



The United Benefice of Thornbury with Oldbury and Shepperdine



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Sunday 3rd December – Advent 1

Services are held within our churches and livestreamed via YouTube, see below.

Shepperdine is open as a place of pilgrimage and private prayer.

If you know or hear of anyone who is not online but needs pastoral support or contact do let clergy or wardens know. Wardens Tel: Jenny Ovens (01454 414727), Robin Gupta (01454 413650), Mike Dennett (01454 419082), Andrew Gazard (01454 412153) and Sandra Grey (01454 260316).

Please follow our '[Thornbury, Oldbury and Shepperdine United Benefice](#)' page on Facebook, and make friends with '[Thornbury Benefice](#).' If you wish to add to these pages, then send photos and notices to

Pat Duru: patduru50@yahoo.co.uk

Please use our Church [YouTube](#) page to watch future livestreamed and recorded services from St Mary's:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA>

(*live streamed)

Readings: Isaiah 64. 1-9, 1 Corinthians 1. 3-9, Mark 13. 24-37

Friday 1st December

7.30pm – Choir Practice at St Mary's

Saturday 2nd December

11:00am-1:00pm – St Marys School Christmas Fair

Sunday 3rd December

8.00am – Holy Communion at St Mary's

9.00am – Holy Communion at St Paul's

12.00noon – Wedding at St Mary's

3.00pm – Refresh at St Arilda's

6pm – *Advent Service of Light with Baptism at St Mary's

Monday 4th December

8.00pm – Bible Studies on Zoom

Tuesday 5th December

7.30pm – Bell ringing practice

Thursday 7th December

9.00am – Hopscotch at St Mary's

Friday 8th December

7.30pm – Choir Practice at St Mary's

Saturday 9th December

10.00am – Dads and Kids at St Mary's Hall

Sunday 10th December

9.00am – Holy Communion at St Paul's

10.15am – *Children's All Age Service at St Mary's

6.00pm – Holy Communion at St Arilda's

**Please note: most services at St Mary's will be live streamed*

*Live streaming – If you are unable to make it to church, please do use our Church YouTube page for the live-streamed services which are filmed from St Mary's:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA> so you can be part of our worship. The camera records the person speaking, with some wider shots of the church.

NOTICES AND EVENTS

Readers at St Paul's Carol Service 6pm Dec. 24th If you would like to read at St Paul's Carol Service on Christmas Eve please add your names to the list at the back of St Paul's or contact Monica 413975 email Alamo.23@blueyonder.co.uk

Christmas Services – Please can you let the office know if you are able to help steward for the 4pm Crib Service on the 24th Dec. We would be very grateful for all volunteers.

Private Prayer - It is planned to re start "Prayers for Healing and Wholeness" ("Private Prayer") once a month after the service at St Paul's, in the New Year. Subject to the availability of two members of the team, this will be on the first Sunday of the month starting with January 7th.

Christmas Messages – Last Call – We are planning on helping members of our congregation reach out with their Christmas greetings to other members of our church communities. Please send your wording across to the office and we will send out the greetings on the 10th December.

Eco – Recommendation - For those who are fed up with lugging large plastic bottles of laundry liquid home from supermarkets, I would thoroughly recommend www.thegreengreencompany.online. Based in Scotland they will deliver laundry sheets in biodegradable packaging direct to your door by the postman! Pop one in the washing powder drawer or dissolve in water if handwashing. We have used them for about a year they even cope with Grandboys dirt! We do not miss liquid at all. No more plastic bottles, lightweight, easy to use and no mess or spills. We also use their washable dish clothes and lots of other lovely items. Give it a go. Jacquie Rinaldi.



Independent Safeguarding Audit - Gloucester Diocese is working with an independent Safeguarding Group conducting an audit across the Church of England to assess the extent to which the church is doing all it can to create an environment in which all can feel safe, valued and respected. As part of this, members of parish communities are invited to comment. This is anonymous and confidential. The responses go directly to the independent audit team, not to the CofE. It is a box-ticking, multiple-choice survey that takes but a few minutes. There is no obligation, but if you feel you have something to contribute to this exercise click on <https://ineqe.com/churchofengland/gloucester/#surveys> and choose between "Parish Workforce" (effectively anyone whose role requires a DBS check) or "Parish Community" (everyone else) to be taken to the questionnaire. The survey will close on 5 December. Chris Verey

The Fair Trade stall will reopen on **Saturday 2nd December at URC**. There will be Christmas treats on sale, as well as many of the regular items. These include the last few packs of Christmas cards. This stall is the successor to the Traidcraft one that operated here for many years. It will be selling stock from "We Are Fair Trade", including some under the Traidcraft brand name.

Do come in for coffee and have a look to see if your favourites are there. It is wonderful news that the Fair Trade Stall is to re-open but we need more volunteers to give 2 hours on occasional Saturday mornings. Please contact Monica (423975 – e mail Alamo.23@blueyonder.co.uk) if you could help.

St Mary's School Fete on 2nd December - St Mary's School fete will take place spread between the church and the school. We have some lovely local independent stalls as well as fun games for the children. There will also be festive pop-up cafe with lots of homemade bakes. We hope you and your families can join us.

Christian Books - Thornbury United Reformed Church will be selling new and second hand Christian books at the Church on the first Saturdays of each month. **2nd**

December 10am – 12.00. Books for seasons in the Christian year, personal devotions and reading, greeting cards and seasonal gifts as part of the church's weekly coffee morning.

Bible Studies – The online bible studies will be held on Zoom on Monday evenings in two halves from 20th Nov – 18th Dec and from 8th Jan – 12th Feb. The third session will continue this **Monday 4th December at 8pm.** Zoom link is below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82433712346?pwd=Y1h4aHhEbk9rVUJTNyt1bE44N09sdz09>

Meeting ID: 824 3371 2346

Passcode: 692258

Armstrong Hall - Invitation to public dissemination meeting, **7th December 2023, 7pm – 9pm** at Thornbury Baptist Church (BS35 2EG). All members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting to inform people of the recent, current and future works. The meeting will include a presentation from the trust, Q&A session and an opportunity for members of the public to voice any input. Space is limited so we kindly ask the user group members refrain from attending and allow space for the wider public to attend.

Save the Date - The 'Pack and Wrap' Party: to make up gift bags for Julian Trust Nightshelter for the Homeless will take place on Monday, **11 December 2023** from 6.30 pm at 22 Siband Road, Thornbury. All very welcome to come along!

Save the Date – 16th December 2023, 7pm Film Night. The showing will be "Christmas Chronicles". This film night is for Children with their families - bring your own bean bag or comfy blanket, bring your teddy to hug, wear your pjs.

Two siblings in Lowell, Massachusetts, Kate and a blackmailed, skeptical Teddy, lay a trap for Santa Christmas Eve to get him on video camera. How many kids get to ride with Santa on Christmas Eve? They sneak on board the sleigh and hide. As a result, it becomes a bumpy ride - crash landing in Chicago with reindeer, (magic) hat and presents missing. Will half the continent's kids miss out on presents or can Santa, with help from the two kids, get the sleigh running within the next two hours?



Save the date Christmas Carol Singing - Please make a note in your diary and invite others to come along to our annual traditional **Christmas carol singing on Tuesday 19th December at 7.00pm.** We gather at the church hall and then sing carols in the area around Eastland Road, returning to the hall for hot drinks and

mince pies. All ages are welcome. Please wear warm/'seasonal' clothing, bring a torch and some smiles, and be ready to spread some Christmas cheer!

Library Box - At St Paul's and St Mary's there are 'library' boxes for the congregation to share books that are inspiring in some way. If you have a book you are willing to loan for a while, please place it in the box and write out a 'borrowing card' to go inside. Recently I read an amazing book in the St Paul's box called "*90 Minutes in heaven*" which tells the story of a man who was killed in a traffic accident and who experienced heaven before coming back to life. It sounds impossible but his account is inspiring, comforting and encouraging, and I found it difficult to put the book down. My thanks to the lender. Anne Ellis

Hats for the Homeless: Knitters of Thornbury we need your help. Can you knit a hat for an adult - any design, style, colour you wish - to help keep a homeless/rough sleeper warm this winter? Please place finished items in the Julian Trust box at the back of church or at 22 Siband Road. Many, many thanks in anticipation.

Julian Trust Nightshelter for the Homeless: Helps homeless and rough sleepers by providing a hot meal and a bed for the night. Warm clothes are needed as the weather changes. If you have clothes, suitable for younger people, there are collection boxes in the back of St Mary's and St Paul's churches. You can find out more about their very valuable work at www.juliantrust.org.uk.

Julian Trust Nightshelter for the Homeless Advent/Christmas Appeal: We would like to provide gift bags for their guests. Please can you donate any of the following items:

- * 1 small bar of soap
- * 1 small bar of chocolate (100 g only, no large bars please, they won't fit in the bags!)
- * 1 toothbrush
- * 1 tube of toothpaste (100ml)
- * 1 pocket sized pack of paper tissues
- * 1 small bottle of hand sanitiser/hand gel (100ml)
- * 1 face mask/covering

There are boxes in St Mary's, St Paul's and St Arilda's churches for donations and at 22 Siband Road, Thornbury. For more information, please contact Christine Dadd on (01454) 414396. Thank you in anticipation.

Thank you from Macmillan - Macmillan are delighted to share the incredible news that Macmillan Coffee Mornings like ours raised **over £15 million**. They say that's enough money to fund **241 Macmillan nurses for a year!**

Donations are still coming in, so that total is climbing every day. But Macmillan wanted to take the opportunity to give an update and say thank you again for your part in raising such a life-changing amount of money.

Ukrainian Christmas Delivery – "The Store" in Thornbury is working with "From Bristol to Ukraine with Love" Charity to deliver essential items to those who have been left behind. The refugees living with hosts in Thornbury are writing notes and Christmas Cards to be included in our delivery. The minibus will leave for Ukraine in the middle of November. It will return with 10 refugees and those who have been injured. Your help to fill the minibus would be MUCH appreciated - items to be delivered to "The Store" at The Methodist Hall on Mondays 10.30 - 12.30 or Friday's 10.00 - 12.00 (1st Friday in month 1.00p- 3.00p) or phone Jacquie Rinaldi for collection 01454 602150. Thank you for the donations so far!

Items needed: Dry and tinned food. Cold and flu medicine. First Aid kits. Wet wipes and toiletries. Hand and feet warmers. Portable generators, power stations, power banks. Mens underwear and socks. Fleeces and coats. Baby food and nappies. Incontinence pads. Sleeping bags and ground mats. Pet Food, pet carriers. Candles, torches, batteries. Water treatment tablets, mould treatment, plastic water containers. Walking boots.

If you are recently bereaved or need pastoral care-Please contact the clergy. We offer the opportunity to share your concerns. Or, if you or someone you know is in hospital, struggling in isolation or has cause for concern, please let the office know and we can pass on information as appropriate.

The Office- The office in St Mary's will be open during the hours of 10am and 2pm, **Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday**. Do please leave a message or send an email on other days and they will be dealt with as soon as possible. Please send any items for the newsletter to the office by 10am on the **Wednesday** of the week when you wish your item to appear. Send to: thornburybenefice@outlook.com. Thank you.

KEY LINKS –Sunday 3rd December

Services at St Mary's Livestreamed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNkUbB6tYzHdbDPJFSkdaZA>

Diocesan Bulletin:

<https://mailchi.mp/8b55294a7e41/the-weekly-bulletin-28-november-2023?e=56d437cfb1>

GOSPEL READING:

Mark 13. 24-37

24 'But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,

25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26 Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory.

27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

28 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

BENEFICE PAGE OF PRAYER

Those who have asked for our prayers at this time:

Gareth Mullinex, Angela Swan, Hughan Welch, Joyce Barge, Hannah, Stuart Elliott, Verity Barker, Fleur Tweehuysen, Phil and Sheila Jones, Gill and Chris Platt.

Those for whom we regularly pray: Joan Cole, Dorothy Long, Jean Thompson, Emma Stuart and Venetia Grant.

Recently departed: We pray for the families and friends of Bob Griffin, Martin Curtis and Mary Howell who mourn their loss.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – King’s College Cambridge have completed the installation of 400 solar panels on the roof of King’s College chapel. Historic England have objected to the project but many are in support. The panels will potentially generate 123,000kWh of electricity a year, which will meet all of the chapel’s power requirements as well as contribute up to 5.5% of the college’s overall need.

FOR OUR WORLD – The Mothers’ Union is taking part in the 16 days against gender-based violence with its ‘No More 1 in 3’ campaign against domestic abuse and gender-based violence. The organisation has also begun a year round campaign called ‘RISE UP against domestic abuse’. For more information please visit: <https://www.mothersunion.org/projects/supporting-those-affected-domestic-abuse>

FOR COMMUNITY – We wish you all a wonderful weekend filled with the work of volunteers helping across many schools and local communities with Christmas markets and other activities to help many different charities at the start of the festive season.