



The United Benefice of Thornbury with Oldbury and Shepperdine



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Sunday 7th January 2024 – Epiphany

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 7th January: Isaiah 60. 1-6, Ephesians 3. 1-12, Matthew 2. 1-12

CALENDAR

Sunday 7th January

9am – Holy Communion at St Paul's followed by 'Private Prayer'

10:30am – *Holy Communion at St Mary's

3:00pm – Refresh! 'Bring your own party' at St Arilda's

Monday 8th January

8.00pm – Bible Studies on Zoom

Tuesday 9th January

7.30pm – Bell ringing practice

Thursday 11th January

9.00am – Hopscotch at St Mary's
Friday 12th January
12noon – Funeral for Susan Keedwell at St Arilda's
7.30pm – Choir Practice at St Mary's
Saturday 13th January
10am – Dads and Kids at St Mary's Hall
Sunday 14th January
9:00am – Holy Communion at St Paul's
10:30am – All Age Service and Baptisms at St Mary's
2:30pm – Games Café at St Mary's Hall
6:00pm – Choral Evensong 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

"Prayers for Healing and Wholeness" Private Prayer - This Sunday (7th Jan), at St Paul's, there will be Private Prayer offered after the service, for anyone who would like to participate. It is planned to offer this on the first Sunday of every month.

Geoffrey Fison - Geoffrey's family and executors have arranged that he will be cremated at Westerleigh in a private ceremony on Tuesday 9th January at 1:15pm.. A service of remembrance in St. Mary's will be arranged later in February to which all will be welcome. In the meantime, please keep Geoff's friends and relations in your prayers. - Revd Tom.

Games Café – Sunday 14th Jan - St Mary's Hall 2:30pm – 4:00pm. Refreshments will be served. Open to all! We have a selection of games to play but if you want to share your Christmas game please do bring it along.

Bible Studies – The Bible Studies course will continue this **Monday 8th January at 8pm**. All are welcome to join even if you have not been able to make the other sessions.

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

Meeting ID: 824 3371 2346 / Passcode: 692258

Save the date - Afternoon Concert Series – Sunday 21st January 4:00pm at St Mary's. Chris Hall will be on the bass baritone and Robert Burgess on the piano. No admission fee, refreshments served. Please come and enjoy the music.

Save the date - Monday 22nd January 3:00pm at St Mary's Church Hall – Mothers Union are hosting Jo Wright to talk about the Organic Blooms organisation. All are welcome to attend.

Thank you message – Thank you to all for your prayers and support during this time. It is very much appreciated. Thank you, Fleur.

Pastoral Assistance training - Christine Butler from Sodbury Vale Benefice is running training for anyone interested in helping with pastoral assistance. The course would begin after Easter. Please contact the office for further information.

2024 Swimarathon – The Rotary club is hosting this year's fundraising event at Thornbury Active on the weekend of 1st/2nd/3rd March 2024. Our team is raising funds for Butterfly Space, (butterflyspacemalawi.com). Please let the office or Gill Leaper know if you would like to join or sponsor a team.

Flower Arranging in St Mary's – The flower arranging team would like a few new members to be included on the Rota. We arrange flowers on a Friday morning and always work in pairs. Even if you have no experience of flower arranging, we can help by showing you how it is done and putting you to work with someone who has experience. If you are interested or want further information please speak to either Kate Teague, Cath Barnard or Carole Ball. It would be lovely to have a few more members on the team to arrange the flowers. Many thanks.

Food bank - We are in need of some stock items which are detailed below. Items in bold are in short supply. It is a much shorter list this month due to your amazing generosity over Christmas. Thank you for your on-going support!

Donations can be placed in the basket in Tesco, the Coop at Thornbury Fields or left on the Baptist church steps on Wednesdays between 9.30am and 11am

Long Life Fruit Juice

Tins of tomatoes

UHT Milk

Pasta sauce

Instant meals

Male & female deodorant

Tins of custard

Toilet rolls

Tins of vegetables

Dog food

Library Box – Please do not forget about the Library boxes at St Paul's and St Mary's!

Hats for the Homeless: Thank you for the hats knitted so far. You can still donate your knitted hats. The hats need to fit an adult - any design, style, colour you wish. 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.

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 7th January 2024

Services at St Mary's Livestreamed at:

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

Diocesan Bulletin:

<https://mailchi.mp/c4f0456e0cd3/the-weekly-bulletin-12-december-1355605?e=56d437cfb1>

BENEFICE PAGE OF PRAYER

Those who have asked for our prayers at this time:

Gareth Mullinex, Angela Swan, Hughan Welch, Joyce Barge, Verity Barker, 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 Lillian Perry, Sue Keedwell, Mike Chappel and Kieth Stanlake who mourn their loss.

GOSPEL READING:

Matthew 2. 1-12

2In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' 3When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' 9When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT –

Here are **3 other things that stood out at COP28:**

A loss and damage fund for people, communities and countries most vulnerable to climate breakdown was cemented on day 1 of the talks. This fund could include climate-disaster relief. Or help farmers whose land has been ruined by sea-level rise. This is welcome news. But the amount pledged falls far short of what's needed. We need to keep pushing rich countries to put much more money in the pot. And make sure the fund is used in line with the needs of people suffering climate impacts most.

The need to fast-track the switch of energy production from fossil fuels to renewables was high on this year's agenda.

It's great this has become so prominent. But the final deal was very weak, due to some wealthy countries blocking finance to help poorer nations switch. Without financial support, the fossil fuel phase-out only exists on paper. New renewables targets are welcome. But they could mean clean power is added on top of, rather than replacing, more dirty oil, coal and gas. Like our own prime minister's plans to "max out" on new oil, coal and gas.

There was a strong sense of people coming together, even though space for freedom of speech and protest was limited this year.

So we were far from alone in calling for climate justice. For richer countries to take the lead on ending fossil fuels fairly. And for more climate finance to help countries most vulnerable to climate change. The collective energy of people demanding more from our leaders always gives me hope.

FOR OUR WORLD – As we head into 2024, many have given so generously to help displaced families this winter in Ukraine. Rocket attacks tear homes, belongings, essential commodities forcing people to flee in search of safety. Winter in Ukraine can be brutal, temperatures reach well below freezing and many people inside the country are living in damaged homes or in buildings that are not equipped to protect them from the harsh weather. Refugees and displaced families urgently need your help to provide them with the essentials they need to survive — shelter, blankets, sleeping bags, stoves, heaters and fuel.

FOR COMMUNITY – We wish the best for all the students returning to schools and university.