

# Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

FEBRUARY 2020

## The Christmas Season

'OH DEAR!' I hear you think or say... 'has Lisa lost the plot? Why are we still thinking about Christmas in the month of February?'

It seems to me that year on year we begin thinking about preparing for Christmas earlier and earlier... lights in windows, Christmas cards posted, presents bought and stored away, carols and music in the shops.

We're busy preparing, we celebrate the day... many of us join the 12 days of reflections 'Following THE Star, Jesus' ... but then it's all packed away and forgotten til next year.

Yet, Christmas, through the season of Epiphany, still continues until the Feast of the Presentation on February 2nd otherwise known as Candlemas. Hence the Nativity scenes still present in Church and the candles in the windows.

The child, who was born in a humble stable to inexperienced and young parents; was greeted by the Shepherds, the outcasts of society; worshiped by the far-travelled-Magi and therefore manifested to the Gentiles (the rest of the world); is then presented in the Temple, recognised by Simeon and Anna, and is both '*a light to lighten the Gentiles*' and '*the glory of God's people Israel*'.

So before we turn our faces toward Easter, where redemption is won for all people through His suffering, let's stay with the light of Christ in Christmas for a while longer. I share with you the wonderful poem Gill Mayo wrote for the Ladies Group Carol Service, and the amazing words of Howard Thurman (*on page 3*) about 'The Work of Christmas', plus a few Christmas pics of our Church, taken by Tamsyn and received with gratitude and thanks. **LISA**

## FOLLOW THE STAR

THE days are short and the air is cold, Christmas is almost here, the seasonal cards are arriving, to wish you all good cheer.

We have so much left to do, and so many people to see, the lights must be untangled, and put upon the tree.

And just when you think you're at the point you can finally stop, you find that beautiful silver star that should be on the top.

Maybe this is the time to consider this special shining star, the one that lead those Wise men who travelled from afar:

It took them to a stable where a baby lay in straw, they gathered all around and gazed on him in awe. He was a very special child, he was our Holy King, t'was love, joy and peace, to the earth he would bring.

Now, we all at Christmas, like to gather round our screen, because we know that TV Stars will be vying to be seen.

But our star was so different, he was born with humility.

He sought no special treatment and died for you and me.

'*A Star Is Born*' was the message that we gave last year, now we move on from that baby that we loved so dear.

He has grown to a man spreading goodness and peace, speaking Gods words, that all evil should cease. His life is a story we all love to hear told, as the words that he spoke are more precious than gold.

He gave sight to the blind and strength to the weak, He healed many sick and made the dumb speak, He admonished the rich and gave to the poor; He turned water to wine that the guests might have more.

He was taken to Calvary and hung there to die, in a tomb in a garden was where he would lie.

He rose from the dead, but his time on earth had ended, so to sit 'longside his Father, to Heaven he ascended.

He gave up his life to save all of us from sin, so we should open our hearts and let him come in.

He's our Star that glows and surrounds us with love, He's a Star that watches over us from Heaven above, He's a Star that is Jesus our saviour, our King, a bright shining Star of whose glories we sing.

To FOLLOW THAT STAR is what we want to do, and to FOLLOW THAT STAR is what we ask of you.

By **Gillian Mayo** DECEMBER 2019

Open Space  
FEBRUARY 2020

### Mission Partners with St Stephens:

Bristol City Centre  
Soup Run  
Bristol/Uganda Link  
Christian Aid  
Community of  
the Sisters of  
the Church  
Emmaus  
Fair Trade  
One25 Project  
The Bristol Noise

### St Stephens

Church Road  
Soundwell  
Bristol BS16 4RH  
0117 956 6257

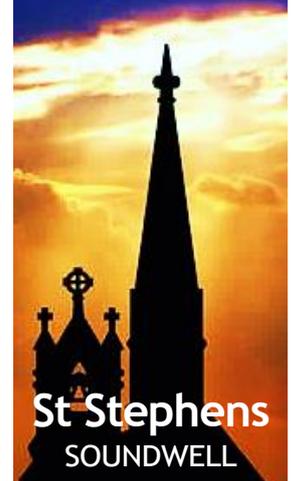
visionatststephens@  
gmail.com

www.saintstephen  
soundwell.org

f saintstephen  
soundwell

@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER  
131503



St Stephens  
SOUNDWELL

# Christmas images from St Stephens



## YOUTH CHURCH

THE families of Youth Church are a valued and joyous part of our Church family. Don't we just love to hear the feedback from the youngsters each week as they charge back into Church!

As the Church family is growing in numbers, so our youngsters are growing in age, and need Youth Church to grow and flourish as they are.

So, we are currently looking to provide a team of 'helpers' each Sunday, to go into Youth Church and support the young families, and the leader for the day, in what they are doing.

This would be just an occasional commitment, perhaps once in every two or three months.

Please do pray about this and have a chat with me for more details and we will gladly welcome you to the team!

LISA

## A COUPLE OF THANK YOU'S:

Thank you for sharing the light of Christingle!

WE HAVE received a thank you from the Children's Society for the gift of £205.41, which we raised for them at our Family Fun Christingle Services on Christmas Eve.

Every penny donated makes a life changing difference for young people, so thank you to everyone who gave financially.

Thank you also to the team of people who gave their time and talents to bring the community together in these services.

Sharing the light of Christ may have also made a life changing difference to those who came, because Following Jesus and Talking Jesus is all it takes!

A yummy and thirst quenching thank you!!

• Thank you for all those who provide, often giving ingredients, to make the amazing cakes and the delicious food items served in the Church Café, Sunday by Sunday.

• Thank you for the way you graciously and joyfully serve us all.

• Thank you for those who give what they can or give with grace and generosity as they receive and consume these yummy foods and drinks.

• Thank you to all those who can not always contribute financially but are welcome and valued part of our Church family.

WE SEE GOD'S GRACE AT WORK EACH WEEK... THROUGH EACH OF US!!

LISA

## THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS...

WHEN the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with the flocks,  
then the work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry,  
to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples,  
to make a little music with the heart.  
And to radiate the Light of Christ,  
every day, in every way,  
in all that we do and in all that we say.  
Then the work of Christmas begins!  
**Howard Thurman**

## SELF ASSURANCE..!



LOOK WHO I found at our Summer Fayre—  
a good looking vicar with golden hair:  
Is she singing, bidding, or waving to the crowd?  
If you know the answer, don't say it out loud, it's obvious really and clear to all –  
She's taking a selfie next to the poster on the wall.  
**Roger Hurkett**

## PLANNING FOR LENT

'FOLLOWING JESUS' has been, and is, a recurring theme at St Stephens: including 'We follow Jesus' and 'Follow THE Star, Jesus' being words we will all have heard and said often.

This Lent, we are planning to keep to this theme, or rather follow on from it... with the focus being: 'Let's talk... Jesus!'

Intrigued?? I hope so!! Want to find out more??

Then pop Wednesday evenings of Lent (4th March to 8th April) into your diaries and come along on those dates to Church at 7.30pm to find out more!

**LISA**



## FEBRUARY CYCLE OF PRAYER BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK

02	Children's Society	See & Know <i>continued</i> : Annabelle Pinter, Isla Reed, Cleo Rees, Daisy Silverthorne	Crownleaze Deerhurst Deerswood
09	Emmaus Bristol	Jack Tarbuck, Michaela Thornton Gracie Tucker, Polly Whitehead Alice Young	Eastleigh Close Eastleigh Road Elmore
16	Sisters of the Church	<b>Our congregation:</b> Robert Andrews Margaret Archer, Cheryl Ashwin Derek and Gwen Beek, Larna Bernard	Fairford Close Fairlyn Drive Florence Road
23	Bristol Soup Run	Terence Biggs, Avis Birkett Bill and Jenny Bishop, Grace Blackburn Jackie Blackwell, Rosemary Boulton	Frys Hill Gilpin Close Gladstone Court

## FEBRUARY 2020 DIARY

### REGULAR WEEKLY GROUPS:

TUESDAYS	01.30pm	Knit & Natter
WEDNESDAYS	01.00pm	} See & Know (For toddlers & carers) (Term time)
THURSDAYS	09.00am	
	01.00pm	

### SERVICES AND OTHER GROUPS/MEETINGS/EVENTS:

02 SUNDAY	08.00am	No early morning service this week
<i>Candlemas</i>	10.00am	St Stephens Community Worship
	11.00am	Café Central ('til 12.15pm)
05 WEDNESDAY	10.15am	Holy Communion
06 THURSDAY	07.30pm	Men's Group (Church Room)
	08.00pm	Ladies Group (Church Hall)
07 FRIDAY	01.30pm	Pensioner's Group (Church Hall)
09 SUNDAY	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
<i>Third before Lent</i>	10.00am	St Stephens Community Worship
	11.00am	Café Central ('til 12.15pm)
	12.30pm	Baptism
10 MONDAY	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café (Church Hall)
12 WEDNESDAY	10.15am	Holy Communion
14 FRIDAY	07.00pm	Outburst Youth Group
16 SUNDAY	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
<i>Second before Lent</i>	10.00am	St Stephens Community Worship
	11.00am	Café Central ('til 12.15pm)
18 TUESDAY	07.30pm	Scouts Gang Show (Church Hall)
19 WEDNESDAY	10.15am	Holy Communion
	07.30pm	Scouts Gang Show (Church Hall)
20 THURSDAY	07.30pm	Scouts Gang Show (Church Hall)
21 FRIDAY	01.30pm	Pensioner's Group (Church Hall)
	07.30pm	Scouts Gang Show (Church Hall)
22 SATURDAY	07.00pm	Scouts Gang Show (Church Hall)
23 SUNDAY	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
<i>Next before Lent</i>	10.00am	St Stephens Community Worship
	11.00am	Café Central ('til 12.15pm)
24 MONDAY	10.15am	Retreat Memory Café (Church Hall)
25 TUESDAY	07.30pm	Deanery Synod Meeting (Church)
26 ASH WEDNESDAY	10.15am	Holy Communion
	07.30pm	ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE (Church)
28 FRIDAY	07.00pm	Outburst Youth Group (Church Hall) 'til 9pm

### MARCH PREVIEW

01 SUNDAY	08.00am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
<i>First of Lent</i>	10.00am	St Stephens Community Worship
	11.00am	Café Central ('til 12.15pm)
02 MONDAY	07.30pm	Mothering Sunday Planning Meeting (Church Room)
04 WEDNESDAY	10.15am	Holy Communion
	07.30pm	Lent Course begins: 'Let's talk... Jesus' (Church) & refreshments
05 THURSDAY	07.30pm	Men's Group (Church Room)
	08.00pm	Ladies Group (Church Hall)
06 FRIDAY	01.30pm	Pensioner's Group (Church Hall)

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### SINCE DECEMBER

#### Baptisms:

● January 05: **Theo**. Please also hold Mum & Dad, Katy & Tom, along with brother George, in your prayers.

January 12: **Serena Teresa Nolan Smyth**. Please hold Mum & Dad, Cordelia & Peter, along with brothers Emrys and Ashton, in your prayers.

January 12: **Rhys Alexander Stanton**. Please hold Mum & Dad, Louise & David, along with brother Owen, in your prayers.

January 19: **Beatrice Ann Bishop**. Please hold Mum & Dad, Jessica & William, in your prayers.

January 26: **Olivia-Jo Botta**. Please hold Mum & Dad, Sophie and Mike along with brother Max (also being baptised), in your prayers.

January 26: **Maximus Antonio Botta**. Please hold Mum & Dad, Sophie and Mike along with sister Olivia (also being baptised), in your prayers.

#### Funerals:

● January 17: **Leonard Raymond Willmott** (89). The celebration of Len's life was held at Westerleigh Crematorium. Please hold his wife, Roma, their children Martin and Jane and their families, as well as Len's many friends, in your prayers.

## Soundwell College Site

CRAIG ABBS, the Head Teacher of the new Specialist Academy on what was the Soundwell College Site is asking for our input in selecting a name for the new Academy.

They have 2 options, but would love to hear of any more we might have.

*The options so far are:*

- Soundwell Academy
- Three Counties Specialist Academy
- Our suggestion

Please would you let me know your thoughts, either of the first 2 suggestions or an alternative one, and I will feed back to Craig.

They are really thankful for and want us to be involved in this process of naming the new Academy.

*Thank you in advance everyone!* **LISA**

## SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL



● **Revd Lisa Wigmore**  
Priest in Charge, 52 Gladstone Street  
Soundwell, Bristol BS16 4RF  
Telephone 0117 957 4297



● **Revd Sandy Cooper**  
Associate Minister, 1 Deerhurst  
Soundwell, Bristol BS15 1XH  
Telephone 0117 967 2621



● **Peter Robbins**  
Lay Minister, 13 Wood Road  
Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8DT  
Telephone 0117 967 9576



● **Gill Mayo**  
Church Warden  
Telephone 0117 956 9796



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