



Sunday 25th December 2022

Christmas Day

Today - Sunday 25th December

10.00 am	Holy Communion	- St John the Baptist, Woodland
10.00 am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
10.00 am	Family Service	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
10.00 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Morning Prayer

There will be no morning Prayer on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday this week.

This week morning prayer will be said at the following times:

Thursday	9.15 am	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
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Reflection

All our churches are open for private prayer and reflection throughout the week from approximately 9am to 5pm each day.

Mid-Week

Rev'd Andrew Down - Day off on Mondays.

Monday	3pm-5pm	T-Pot	- Church Cottage, Denbury
	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
Tuesday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's Ipplepen
Wednesday	7.00 pm	Bellringing Practice	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- St Andrew's Ipplepen
Thursday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- Church Cottage, Denbury
	4.30-5.30pm	Sta*x Youth Choir Practice	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Friday	3.45 am	Visiting Bellringers	- St Andrew's Ipplepen

Next Sunday 1st January 2023 – Christmas 2

9.30 am	Holy Communion	- St John the Baptist, Woodland
9.30 am	Celtic Morning Prayer	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
11.00 am	Holy Communion with Children's Activities	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Points of Prayer: Christmas is a time for rejoicing at the birth of Jesus but may we remember those who are finding this season difficult. We pray for those who are experiencing loss this Christmas: relational, financial, spiritual and physical. Through the retelling of the Christmas Story may they find comfort, peace and hope in a better future.

In Memory: Kathleen Woodier, Marie Pook, Margaret 'Jean' Harvey, John Ducker, Diana Hunt, Steven Lloyd, Beryl Humphrey, Michael Retter, Bill Staff, Grace Domoney, Margaret Wakeham, Pamela Lloyd and Ian House.

Denbury Advent Window Displays: A new Denbury Advent Window displays will remain on display during the Christmas period. For the list of addresses, please see the notice boards or the website: www.missioncommunity.org.uk

Follow the Star: the Great Invitation Reflections Starting on Christmas Eve and running through until Epiphany on 6 January, 12 daily reflections will be released from The Church of England as part of their *Follow the Star: The Great Invitation* campaign. On each of the 12 days, a different contributor will bring to life the theme of invitation through a mix of bible readings, personal stories, reflections and challenges. There are a variety of different ways that you can listen to the reflections:

- Receive them in your inbox by signing up for daily emails: <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe/advent-and-christmas/follow-star-great-invitation>
- Download the Follow the Star app which has both written and audio reflections, along with accompanying resources for children and families. <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe/advent-and-christmas/follow-star-great-invitation>
- Ask your smart speaker to 'ask the Church of England for today's Follow the Star reflection' to listen to the audio reflection.

The reflections will also be available each day via the Daily Hope free phone line on 0800 804 8044.

Bishop Jackie Reflects on Christmas Message of the Ukrainian Bell Carol The Bishop of Crediton, the Rt Rev'd Jackie Searle, reflects on the joy of Christmas carols and the poignancy of the Ukrainian Bell Carol this year, as the war in Ukraine continues. <https://exeter.anglican.org/bishop-jackie-reflects-on-christmas-message-of-ukrainian-bell-carol/>



Readings	This week	Next week
Readings for this Sunday:		
1st Reading	Isaiah 52:7-10	Numbers 6:22-End
	Psalms 98	8
2nd Reading	Hebrews 1:1-4, 5-12	Galatians 4:4-7
Gospel	John 1:1-14	Luke 2:15-21

Readings for the week ahead:

Mon	26 th	Matt 10:17-22	Thurs	29 th	Luke 2:22-35
Tue	27 th	John 21:19b-End	Fri	30 th	Luke 2:36-40
Wed	28 th	Matt 2:13-18	Sat	31 st	John 1:1-18

Readings can be viewed/downloaded from <https://bible.oremus.org/>

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Reflection by Hillarie Griggs

Christmas Day
25th December 2022

“Joy to the world. The Lord is come.”

The title of this reflection is the opening line of Issac Watts’ hymn first published in 1719 and has been a favourite carol ever since. Surprisingly, it was not written as a song, much less a carol, but was a poem based on Psalm 98. It has no imagery usually associated with the story of the birth of Jesus. Rather, the lyrics speak more about Christ’s reign of love where He will rule with truth and grace. It is this joyful celebration of Christ’s coming that ties this song to Christmas.

The opening line is not, “Joy to the world! The Lord **has** come,” but rather “Joy to the world! The Lord **is** come.” Watts is not just looking at a past event but that Jesus is with us now, and to the future coming of Christ. So, although our earthly life may be filled with troubles, we have reason for hope because Jesus came the first time and will come again. What it encourages us to do is rejoice as we look back on what God has done for us, and also to rejoice as we look forward with hope to what God has promised in the future.

The Christmas Story is a story of joy in the midst of chaos, disruption, despair and upheaval. Jesus was born in a stable, during a time of political and religious turmoil to parents who had been forced to travel away from home to satisfy the needs of an occupying force. Despite the situation they were in various people, throughout the story, express joy when they hear the news of Jesus’ birth. When Mary comes to visit Elizabeth, a woman who is also pregnant and whose husband had been struck dumb, Elizabeth proclaims “For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting the child in my womb

leaped for **joy**” (Luke 1.44). The angel said to the shepherds, people who were marginalised and social outcasts, “Do not be afraid, listen carefully, for I proclaim to you good news that will bring great **joy** to all people” (Luke 2.10). The Wise Men, travellers in a foreign land, “when they saw that the star had stopped they were overwhelmed with **joy**” (Matthew 2.10).

When God chose to be born as a vulnerable baby to very ordinary parents, in a temporary shelter and surrounded by social outcasts, it changed people’s understanding of who God was. Throughout His ministry Jesus’ message to the world was that He wanted to be one with us, and that all are welcome in his presence. God loves us for who we truly are. A person’s background or status does not matter. What mattered is that we made space for Christ and for others in our hearts. No one was to be considered unworthy of God’s love or of respect from others. This is cause of great joy for all.

In his letter to the Galatians Paul listed joy as the second fruit of the spirit after love. Joy is something deeper than happiness because happiness is determined by outer circumstances. Joy is determined by what is happening on the inside. So it seems that joy is not something that we can chase after, not something we can capture from the world around us. It is a gift which is offered to anyone, a gift from God through the Holy Spirit. CS Lewis famously said, “joy is the serious business of heaven.”

Whatever your source of joy, watching a spectacular sunset, listening to a piece of music or the smiles and laughter of being surrounded by friends and family I hope that you will find some joy in the messiness of life during this Christmas season.

