

St Mary's Monthly Message

December 2022



A Note From David

BY THE RECTOR

Dear Church Family,

Christmas is coming! As we journey towards it, I thought it might be helpful to remember the journey Mary and Joseph made before that first Christmas. For if you travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem these days, it is a relatively easy journey. The roads are good and you should get there by car in about two and a half hours. However, Mary and Joseph's experience would have been completely different. On foot the ninety-mile journey would have been long and dangerous. There were the ever-present threats of robbers and wild animals. The weather would have also been a challenge, as during the day it would have been really hot and at night it would have been freezing. And the journey would normally have taken walkers about five days, but because Mary was in the last stages of pregnancy, they may well have taken a few days longer. So all these factors would have meant that the young couple must have been absolutely exhausted when they finally arrived in Bethlehem.

And why am I mentioning these things? Well, the often romanticised pictures of Jesus' birth can lull us into thinking that all was sweetness and light, but that was far from the case! We are living in an uncertain world and facing many challenges, but let's remember that God understands and at the heart of Christmas is the celebration of the birth of a baby with all the vulnerabilities that went with that birth. It shows for all time the full extent of love our Heavenly Father has for us. Christmas is about an encounter with Jesus and love that came down at Christmas in the person of Jesus. As wonderful as the trimmings of the tree, the lights, the presents, and the food are, I pray that we may each meet with Jesus this Christmas and thank Him for his great love for us!

Many Blessings, David.

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Traditional Carols: Stuart King

Stuart is married to Laila, who is Finnish, and they have lived in Lacey Green for almost 40 years. They have three children: Tabitha, Philippa, who died of cancer in April this year was a talented artist and poet, and Arabella, who has three children. Stuart has been playing the organ at St Mary's since 2003 and has been full time organist since 2007.

Q. Can you tell us a little about traditional carols?

A. The tradition of carols goes back to medieval times, and we are carrying on that tradition, taking inspiration from what the cathedrals do and bringing it to the parish. The Lessons and Carols service, as we know it today, dates back to the late 19th Century and was first introduced by Truro Cathedral. Since the demise of the choir at St Mary's, the singing has been by the congregation only, but this year, thanks to over 20 volunteers, we shall be having a Lessons & Carols service with choir. Carols by Candlelight will be at 6:00 pm, on December 18, 2022.

Q. What do you do when you are not playing the organ?

A. Since I retired, I gained a Certificate in Art History from Oxford University Department of Continuing Education. As a musician, I also compose organ music. The short musical interludes played after the gospel reading at the 09.30 service are my compositions. Apart from that, I enjoy spoiling my grandchildren.

Q. Can you tell us a little about your Faith?

A. I came to faith partly through music; singing in choirs both in parish churches and in our great cathedrals and praising God in my organ playing. The Bible bids us to make music in both the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. Pippa's untimely death strengthened me by her example of an unshakeable faith. It gave me hope that there is much more in store after this earthly life. I have hope that there will be a small corner of God's Kingdom for me, perhaps polishing the great Johann Sebastian Bach's organ shoes or singing tenor at the Heavenly banquet.

Contemporary Carols: Tim Horton

Tim Horton is married to Lucy and they have two daughters, Jemimah and Elodie. They've been part of our St Mary's church family for seven years. You'll often find Tim, guitar in hand, leading our sung worship at the 11:15 service.

Q. Can you tell us about the Contemporary Carol service?

A. The Contemporary Carol service is, as the name suggests, a more contemporary expression of our Christmas worship, to complement the traditional carol services hosted at St Mary's. In the planning we strive to make the service accessible to all: regular members of our community and visitors; those with a faith and those for whom this might be the only time they come to church in the year. Music plays an important part in the service, and we work hard as a band to sing the carols that most people know, but often with a contemporary twist. Sometimes there is a new chorus added in, or a medley of songs/carols, or even a new musical arrangement to a well-known carol.

In addition to the music, we have a message which ties together many of the strands of the service into one theme. Previously, we've explored the theme of Jesus as light of the world, or simply "joy" which was more of a party atmosphere (complete with party-poppers!).

For me, the contemporary carol service is the highlight of the year; it's an occasion when we can push the envelope musically and technically to create a worshipping environment that's different from any other service. I'm sure I drive my family crazy when I start listening to carols in early October but it's all 'research' of course!

This year's Contemporary Carol service is going to be brilliant (but of course I'm going to say that!). Looking forward to seeing you in church on Tues 20-Dec, 7.30pm.



Stuart King reading Die Zeit

"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

ISAIAH 9:6



Tim Horton

In other news...

The wonderful **Jinglers Choir** will be performing with the Redwing Band at a 'Winter Wonderland Concert' and Coffee Morning coffee morning in St Mary's Church on Friday 2nd December at 10.30am. Donations to the Princes Centre. Doors open at 10am for refreshments, with concert beginning at 10.30am. Free entry but donations welcomed for the Princes Centre.

The **Advent study for this year** continues at 7:30pm in the Chapter House on 7, 14 & 21 December following Sally Welch's book 'Sharing the Christmas Story'. Each week we look at the theme, using the bible readings and reflections included in the book for that week.

Do you know any individuals, couples or families that need a hot meal due to their circumstances? If so, then the **Princes Risborough Hot Meals Scheme** is for them. You can nominate recipients for the scheme by calling 07774944324 or through St. Mary's Church Office on 01844 273300. Pick up a leaflet in church.

Feeling frazzled? Then **Embrace @ St Mary's Church** is for you. This is a new event in church on 10 December 10:00am-1:00pm for anyone who needs to recharge their batteries.

There will be a **family friendly Reconnect Christingle service** on Sunday December 11th at 4pm at St Mary's. Please book for this event using the following link: eventbrite.co.uk/e/reconnect-christingle-service-tickets-424069131187
For more details contact Sue (pioneercurate@stmarysrisborough.org.uk)

David will be leading **carol singing** around some of the Estates in Risborough on the evening of **Thursday 22nd Dec**. If you are able to join the merry band of singers, please contact the office.

Please continue to **donate to One Can** as many families are in greater need as the weather turns colder. You can donate cash or food items and full details can be found at onecantrust.org.uk. Sources of protein eg tinned meat, tinned fish, lentils etc. In addition items such tinned tomatoes and cook in sauces will enable people where possible prepare meals of their choice.

If you're stuck for a Christmas present to give to a loved one, why not consider sharing the love with someone in a poor country? For example, find some good ideas at <https://charity-gifts.christianaid.org.uk/>

Tea for All will be on December 18th at 2.30-3.30pm in church, open to anyone who would like some company.

Looking ahead...

The **Ladies Breakfast** will be on on Saturday 7th January, 9am in the hall with speaker June Brazier talking about "Smalls for All." (Underwear for women in third world countries).

The next **Mens Breakfast** January 14th also in the hall. The speaker is David Williams. The cost has gone up to £7.

Those wishing to go to either contact: Rose Williams (ladies) or Steve Williams (mens) 01844 274225.

A new **Alpha course** will commence in January in Longwick Village Hall - contact Sue Hughes for more details.



Jinglers Concert

You're Invited!

Feeling Overwhelmed?
A warm Christmas welcome is here to help you step away from it all.

'Embrace' @ St Mary's Church
Princes Risborough, HP27 9AW
Saturday 10th Dec, 10am to 1pm

You are welcome to drop in for.....
children's play area, craft-making and music,
prayer space, Christmas refreshments,
chat and chill
no charge - just enjoy!
stmarysrisborough.org.uk

Sign up for our weekly e-news by going to the homepage on our website. Receive all the news from St Mary's direct to your phone!



Afternoon tea

Dates for your Diary

Jinglers Concert Friday 2nd December at 10.30am.

Monthly Lunch Club: Weds 7 December & Weds 4 January, 10:00am to 3:00pm

Embrace @ St Mary's Church 10:00am-1:00pm on 10 December

Icknield Court Service for residents and staff led by Revd Jan Henderson 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm 11 December

Reconnect Christingle service on Sunday December 11th at 4pm at St Mary's

Traditional Carol Service at St Peter's, Ilmer 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm 11 December

Bereavement Drop-in 3:00pm Monday 12 December

Tea for All 18 December at 2:30-3:30pm

Carols by Candlelight 6:00-7:00pm 18 December

Contemporary Carols Service 7:30-9:00pm Tuesday 20 December

Christmas Eve Crib Service 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm, 24 December

Christmas Eve Midnight Holy Communion 11:30pm 24 December

Christmas Day service of Holy Communion at St Peter's, Ilmer 9:00am, 25 December

Christmas Day Family Celebration Service 10:00am, 25 December

Youth Drop-in: at Baptist Lower Hall Thursdays in term time 5:30-7:00pm

Play Cafe: every Tuesday during term time from 9.30am to 11am in church.

Services at St Mary's and St Peter's

For Christmas Services please see the website or the flyer in church.

Holy Communion at 8am (said)

Parish Communion continues at 9.30 on Sundays in church and live streamed to your home. See the St Mary's website for the link to our YouTube channel.

Live@St Mary's all age service at 11.15 in church. Kid's Church welcomes children to join them for activities during this service - contact

childrensworker@stmarysrisborough.org.uk for further info on sessions.

Mid week Holy Communion is on Wednesdays at 10.30 followed by coffee.

Third Sunday in the month, **Evensong with shortened HC at St Peter's Church,**

Ilmer: this month 6pm on 11th December is a service of Lessons and Carols.

For your Prayers this month

A Prayer for Christmas

Holy Jesus,
by being born one of us,
and lying humbly in a manger,
you show how much
God loves the world.
Let the light of your love
always shine in our hearts,
until we reach our
home in heaven,
and see you on your
throne of glory.

Amen.

A Prayer for Peace

Lord, more than ever
we pray for
Your peace and joy.
You've promised
rest for the weary,
victory for the battle-scarred,
peace for the anxious,
and acceptance for the
broken hearted
not just at Christmas,
but every day of every year.

Amen.

We remember these families in our prayers following the deaths of: Gillian Stevens, Joan Collins, Gillian Rankin, Anne Warren, Joseph Rogers, Karen Starkey & Brian Way.

We give thanks for the Baptisms of Albert Hamer and Darren Kemsley.

Copies of this newsletter are available in Church for you to collect and pass on to friends and neighbours.



Join our weekly prayer meeting on Zoom every Wednesday at 9am – Zoom invite available from the Parish Office .

We encourage everyone to pray for one another. Ask the Parish Office if you would like to receive details of prayer requests.

Prayers for Ukraine: are held weekly on zoom - Fridays @ 9.00am. Zoom Link - Meeting ID: 714 5146 5358 Passcode:262GY9

*Contact the Parish Office
parishoffice@stmarysrisborough.org.uk*

Telephone: 01844 273300