



25 December 2021 Christmas • Faith 24/7

Pondering celebration

 **Luke 2.1-20**

Jesus is born in Bethlehem and placed in a manger. Shepherds from the surrounding hills are summoned by angels to visit him. Amid the busyness of the angels celebrating and the shepherds hurrying to Bethlehem, we find Mary quietly pondering what Jesus' birth means. Busyness and celebration isn't wrong, but how can you still yourself, in the midst of the busyness, and ponder what Jesus – and Christmas – means to you?

Now read **Luke 2.1-20** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The busyness of Bethlehem during the time of the census can mirror the busyness of our Christmas celebrations. It might seem that we need to be in a million different places all at once, but be careful to balance this out by taking time to consider the reason for the celebrations. Consider the calming and peaceful second part of this week's passage, and try and find moments to reflect on the awe and wonder that is Jesus this Christmas.



Ask yourself: How can you take time to ponder, with those around you, this Christmas time?

WALK

A popular Christmas Day tradition is to take a walk after dinner to get some fresh air and make some room for more chocolate! As you take a walk on or after Christmas Day, take note of all the beautiful Christmas lights. As you stroll, also look up at the God-given Christmas lights too – the stars! Try and imagine that you are a wise man following a star, or a shepherd on the hillside. How would you have felt, travelling to meet the new king?

CHRISTMAS DAY SPECIAL

Do you watch television on Christmas Day? Is there a film or TV episode that you always watch? After this or during the week, spend some time creating freeze-frames of some of your favourite Christmas Day celebrations and traditions, exploring how a Christmas Day special in your house might look! Think about how the day starts, which activities you do, and who you usually spend the day with.

WRAP THE PARCEL

After dinner, play a game of pass the parcel using clothes or pillowcases to wrap the gifts up – you may have already unwrapped them from their shiny paper. Use this to remember how Jesus lay as a baby, in such a simple place, and the importance of what is on the inside, not the outside. It's also a great eco-friendly way of wrapping presents and eliminating paper waste!

Angel Wings

Using Christmas decorations and any new gifts, make the shape of some angel wings on the floor. Lie down in the middle of them so it looks like you too have angel wings, to remember the heavenly hosts. You could use this image to send people as thank-you cards or use for next year's Christmas card!

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

Before you tuck into your Christmas dinner, pull your cracker and as you do, say something which you are thankful for from the past year. After a year of ups and downs, it is important to try and remember the positives and praise God for them. You could use this as a way of saying Grace, a prayer before your meal.



Happy Christmas!

A very Happy Christmas and New Year from everyone at Holy Trinity & St Matthew's Church. This week we have a double edition of the newsletter (there is no newsletter for the 2nd January).

Also included are Christmas greetings from members of the congregation. Our services resume at the Community Centre on 2nd January at 10.00 a.m. when our guest presiding minister will be Revd Dr Robin Parry.

Have a safe, peaceful and happy time everyone.

Daily Readings for 2 weeks, commencing 27 th December 2021		
Monday	Exodus 33: 12-end	1 John 2: 1-11 <i>St John the Apostle</i>
Tuesday	Genesis 37: 13-20	Matthew 18: 1-10 <i>The Holy Innocents</i>
Wednesday	Jonah 1	Colossians 1: 1-14
Thursday	Jonah 2	Colossians 1: 15-23
Friday	Jonah 3-4	Colossians 1: 24-2:7
Saturday	Genesis 2: 17-end	Romans 2: 17-end
Monday 3 rd Jan.	Ruth 2	Colossians 3: 1-11
Tuesday 4 th Jan.	Ruth 3	Colossians 3: 12-4:1
Wednesday 5 th Jan.	Ruth 4: 1-17	Colossians 4: 2-end
Thursday 6 th Jan.	Jeremiah 31: 7-14	John 1: 29-34
Friday 7 th Jan.	Jeremiah 23: 1-8	Matthew 20: 1-16
Saturday 8 th Jan.	Jeremiah 30: 1-17	Matthew 20: 17-28

Pray for those in need... Sally, Tristan, Mark, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy, Mandy, Joyce, Ian, Pamela, Juliette and Nicki. **Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...**

With God, nothing is impossible....

In what are still difficult times, it is significant that news of the outcome of a television dance contest should hit the headlines. People often complain about the lack of good news that is reported but here is an example of good news writ large. Rose's victory has been acclaimed as more than just a personal achievement; it is also a victory for the deaf community. If society addresses those barriers and provides the right access and support, deaf people can do anything. God in Christ Jesus works through unexpected people too - a teenage girl and a bunch of shepherds. It is worth pondering how God can work through us.