



Five Crosses

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2018

Tintinhull, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil Marsh,
Thorne Coffin, Lufton

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Dear Friends,

It's not unusual at this time of year to hear gloomy remarks about *Christmas*. It might be complaints about how the shops have had their Christmas decorations up for so long that already they're looking tired. Perhaps we hear someone complaining of what a burden it is to spend so much time choosing and shopping for presents. Maybe we know someone who is dreading having the whole family to visit but they don't like to say *no*. Possibly someone is feeling bombarded by the constant adverts on TV, or the ceaseless carols and Christmas songs in the supermarket. There's no doubt that Christmas can be very stressful for many people, and for some a desperately difficult and lonely time.

But it doesn't have to be like that. All of this misses the point. We tend to make Christmas much more trying than it needs to be. Of course, we want to show the people we love that we care by the exchanging of gifts. Of course, we want to spend time celebrating with family and friends. That's all good and entirely within the spirit of Christmas. But we need to be careful not to lose our sense of proportion. And the way to do that is surely to understand what Christmas is really all about and why we celebrate it.

We are celebrating the birth of Jesus, but it's not just a massive birthday party. It's a celebration that God loves *the world so much that he gave his only-*

begotten Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life (John 3.16). Knowing this deep truth will change the way we view not only Christmas but our neighbours and our families as well. We will see them all as people loved by God and therefore people we need to share God's love with.

The traditional Christmas story is very beautiful with the child in the manger, the ox and the ass adoring, with the angels on the hillside appearing to shepherds and the Magi bringing their wonderful gifts. But if Luke and Matthew (along with a bit of legendary embellishment) had never told us the story of Jesus's birth in their gospels Christmas would still have the same meaning. It would still be true that God's Son came to earth and revealed God's love to us in all that he did and said – and most particularly in his death and resurrection.

The Christmas carols that we sing, the cribs that we build, the candles we light, the gifts we share and the food we enjoy are all good, but if none of that were there we would still be able to celebrate the love of a God who becomes human and dies on the cross for love of us.

You will find details of all of our Christmas services and events in this newsletter and I hope that you might join us for some of them. Everybody is welcome and we would love to see you whether you live in one of our villages or

are visiting family or friends. May you all enjoy a blessed and peaceful Christmas and find in the celebrations the truth that God's love is real for each one of us. With every blessing at Christmas,

Fr Peter

A message from The Right Reverend Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton

“God with us”

“Well, we are into the frantic pressie-buying month of December now. The American ‘Black Friday’ tradition appears to be firmly a part of our own pattern and has brought the search for the perfect Christmas present yet earlier in our calendar. parish and school Christmas Fayres offer us home-made, Fairtrade, recycled and singular alternatives. And increasingly the inequalities within our economy become more apparent as people risk debt to bring a smile to their child's face. When I was a parish priest we found that many of our single parents felt trapped by the pressure of keeping up with those around them. We tried to introduce a maximum spend for all our congregational and family present buying in order to bring some parity. It wasn't easy! I'm reminded at this time of year of the line that we are seeing more frequently, accompanying invitations to weddings and Birthday parties: **‘No presents required, just your presence!** It makes me think about what Christmas really means. During this time of preparation and waiting for the big day to arrive, many of us will sing the words of that Advent hymn, ‘O come, O come, Emmanuel’, a 12th century hymn that invites God to fulfil his prophecy to his people. Will we really take in those words?

‘Emmanuel’ means ‘God with us’, such an important and comforting phrase in these times of uncertainty and anxiety, as we wonder what the new year will bring. Christmas we know is a time when people can feel lonely, disappointed, stressed. There are reputedly more suicides and marriage breakdowns during the course of this holiday period. One of the best Christmas presents we can offer then must surely be that of hospitality, a listening ear and simply our ‘presence’ among those who feel forgotten, rejected or overlooked.

In so doing we will find God's own present to us this Christmas, as in any and all other Christmases, His presence. The God to whom “every animal of the forest and the cattle on a thousand hills, belongs” (Psalm 50) has given us the best present of all **He is with us.”**

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

THORNE COFFIN

Margaret Clancy writes: “Thorne Coffin will be having their Carol Service on 23rd of December from 4pm until 5pm; after the service minced pies and mulled wine will be served to those who wish to stay and chat.”

TINTINHULL

From John Gower, Churchwarden: “A Remembrance Day service was held on Sunday 11th November which was particularly poignant as it was, of course, 100 years ago to the day that WW 1 ended. The 14 men from Tintinhull, who gave their lives, were particularly remembered: their names are on the War Memorial. The Church was full for the service which was very moving. There was also the decommissioning of the Men's and Women's sections of the Royal British Legion. Their standards will be placed permanently in the Church. The Church looked magnificent with the Poppy decorations. There were also 14 poppies in the Church, made by the children of St. Margaret's School, each with a name of one of those Tintinhull men who gave their lives for our freedom. There were also poems and prayers written by the children and, I think, every pupil of the school contributed to the display. It is wonderful that they have remembered the sacrifice made by a former generation. Fortunately, Tintinhull suffered no fatal casualties in WW 2. The service collection went to The Royal Legion who continue to support service men who have suffered injuries in more recent conflicts. You will be most welcome to attend one or more of our services to remember the true reason of Christmas. Looking forward to next year, we will be having a Take Art type show on the 30th March when we will be welcoming back **“Graffiti Classics”**- they were absolutely brilliant when they came before so do be

sure to keep that date free and apply for tickets when they go on sale."

Hilary Cozens writes: "the flower team will be putting in Christmas flowers on 17th December. If anyone is interested do please drop by between 10 and 11am. Memorial donations to the Christmas flowers are most welcome."

Carol Perry writes: "As Christmas is fast approaching don't forget you can get all your postal needs met at your local **Village Post Office**. This wonderful service means no queues and easy parking; you may like to stay for coffee biscuits and a friendly chat. There is also a raffle where you may be lucky enough to win a delicious home-made cake. Remember that all monies raised from the raffle and refreshments contribute towards the upkeep of our beautiful village Church. Come and join us every Wednesday from 9.30am -12pm at The Tintinhull Working Men's Club. Thank you to all for your support - especially to Rob and the Working Men's Club for their continued hospitality. **Don't forget last posting dates:**

2nd class Tuesday 18th Dec.

1st class Thursday 20th Dec.
We wish our Customers and Volunteers a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Valerie and Carol

YEOVIL MARSH

Christine Salmon, Churchwarden writes: "Yeovil Marsh Church Hall will be open on Friday 14th December for a seasonal social evening following the Carol Service in All Saints Church- please join us for the chance to win a Christmas hamper and many other seasonal prizes in the raffle - have a go at the Christmas bingo game and share seasonal drinks and mince pies - what a great way to wish friends and neighbours a very happy Christmas. Hope to see you there - please see flyer and posters for further details. Funds raised will go to the hall refurbishment."

CHILTHORNE DOMER

Angie Clothier reminds you all that: "St Mary's Christmas party will be on Saturday 8 December, 7pm, at the Old Rectory, Main St. Drinks and finger buffet, £10 ticket (includes free glass of fizz)

Tickets are available from Zanne Gardner 849239 or Angie Clothier 841659. Raffle, Champagne Charlie etc. Also, enter a competition for a) best decorated Christmas cake or b) Christmas wreath or table decoration. Entry forms available from the above. Do come to St Mary's to join in with our Carol service on Sunday 16th December at 6.30pm.; the service will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies."

Jill Coe writes: "Thank you to everyone who took part in The Blythswood Care Shoe Box appeal this year. 219 boxes left here on Monday 13th November to start their journey to Eastern Europe. They will arrive in time for Christmas. What joy they will bring to those receiving them.

It was a wonderful effort!"

LUFTON

Susan Collins writes: Those who were there witnessed another extraordinary evening of whimsical, magical story telling and anecdotes by Taffy Thomas MBE accompanied by music from the Northumberland pipes and fiddle. Not to mention seeing Taffy's incredible Storytellers Coat and 'Pork Pie' hat. A very special evening indeed and the meeting up of old friends. We were also delighted to welcome the Rev.'d Canon Eric Woods, Vicar of Sherborne who delivered an interesting sermon during our Evensong Service and earned his guinea. We were pleased to welcome a few visitors in addition to our usual congregation and most stayed to enjoy a parish tea. A special 'thank you' to those parishioners who laid on refreshments. Our Traditional **Candlelit Christmas Service of Readings and Carols** will be held on 23rd December at 6pm. All in the Benefice and beyond are most warmly invited to join us for this very special service, followed by seasonal refreshments. On the next day, Christmas Eve, Holy Communion is at 6pm. **We hope you will join us for, at least one of our services over the Christmas period.** At all times, the Church may be used for private prayer. For a key contact the Churchwardens. We should like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Benefice and beyond, a very happy and peaceful Christmas."

Day	Tintinhull	Chilthorne Domer	Lufton	Yeovil Marsh	Thorne Coffin
2 nd December Advent Sunday		10.30am Benefice Eucharist	6pm Evensong		
9 th December Advent 2	8am Eucharist (BCP) 10.45am To- gether4God	10.45am Matins	6pm Evensong	6pm Evening Worship	4pm Evensong
16 th December Advent 3	9.15 am Parish Eucharist	10.45am Parish Eucharist	6pm Evensong	10.45am Morning Worship at the Elms	
23 rd December Advent 4	9.15am Parish Eucharist	10.45am Matins		11am Parish Eucharist	
30 th December	9.15am Parish Eucharist	10.45am Parish Eucharist	6pm Evensong		
6 th January Epiphany		10.30am Benefice Eucharist			
CHRISTMAS SERVICES					
Friday 14 th December				6.30pm Carol Service	
Sunday 16 th December		6.30 pm Carol Service			
Tuesday 18 th December	7pm Carol Service				
Thursday 19 th December	6pm St Margaret's School Carol Service	2pm Chilthorne Domer Church School-KS2 Carol Service			
Sunday 23 rd December			6 pm Carol Service		4 pm Carol Service
24 th December Christmas Eve	3.30pm Crib & Christingle Service	5pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Mass	6pm Christmas Communion (BCP)	9.30pm Christmas Eucharist	
25 th December Christmas Day	10.45am Christmas Eucharist				9.15am Christmas Eucharist