am	Midweek Communion
Sunday 31 Dec	10:00am	Partnership Carols with Communion at St Mary's

Westlea

Date	Time	Form
03 December	10:00am	Partnership Service at St Mary's
10 December	10:00am	Family Service
17 December	6:30pm	Carols at Westlea
Christmas Eve	10:00am	Morning Service
Christmas Day	10:00am	Family service
Sunday 31 Dec	10:00am	Partnership Carols with Communion at St Mary's

