



The monthly magazine
of the Church of England
Benefice of
Rodborough,
Woodchester and
Brimscombe

Issue 13 – December
2019 and January
2020

Christmas to finish?

This year, as a benefice we have been focusing on the Bible, and we have looked at:

- The big picture story of creation, fall, the story of Israel, Jesus, the church and the new creation
- Key biblical themes like the Holy Spirit and being made in the image of God
- Biblical books and genres like the Gospels, the Law & Psalms
- Key themes from the prophets like social justice and calling
- Jesus as teacher, healer, saviour, as revealer and as love
- And the church as a spirit-filled community of generosity, learning, breaking bread, signs and wonders, and a common life together.

Some of us have also been reading the Bible together cover to cover (with help from the Bible Project short films) and are nearing the end.

But as we come to the end of the year, we will be finishing our year of the Bible with Christmas. In one sense, the start of the Gospels feels like the middle of the story. Is this really a good place to finish?

I'd like to suggest that Christmas may be the best place to finish. As we count down to Christmas in this season of Advent, we will be looking at how all the elements of the biblical story point to Jesus and his call on our lives. Jesus is not just in the middle of the Bible, but He is at the very heart of the story. And He invites us both to be part of His story and also to be at the heart of our lives.

And this theme draws us into our key focus of 2020 – looking at what it means to “Walk with Jesus”, with a key focus on his life and teaching and what that means for our lives today.

I pray that you may increasingly know your part in God’s story and that Jesus would be at the heart of your life,

Rev Peter Francis, Rector of Rodborough, Woodchester and Brimscombe

ADVENT SERMON SERIES

As we conclude our year on the bible, our Advent sermon series draws on traditional Advent readings and themes, putting Jesus at the heart of the Biblical Story. In the 4 Sundays of Advent we will be exploring:

- ❖ The Problem: Sin & salvation
- ❖ The Prophesied Kingdom: Now & not yet
- ❖ The Patriarchs: Good news to all
- ❖ The Parents: The Obedience of Mary and Joseph

QUIET MORNINGS

We are starting a new series of quiet mornings – drawing on ancient wisdom that speaks into the heart of modern lives. These quiet mornings will be run in our benefice, but will be open to the diocese, so do book a space as soon as you are able. And feel free to bring a friend, the sessions will be accessible and welcoming with everything explained.

Advent Quiet mornings

Holy Trinity Brimscombe – Saturday 30th November and Thursday 5th December, 10am-12noon

As we begin a new church year in Advent these quiet mornings will be an opportunity to reflect on the last year, on God’s presence in our Lives, and think about what we want to take into this new year. They will be an opportunity to start to encourage a greater sense of gratitude, God’s presence and direction for our lives.

There will be a mix of teaching input and space to reflect and material to take away. We'll start with coffee at 10am and on the Thursday session you could follow the quiet morning with lunch at the Long Table (12-2) which costs £5. Amidst the busy rush of this season, come and enjoy some space. If you would like to come, please email Peter Francis.

New year Ignatian Quiet morning

Holy Trinity Brimscombe - Thursday 16th January, 10am -12 noon

What would it be like to read the Bible from the inside, stepping into one of the greatest stories ever written, and to let the story speak to you and to your life today? Come and transform the way you read the Gospels and let them transform you. There will be a mix of teaching input and space to reflect and material to take away. We'll start with coffee at 10am and you could follow the quiet morning with lunch at the Long Table (12-2) which costs £5.

*If you would like to come please **email Peter Francis.** (peterfrancis777@gmail.com)*

GROUP IN FOCUS: THURSDAY EVENING HOMEGROUP

When do you meet? Thursday evenings at 7.30pm.

Where do you meet? at Andrew Pemberton's house in North Woodchester.

What do you do? We have a time of Bible Study, usually following a study booklet through a chosen book of the Bible, then a time of conversation and prayer after which it's sometimes difficult to get up and go home from in front of the warm stove on cold winter evenings!

What are you studying at the moment? Paul's Letter to the Romans, which includes some of Paul's more elaborate writings, and which our study guide is good at explaining. We are also finding the J B Phillips translation and The Message version helpful to look at.

Who comes to the group? Members of our Woodchester congregation – but anyone else is welcome.

And if I was interested in coming along? Speak to **Andrew Pemberton** on 07973 187923.

BIBLE-IN-A-YEAR: READINGS FOR DECEMBER

Bible readings to complete the bible in a year are listed below. The reading plan completes on the 24th which gives you a few days to catch up, if needed.

Nov 24	2 Thessalonians	Dec 4	Hebrews 7-8	Dec 14	1 John5, 2-3 John
Nov 25	1 Timothy 1-2	Dec 5	Hebrews 9-10	Dec 15	Jude
Nov 26	1 Timothy 3-4	Dec 6	Hebrews 11-13	Dec 16	Revelation 1-3
Nov 27	1 Tim 5-6	Dec 7	James 1-3	Dec 17	Revelation 4-6
Nov 28	2 Tim 1-4	Dec 8	James 4-5	Dec18	Revelation 7-9
Nov 29	Titus	Dec 9	1 Peter 1-2	Dec 19	Revelation 10-11
Nov 30	Philemon	Dec10	1 Peter 3-5	Dec 20	Revelation 12-13
Dec 1	Hebrews 1-2	Dec 11	2 Peter	Dec 21	Revelation 14-16
Dec 2	Hebrews 3-4	Dec 12	1 John 1-2	Dec 22	Revelation 17-18
Dec 3	Hebrews 5-6	Dec 13	1 John 3-4	Dec 23	Revelation 19-20
				Dec 24	Revelation 21-22

The 2020 reading plan will be simply to read the Gospels as we focus on walking with Jesus. If you haven't joined in this year, do join in with reading the Gospels. Simply take some time to listen to Jesus and learn from Him. More details on reading the Gospels will be available before the new year.

If you wanted some study resources to help you (or wondered what to ask Santa for) do pop into the Scroll Eaters Christian Bookshop in Brunel Mall, Stroud and speak to Mike. I like the ESV Study Bible with 20,000 Bible notes. But in my view the best single book in the world (after the Bible) is the New Bible Commentary, which has almost 1500 pages explaining every chapter of every book of the Bible. It is written by top scholars, but in an accessible way. Both of these books are an investment for many years of bible study (and would be great companions for reading through the Gospels), and Mike will give you 20% off them if you come in with this magazine.

SWEP

(SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROTOCOL)

Emergency Winter Night-shelter

We will be helping run the Winter Night-shelter again this year and our benefice will be organising Wednesday nights from January. As an emergency shelter it operates only when the temperatures are freezing. We cook and then eat with the guests in the evening, have some social time together (last year we played boardgames some evenings), and some of us will sleep over. This year it will be hosted in the newly-renovated Salvation Army Citadel in Acre Street. We currently have 11 people volunteering including some who can only come to help with the cooking. This is valuable opportunity to help some of the most vulnerable people in our community, so if you think you might be able to join us on some Wednesdays and would like to find out more – do speak to Fiona Short, Victoria Robson or Peter Francis.

LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY...

This year the **World Day of Prayer** (formerly Women's Day of Prayer) service has been prepared by people of Zimbabwe. The theme is "Rise! Take up your mat and walk".

Here in our part of the world, on Friday 6th March, it will be presented by Holy Trinity Brimscombe.

In preparation for this service, people from Brimscombe, Minchinhampton Parish and Baptist Churches, Amberley, Woodchester and hopefully Rodborough, will be meeting up to plan how to present it, in the Upper Room at Holy Trinity Brimscombe, on Friday 31st January. All who can be available are welcome to join in.

Our final rehearsal will be on Friday 28th February.

Any enquiries to Pauline Hill 01453 883197

LOOKING BACK TO REMEMBRANCE...

I am always concerned as to what happens to the poppy wreaths etc that are left over. Looking at the British Legion website, I see that all poppies are recyclable at Sainsburys. **Pauline Hill**



Christmas Craft Fair



at

Rodborough Parish Church
on Sunday 1st December 2019
2-4pm

Something for everyone including
ceramics, jewellery, creative textiles,
cards, gift wrap, mixed media gifts
and much more!

Refreshments and home-made cakes

Face-painting

Craft tombola

Raffle



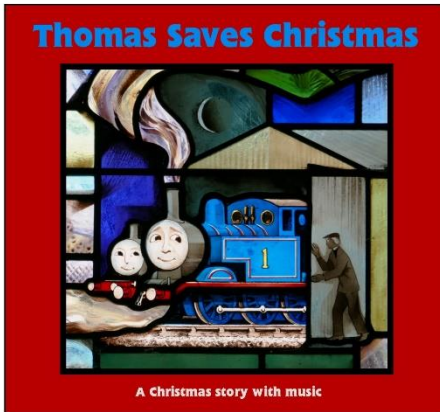
Come along and bring your family and friends to enjoy this
festive community event!



**At St. Mary Magdalene Church, Rodborough
on Saturday 21st December at 7pm**

Thomas Saves Christmas

...a Christmas Story with music!



Written by local authors Katie Fforde and Jane Gordon-Cumming and narrated by Dominic Cotter from BBC Radio Gloucestershire. With music from Stroud's Thames Head Singers, directed by Andrew Hopwood and accompanied by Julian Elloway.

A unique and enchanting evening, featuring a specially written story about Thomas the Tank Engine, by local authors Katie Fforde and Jane Gordon-Cumming, and narrated by BBC Radio Gloucestershire's Dominic Cotter. It will be a festive treat with a difference, that all ages will enjoy.

This special event includes Stroud's Thames Head Singers performing a variety of festive and 'locomotive' songs including a very special adaptation of Chattanooga Choo-Choo with new words by Jane Gordon-Cumming and arranged by Musical Director, Andrew Hopwood. There will also be opportunities for the audience to join in with traditional Christmas carols in the time-honoured fashion! Seasonal refreshments will be served during the interval.

Tickets are available from The Prince Albert Inn, Rodborough, and on the door (subject to availability). Adults £10, children £3.

All proceeds from the evening will go to Rodborough Church.

Parking is at Stroud Rugby Club, opposite B&Q – Dudbridge Hill, Stroud GL5 3HS. Free shuttle buses will be in operation to and from the church from 6.15pm. Please arrive early to allow time for the bus to get you to the church. One of the shuttle buses is specially equipped for those who are less mobile.

BRIMSCOMBE

Christmas Services

December 19th at 2.00pm: School Christmas Service in Church

December 22nd at 3.00pm Roving Nativity around Brimscombe (see below)

December 24th *Christmas Eve* 3.00pm Christingle

6.30pm Village Carol Service

December 25th *Christmas Day* 10.30am All Age Christmas Worship

Roving Nativity@ Brimscombe



Sunday 22nd December 2019 at 3.00pm

Follow the Christmas story around the village;

Sing traditional carols and welcome the Infant King!

Starting on the drive of Brimscombe CE Primary School and ending at
The Ship Inn for Carols and mince pies!

Come with your families and receive the true meaning of Christmas -
love and joy! Contact Hayley (hayleyhotline@live.co.uk) if you'd like to
be involved. All ages welcome!

Brimscombe C of E Primary School - events

Saturday 7th December – 3.00-5.00pm Christmas Fayre

Saturday 25th January - 7.30-9.00 Quiz Night for grown-ups!

Brimscombe Community Lunches at the Long Table.

Wednesday 18th December and Wednesday 15th January 12.30-2.00pm.

“Pay as you can”, held at the furniture recycling project, Brimscombe Port. Lifts can be arranged for those with poor mobility; if required, please ring Fiona on 07754 609841.

WOODCHESTER



Woodchester Endowed C of E Primary School had a very successful prayer week at the beginning of November, focusing on the Lord's Prayer. The week was introduced by the Open the Book team who performed the story of the Prodigal Son. Rev Francis led the worship sessions on the next 4 days. The week finished with a “Lord's Prayer Experience” in St Mary's church, visited by all the schoolchildren: there were five activities for them, each of which was based on a section of the Lord's Prayer.

A memorial at Christmas

Christmas draws us all closer together and is a time for celebrating with family and friends, but it can also be the time when the pain of loss is felt most sharply. This Christmas, as last year, we will be offering everyone a chance to remember loved ones who are no longer with us.

We invite everyone who visits St Mary's at any time over the Christmas period to hang the name or names of loved ones who have died on our prayer tree. Special cards will be provided near the tree.

We will remember them before God with thanks for their lives and the love they shared. **Liz Cole**



Our Benefice: Groups & Activities		
Little Stars Toddler Group on Monday mornings		Email: littlestars@stmaryswoodchester.org.uk
Laser Youth Group on a Sunday evening once a month for Years 6 – 9		Contact Nick Ardagh-Walter 791056 or Chris Short 885374 or Peter Francis (number given below)
PizzaChat meets monthly for Years 10+, on a Sunday evening		Contact Peter Francis (number given below)
Messy Church at St. Mary's Woodchester, monthly		Contact Liz Hale on 01453 765422
Monday Mums Each Monday at 12.30pm		Pre-school children welcome! Venue varies... Contact: Sue on 07866 487911
Prayer Group Each Wednesday at 9.30am		Meets at 69 Bownham Park. Contact: Philip on 01453 872168
Prayer Group Each Tuesday from 7.45pm		Meets in the Undercroft at St Mary's church Contact: Gail on 07875 028671
Prayer Group Each Thursday at 8:30am		Meets at Bruinswood, Frome Park Road, Rodborough. Contact: Jane on 01453 752288
Home Group Each Monday at 1.00pm		Meets in the Undercroft (Woodchester). Contact: David on 07734 192456
Home Group On alternate Thursdays		Contact: Peter Francis (number given below)
Home Group On 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month from 8.00pm		David and Christine Butcher's home in Minchinhampton. Contact: Theresa on 01453 755742
Home Group Each Thursday at 7.30pm		The Grange, Selsley Road, N Woodchester. Contact: Andrew – 01453 872813
Benefice Ministry Team – contact numbers		
RECTOR	Rev Peter Francis (day off – Friday)	01453 759680
Readers	Richard Spencer Victoria Robson Peter Gee	01453 872686 07824 806160 07796 180317

DIARY FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

Sunday 1 ADVENT SUNDAY	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am 2-4.00pm	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Café Church (<i>Brimscombe, in the School</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>) Christmas Craft Fair (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Monday 2	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 4	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Saturday 7	9.30am 10.30am	Prayer Walk (<i>Woodchester</i>) Coffee & Chat (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Sunday 8 ADVENT 2	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Holy Communion (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 9	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 11	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Friday 13	12 noon	Lunch with Friends (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Sunday 15 ADVENT 3	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Christingle Service + Baptism (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 16	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 18	10.00am 11.00am 12.30pm	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>) Brimscombe Community Lunch (<i>at the Long Table</i>)
Saturday 21	7.00pm	“Thomas Saves Christmas” (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Sunday 22 ADVENT 4	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am 3.00pm	Holy Communion (<i>Rodborough</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Roving Nativity (<i>Brimscombe</i>)
Monday 30	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Tuesday 24 CHRISTMAS EVE	3.00pm 3.00pm 4.00pm 6.30pm 6.30pm 11.15pm	Christingle Service (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Crib Service (<i>Woodchester</i>) Christingle Service (<i>Rodborough</i>) Carol Service (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Carol Service (<i>Woodchester</i>) Holy Communion (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Wednesday 25 CHRISTMAS DAY	9.00am 10.00am 10.30am	All Age Communion (<i>Rodborough</i>) All Age Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) All Age Communion (<i>Brimscombe</i>)
Sunday 29 CHRISTMAS I	11.00am	Joint Benefice Service (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 30	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)

DIARY FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY

Wednesday 1	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) TBC Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>) TBC
Saturday 4	9.30am 10.30am	Prayer Walk (<i>Woodchester</i>) Coffee & Chat (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Sunday 5 CHRISTMAS 2	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Café Church (<i>Brimscombe, in the School</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 6	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 8	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>)
Sunday 12 BAPTISM OF CHRIST	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Holy Communion (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 13	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 15	10.00am 11.00am 12.30pm	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>) Brimscombe Community Lunch (<i>at the Long Table</i>)
Friday 17	12 noon	Lunch with Friends (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Sunday 19 EPIPHANY 2	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Morning Worship (<i>Rodborough</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Brimscombe</i>) All Age Worship (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 20	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 22	10.00am 11.00am 3.20pm	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>) Messy Church (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Sunday 26 EPIPHANY 3	9.00am 10.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Rodborough</i>) Morning Worship (<i>Brimscombe</i>) Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Monday 27	9.15am	Morning Prayer (<i>Woodchester</i>)
Wednesday 29	10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Woodchester</i>) Morning Prayer (<i>Rodborough</i>)

COMMON GROUND: For your feedback or materials for February's edition (before 19th January) please contact:

Brimscombe Pauline Hill p.hillgarden@tiscali.co.uk
 Rodborough Georgia Boon hostable@googlemail.com
 Woodchester Andrew Pemberton andrew.pemberton@btinternet.com
 Woodchester Helen Jackson thejackson5@tiscali.co.uk
 If you wish to unsubscribe, please email cground101@gmail.com