



The United Benefice of Thornbury with Oldbury and Shepperdine



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Sunday 17th December – Advent 3

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 17th December: Isaiah 61. 1-4,8-end, 1 Thessalonians, Canticle: Magnificat

Readings 24th December: 2 Samuel 7. 1-11,16, Psalm 89.1-4,19-26, Luke 1.26-38

Readings 31st December: Isaiah 61.10-62.3, Galatians 4.4-7, Luke 2.15-21

CALENDAR

Friday 15th December

7.30pm – Choir Practice at St Mary's

Saturday 16th December

7.00pm – 'Christmas Chronicles' Film Night at St Mary's Hall

Sunday 17th December



9.00am – All Age at St Paul's
10.30am – *Holy Communion Service at St Mary's
1:30-3:30pm – St Paul's Open Afternoon
6.00pm – Evening Prayer at St Arilda's
6.00pm – *Lessons and Carols at St Mary's

Monday 18th December

1:00pm – Bob Griffin Funeral at St Mary's
8.00pm – Bible Studies on Zoom

Tuesday 19th December

6:00pm – Carols at the Anchor Pub Oldbury
7:00pm - Carol Singing starting at St Mary's Hall
7.30pm – Bell ringing practice

Wednesday 20th December

10:00am – Holy Communion with seasonal refreshments at St Mary's
4:00pm – Christingle at St Mary's

Friday 22nd December

7.30pm – Choir Practice at St Mary's

Saturday 23rd December

6:00pm - TCT Carol Singing starting at the Wheatsheaf
Sunday 24th December

8:00am – Holy Communion at St Mary's

11:00am – Crib Service Practice

2:00pm – Carols at St Arilda's

4:00pm – Crib Service at St Mary's

6:00pm – Carol service at St Paul's

11:15 – *Midnight Mass at St Mary's

Monday 25th December

9am – All Age Holy Communion at St Paul's

9am – Holy Communion at Shepperdine

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

10:30am – All Age Holy Communion at St Arilda's

Sunday 31st December

8am – Holy Communion at St Mary's

10:00am – Benefice Service at St Mary's Hall (BYO drink)

Monday 1st January

Happy New Year!

Wednesday 3rd January

10:00am –Holy Communion with prayers for healing at St Paul's

Sunday 7th January

9am – Holy Communion at St Paul's



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

3:00pm – Refresh! 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

Bob Griffin – Thank you so much for the support, flowers, cards, and condolences. It has been very much appreciated. Bob's funeral is on Monday 18th December at 1:00pm at St Mary's. Please do come if you would like to, you are very welcome. There will be refreshments served at St Mary's after the service.

The Revd Geoffrey Fison - who assisted in this area for many years and who will be remembered by many of our congregation, died peacefully in Beech House on Wednesday 13th December.

Help needed – If anyone is available on Wednesday 20th at 11am to help prepare some oranges for the Christingle service, we would be most grateful. Please speak to Jenny or Alice to let us know if you can come.

Christmas Services – Please can you let the office know by Monday 18th December if you are able to help steward for the 4pm Crib Service on the 24th Dec. We would be very grateful for all volunteers.

Pack and Wrap party – 260 gift parcels were taken to the Julian Trust emergency night shelter for the homeless. Thank you very much for your generosity with donations and thank you very much to all the packers and wrappers who came and helped. Christine Dadd.

Hopscotch - A very Peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year from everyone at Hopscotch. We will be back in church on Thursday 4th January.

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.

Private Prayer - It is planned to restart "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.



Bible Studies – The fifth session of the Bible Studies course will continue this **Monday 18th December at 8pm**. All are welcome to join even if you have not been able to make the other sessions.

This week please can people bring with them their favourite story about Jesus.

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

Meeting ID: 824 3371 2346 / Passcode: 692258

The sessions will then continue from the 8th January 2024.

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!

TCT Christmas Carol Singing - On 23rd December we will be singing in pubs in central Thornbury and collecting for Crisis at Christmas. Please join us - starting at the Wheatsheaf at 6pm. We will then visit the Malthouse, the Butchers Hook and the Royal George. Wrap up warm!

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 1.00pm- 3.00pm) 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.

Beware! Tip for Online Shopping - During an on-line purchase made from the MU Shop, at the payment process stage a box popped up from an organisation called "Complete Save". It appeared to be an organisation managing the payment process, so a tick was put in the box. However, this turns out to be a way of getting people signed up to a monthly payment of £15 as a subscription to them. There is no indication about this. When making payments to MU on-line or any other retailer; watch out for such "pop ups" and do not tick the box. This organisation has got into other organisations' payment systems, over and above the MU Shop, which include National Rail and National Express among others.

Second hand toys - With Christmas Fast approaching and people on the lookout for jigsaws, new bicycles, scooters, new CDs and books to keep children entertained it might be timely to remind everyone of the local Tip shop. There are some real bargains. We have picked up a children's painting table with tiny chairs, swing ball and lots of games up there. If you intend to walk on up please note that you now have to book 4 x days in advance to let them know you will be onsite!

1. email streetcare@southglos.gov.uk
2. call 01454 868000
3. leave a message on www.facebook.com/sglosstreetcare

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- St Mary's Office will be closed from 22nd December and will open on the 3rd January 2024. Do please leave a message or send an email and they will be dealt with as soon as possible. Email: thornburybenefice@outlook.com. Thank you.



KEY LINKS –Sunday 17th December

Services at St Mary's Livestreamed at:

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

Diocesan Bulletin:

<https://mailchi.mp/aa09e43beeb5/the-weekly-bulletin-12-december-2023?e=56d437cfb1>

Diocesan Christmas Message:

<https://mailchi.mp/2c865c4cb07c/a-christmas-2023-message-from-bishop-rachel?e=56d437cfb1>



GOSPEL READING:

Canticle: Magnificat

- 1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
- 2 From this day all generations will call me blessed;
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his name.
- 3 He has mercy on those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
- 4 He has shown strength with his arm
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
- 5 Casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.
- 6 He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
- 7 He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
to remember his promise of mercy,
- 8 The promise made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Luke 1.46-55

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

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: Mick Spiller, Aileen Acton, Dilys Cockerell, Keith
and Elaine Stanlake and Kevin Tweehuysen. Roger Holliday, Betty Hayes, Matthew
Watson and Diana Jarvis.

Recently departed: We pray for the families and friends of Bob Griffin, Jeremy Dicker
and Revd Geoffrey Fison who mourn their loss.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT –

A few Christmas tips for keeping eco in the festive season.

Remove packaging: Reduce waste even further by buying gifts with little or no packaging. Sometimes shopping local can help with this, especially if you have a local refill shop. If you must use packaging, use recycled, or recyclable, materials. Avoid plastic where possible, and don't forget your reusable bags to carry all your shopping home!

Test your wrapping skills: Look for cards and wrapping paper made from recycled or FSC-certified paper. Avoid plastic ribbon and tape, or foil-backed and glittery wrapping paper. Choose cards that you can recycle (this means no foil or glitter!). Check out some tape-free wrapping techniques online such as furoshiki. This is a traditional Japanese method of using cloth to wrap and transport gifts. It makes for beautiful, unique, and reusable packaging.

Table Manners: Many Christmas crackers are not recyclable, and the toys inside are often made of plastic. Instead, look out for FSC-certified crackers. Reusable DIY crackers are another great option. Fill them yourself with sustainable options (like chocolates) and personalised festive favours.

Avoid single-use tablecloths and napkins. Instead, use material versions which have a longer lifecycle than their paper equivalents as you can wash and keep them.

Cut your food waste: Food production is the biggest cause of tropical deforestation. Try to cut any waste by planning ahead - be realistic about how much food you need and use up leftovers. Instead of clingfilm, use Tupperware, foil and wax cloth covers to keep leftovers nice and fresh!

FOR OUR WORLD – For all those all over the world with no shelter this Christmas.

God of compassion, your love for humanity was revealed in Jesus, whose earthly life began in the poverty of a stable and ended in the pain and isolation of the cross: we hold before you those who are homeless and cold especially in this bitter weather. Draw near and comfort them in spirit and bless those who work to provide them with shelter, food and friendship. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

FOR COMMUNITY – We hope that everyone has a wonderful Christmas and a very blessed New Year!

