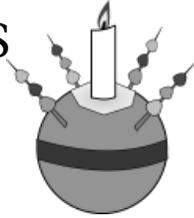


# CHRISTMAS SERVICES

## CHRISTMAS EVE\*

• **Christingle Family Fun\*\***

2.30 & 4PM



• **Midnight Communion**  
11.30PM

## 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

• **Community Worship**  
10AM



## 26 ST STEPHEN'S DAY

• **Communion** 10.15AM

\* *Christingle Nativity Rehearsal* in Church 3pm **Christmas Eve**

\*\* *Christingle Making* in the Church Room at 2pm **Sunday 23 December**

## Church Office

*The Office will be officially closed:*  
from Friday 21st December, 2018 and open again on Monday 7th January 2019

## Join a team?

WE have opportunities to join others in serving God through your Church.

- Assisting Peter in his role as Safeguarding Officer
- Supporting Youth Church
- 'Being' at Baptisms.
- Serving at Holy Communion

If any of this tweaks an interest in you, please have a chat with Lisa.

ST STEPHENS (SOUNDWELL)  
DRAMA GROUP PRESENTS:

## Little Red Riding Hood & the Little Pigs

31 JANUARY - 2 FEBRUARY 2019

Tickets £9 adults and £7 children & OAP  
bookable in advance: 07944 158294 or  
[www.ststephensdramabristol.co.uk](http://www.ststephensdramabristol.co.uk)

## Mary's song

< *Continued from overleaf*

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. ●

In the world's eyes, Mary would be the unlikeliest mother for the Saviour of the world, and yet in God's eyes, she has found favour (grace). And Mary responds in song. What a woman.

May we may follow her example more dearly day by day. Amen. **LISA**

READINGS: MICAH 5:2~5A & LUKE 1:39~55

# Mary's song

MARY and Elizabeth shared a dream. It was an ancient dream of Israel: the dream that one day all that the prophets had said would come true. One day Israel's God would do what he had said to Israel's earliest ancestors: all nations would be blessed through Abraham's family.

But for that to happen, the powers that kept the world in slavery had to be toppled. Nobody would thank God for blessing if they were poor, hungry, enslaved and miserable.

God would have to win a victory over the bullies, the power-brokers, the forces of evil, which Mary and Elizabeth knew all too well, living as they did in the dark days of Herod the Great, whose casual brutality was backed up by the threat of Rome.

Mary and Elizabeth, like so many Jews of their time, searched the scriptures, soaked themselves in the psalms and prophetic writings which spoke of mercy, hope, fulfilment, reversal, revolution, victory over evil, and of God coming to rescue at last.

All of that is poured into Mary's song. Somewhere deep within her soul, from the innermost workings of her heart, from that place where the Holy Spirit dwelt within her, she found these inspired words of praise and glory to God. Despite her fear of being pregnant, of being thrown out by her family, discarded by Joseph and all of society around her, with no way of surviving on her own.

*Her song is all about what God has done for her.*

God her saviour, was the cause of all her glorifying and praising. With all this backdrop in mind, read and hear Mary's song...

● **MY SOUL** magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

*Continued overleaf>*



St Stephens  
SOUNDWELL