Spreading the Word



May our faith shine as bright as the Christmas star

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THE CHAPLAINCY OF AQUITAINE is part of the Church of England Diocese in Europe, working in partnership with The Intercontinental Church Society, in ministry to people who speak English. It covers Gironde, Dordogne and Lot-et-Garonne

CHURCH SERVICES
December 2026 - mid January 2027

Weekly recorded services and daily online prayer (zoom) continue

FRIDAY 04 DECEMBER

18.30	**Libourne (Condat Chapel)**	**Carol Service**

SATURDAY 05 DECEMBER

16.30	**Arcachon**	**Carol Service**

SUNDAY 06 DECEMBER 2nd Sunday of Advent

10.30	Bertric Burée	Open Door
10.30	Eymet	Praise and Prayer
11.00	Doudrac	Holy Communion
11.00	Ste Nathalène	Praise and Prayer
15.00	Bordeaux	Holy Communion
16.00	Bertric Burée	Evensong

WEDNESDAY 09 DECEMBER

10.30	Bertric Burée	BCP Holy Communion

FRIDAY 11 DECEMBER

18.00	**Flaujagues**	**Carol Service**
18.00	**St Médard**	**Carol Service**

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER 3rd Sunday of Advent

10.30	Bertric Burée	Holy Communion
10.30	Eymet	Praise and Prayer
10.30	**Négrondes**	**Carol Service**
17.00	**Limeuil**	**Carol Service**
17.00	**Bordeaux**	**Carol Service**
17.00	Libourne	Holy Communion

TUESDAY 15 DECEMBER

15.00	**Ste Nathalène**	**Carol Service**
17.00	**Monteton**	**Carol Service**

WED 16 DECEMBER

16.00	**Dondas**	**Carol Service**
17.00	**Eymet (RC church)**	**Ecumenical Carols**

FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER

17.00	**Condom**	**Carol Service**

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER

1700	**Libourne**	**Carol service**

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 4th Sunday of Advent

10.30	Bertric Burée	Morning Worship
10.30	Dondas	Holy Communion
10.30	**Eymet**	**Carol Service**
14.30	**Chancelade**	**Carol Service**
15.00	Bordeaux	Praise and Prayer
17.00	**Doudrac**	**Carol Service**

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS EVE

15.00	Négrondes	Holy Communion
16.00	Monteton	Holy Communion
17.00	**Bertric Burée**	**Carols in the Square**

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30	Bertric Burée	Holy Communion
10.30	Bordeaux	Christmas Celebration
10.30	Eymet	Christmas Celebration
10.30	Libourne	Holy Communion
10.30	Limeuil	Christmas Celebration
11.00	Doudrac	Holy Communion

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER

15.00	Bordeaux	Praise and Prayer

SUNDAY 03 JANUARY

10.30	Bertric Burée	Open Door
10.30	Eymet	Praise and Prayer
11.00	Ste Nathalène	Home service
15.00	Bordeaux	Holy Communion
16.00	Bertric Burée	Epiphany Carol Service
17.00	Libourne	Evening Worship

SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

10.30	Bertric Burée	Holy Communion
10.30	Eymet	Holy Communion
10.30	Négrondes	Holy Communion
10.30	Limeuil	Holy Communion
10.30	Monteton	Morning Prayer
15.00	Bordeaux	Praise and Prayer
17.00	Libourne	Evening Worship

WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY

11.00	Bertric Burée	BCP Holy Communion

SUNDAY 17 JANUARY

10.30	Bertric Burée	Morning Worship
10.30	Dondas	Holy Communion
10.30	Eymet	Praise and Prayer
10.30	Chancelade	Holy Communion
11.00	Ste Nathalène	Home service
15.00	Bordeaux	Praise and Prayer
17.00	Doudrac	Evening Worship
17.00	Libourne	Evening Worship



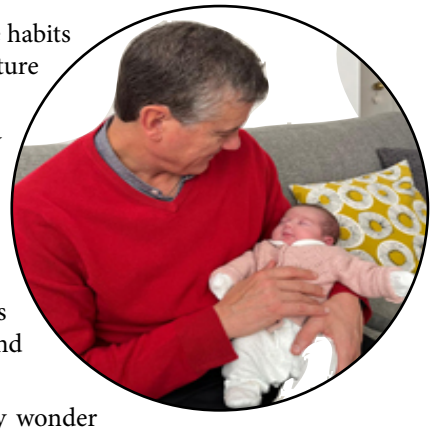
No Turning Back

What does the future hold?

We are all in the process of becoming someone.

Who you will be tomorrow depends on many factors and influences, not least your openness to the work of God's Spirit in your heart, but also the choices you make, the things you allow your imagination to dwell on, the company you keep.

Who am I in the process of becoming?



As we grow older our horizons narrow. The person we have been and the habits we have formed, control many of the factors which will determine our future character. But not all. There is still the possibility of change.

I reflected on all this as I held my three week-old granddaughter Ruby recently. We joked together with our son about her future. We wittily referred to her as "the lawyer", or "the doctor", as if we believed that in doing so we could make such a future manifest itself in her life. I held her close and asked: "Are you going to be a sportswoman? Or a bishop?"

Mostly I just prayed that she would discover in the years ahead that she is loved by the God who made her, who came as a baby to be her Saviour and Lord.

As Mary and Joseph held three week-old Jesus in their arms, did they wonder about his future? They had experienced angelic announcements, and dreams from God, and unexpected visits from shepherds with strange stories to tell. *"Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart..."*. I like to think Joseph did too, but it seems he was no longer alive to be interviewed by the time Luke was writing his gospel.

As we enter Advent, we make ourselves conscious of the past we are about to celebrate in a baby who was born in Bethlehem, and what he became and is. And we take note of the words of the angels in Acts 1:11 that *"this same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."*

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas, and let's ask the Spirit of the living God to make us more and more into the likeness of his son.



Contributions to this magazine are always very welcome and should be received no later than the **20th of the month.** Please send to:
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You can subscribe to **Spreading the Word** by sending your name and address, with a cheque for 50 Euros made payable to: 'The Chaplaincy of Aquitaine' to Gill Sweetman at the above address,

OR: send your e-mail address and you can receive it without charge ***though donations to the Chaplaincy would be most welcome!***

Dear Friends,

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation for the farewell gift which was bestowed upon me. I cherish the beautiful card, with so many meaningful messages and words of encouragement. (Thanks to Tina for crafting such a colourful and happy compilation!) Your thoughtful gesture has touched me deeply, and I thank the Lord for such kindness and generosity.



Thanks to the Team at Limeuil for making the worship service and celebration lunch so special. As my two sisters were visiting from California, they were able to attend the gathering. It was a meaningful time for us, and they really enjoyed meeting so many friendly people from across the Chaplaincy coming together.



What a blessing to be part of such a wonderful Chaplaincy of Christian fellowship! I am grateful and treasure memories of serving God's mission for so many years, helping to foster growth and development. It has been a privilege to work with such talented and devoted teams of people, with experiences which have enabled me to learn so much and grow closer to Christ. I sincerely appreciate all the support and friendship, and pray this will continue into the path ahead. I hold you in my prayers, please keep in touch.

With much love and blessings in Christ, Amy

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Life is Sweet

As the sun sets in a golden glory let us be glad for winter nights. They give us pause for reflection. The glory of the evening star awakens us to the beauty and serenity of the night. Tomorrow we will carry it into the daily round encouraging all with whom we come into contact.

As each year slips by, it is the love and tenderness we remember. None of its frustrations rob us of the hope that springs anew at the approach of the new year. I guess we all have had a failure or two, yet we will reflect upon our present blessings, of which we have many. Life's changes have a purpose.



Life today is crammed with problems. Many people are unable to find the answers. Far beneath the surface there lies within each one of us a 'pool of quiet'. In spite of the world's warring factions we can find rest.

Do not doubt your strength or hesitate to make bold decisions. The New Year means a new beginning. Contentment with our present lot is a precious acquisition.

I love this prayer:

I said a prayer for you today, and know God must have heard.
I felt the answer in my heart although He spoke no word.
I didn't ask for wealth or fame (I knew you wouldn't mind),
I asked Him to send treasures of a far more lasting kind.
I asked that He'd be near you at the start of each new day
To grant you health and blessings and friends to share your way.
I asked for happiness for you in all things great and small
But it was His loving care that I prayed for most of all. Author unknown

Grace magazine

A Christmas Creed



I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room, and I confess that my heart still sometimes wants to exclude Christ from my life today.

I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

I believe in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible:

I believe in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I confess my ever-lasting need of God: The need of forgiveness for our selfishness and greed, the need of new life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.

I believe in God who gives us the best of himself. I believe in Jesus, the son of the living God, born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world.

God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is love; the radiance of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ.

Amen.

Source unknown

L'enchanté



This beautiful story is recounted every Christmas in the forest of Provence in southern France. It's about the four shepherds who came to Bethlehem to see the child. One brought eggs, another brought bread and cheese, the third brought wine. And the fourth brought nothing at all. People called him L'Enchanté.

The first three shepherds chatted with Mary and Joseph, commenting on how well Mary looked, how cozy was the cave and how handsomely Joseph had appointed it. What a beautiful starlit night it was! They congratulated the proud parents, presented them with their gifts and assured them that if they needed anything else, they had only to ask.

Finally someone asked, "Where is L'Enchanté?" They searched high and low, up and down, inside and out. Finally, someone peeked through the blanket hung against the draft, into the crèche. There, kneeling at the crib, was L'Enchanté. – the Enchanted one. Like a flag or a flame taking the direction of the wind, he had taken the direction of love. Through the entire night, he stayed in adoration, whispering, "Jesu, Jesu, Jesu – Jesus, Jesus, Jesus."

Source | Brennan Manning, The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus

Ministry Musings

When I first asked to begin my training, we talked of me training to be a "Reader". I much prefer the term **"Lay Minister"** – it is a rich term that carries with it a wealth of meaning. I don't just read things! To me Christian Ministry is wonderfully wide-ranging, including many privileges and responsibilities.

To be a minister involves all of what John Bavington describes as "Up" "In" and "Out". Our relationship with God, our relationship with others and our mission to others.

For "Up" – I cannot be a proper Christian Minister if I don't have a real relationship with God. That means prioritising spending time with the Lord, in prayer and reading and studying scripture. Also, it is important to read what other great Christians have written about their own understanding of Scripture and the Christian life. I often express myself to the Lord in song, listening to and singing music from all genres. I listen and sing along to Christian songs when I am ironing and in the car! I also chat to the Lord at various moments. "Wow, thanks Lord, lovely autumn colours" also "Sorry, Lord, I didn't do well there"!

For "In" I am referring to my relationships with my fellow Christians – most especially in the Bordeaux congregation where I am to be found each Sunday unless I am away. I have always loved spending time with other Christians, worshipping together and engaging in Bible Study, Prayer, Fellowship and Fun – lots of fun and laughter. Bordeaux Church family is wonderful. We are hugely diverse in every imaginable way. The age range is from babies and toddlers to folks in their 90s. There are very few English people and very few who are from Anglican backgrounds. Most of us want to worship the Lord in English but for many English is a second language. When we say the Lord's Prayer – we invite people to pray it in the language in which they are comfortable – and it is glorious to be part of the multi-lingual moment of prayer fellowship.

Regarding "Out," I suppose like a lot of people my report card would say, "Could do better!" Why is it so difficult to talk about the Lord at times? As a minister, it is less difficult during specific pastoral moments. If I am visiting someone who is ill, or speaking with someone who is recently bereaved, or to people who are suffering, the words come. I find preparing and preaching a sermon a great blessing, and I learn so much myself too. If someone asks me a specific question about my faith, Christianity, or religion generally, I take that as an invitation to talk about the Gospel. I tell people that I pray for them – and they are often very grateful. The thing I am more shy about is opening up the subject of the Gospel myself. I do pray that I will become better at that.

The final word on what I should be as a lay minister are the words of Jesus in the "Great Commission":

Matthew 28:19-20 *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

And it delights me that it ends with that wonderful promise.

Heather Gardiner

"Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts." — Janice Maeditere

"Joy is the true gift of Christmas..." — Pope Benedict XVI

"Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone." — Charles M. Schulz

Looking at Art with Jeff Bottger

As I have done in several previous Looking at Art articles for December, I have selected works of art in four genres that show how great artists depicted the Nativity.



Rogier van der Weyden was one of the greatest and most influential Flemish artists of the 15th century. In about 1450 he created an oil on wood triptych for the Bladelin Altarpiece in the cathedral in Middelburg. The central panel depicts the Nativity. Notice how he gave the painting what, for him, was a contemporary daytime setting. A devout Christian, he is best known for his exceptional 1435 painting *The Descent from the Cross.*



Giotto di Bondone, now known mononymously as Giotto, was an exceptionally gifted Italian painter and architect from Tuscany. He is often referred to as the Father of the Renaissance. In 1305 he created a spectacular series of 38 frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua which depict the lives of Mary and Jesus. One of the panels beautifully portrays the Nativity. Taken together it is considered to be his masterwork.

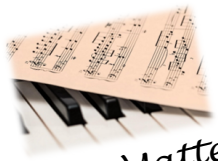


Alabaster is a soft, translucent mineral whereas marble is a dense, hard rock. It is therefore easier to quarry and sculpt. Here we see a beautiful portrayal of the Nativity by an unknown English sculptor who was probably from the Nottingham region. An exhausted but sublime Mary rests in a bed next to her newborn son, aided by a midwife. It measures 37cm x 26 cm. Similar alabaster samples can be found in Westminster Abbey.



Giovanni della Robbia was an early 15th century Italian Renaissance sculptor who primarily created religious images using terracotta, which is a porous, clay-baked material. His elaborate polychrome relief depicting the Nativity has been beautifully coloured and glazed. It contains images of the Holy Family, God, Franciscan saints and several other people, winged angels and the hovering Holy Spirit dove. Now 600+ years old, it remains a masterpiece.

I hope your holiday season will be enriched by this month's Looking at Art article. As always, should you have any comments please contact me at kidjeff52@gmail.com. Many thanks for reading and have a Happy Christmas!



Music Matters.... with Belinda Drew

We're moving on in our exploration of how music has developed over the centuries, how the different periods were influenced by what was happening in the world of politics, art, architecture and science, and how the periods came to be defined by these changes.

So here's a quick recap of where we are now....

From the Medieval period to the Renaissance, music developed from simple Gregorian chant to complex polyphony, combining several independent melodies. Sacred music remained important, while secular music flourished (troubadours, madrigals). Composers such as Josquin, Palestrina and Tallis refined musical expression, harmony and composition, paving the way for..... ***the Baroque period 1600 - 1750***



What does 'Baroque' mean?

The word **Baroque** comes from the Portuguese word *barroco*, meaning an **irregularly shaped pearl.** It was originally used somewhat negatively to describe something unusual, extravagant or overly elaborate. The term was later applied to the ornate, artistic style of the 17th and early 18th centuries, encompassing music, architecture, painting and sculpture. Interestingly, what was once considered excessive or irregular is now celebrated as one of the great periods of European art and music!

Who were the key composers?

Think Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Purcell, Montiverdi, Corelli..... the first three regarded as the giants of Baroque music.



Johann Sebastian Bach
1685 - 1750

George Frideric Handel
1685 - 1759

Antonio Vivaldi
1678 - 1741

What characterised the music of this period?

I hope this table will guide you through an overview of the Baroque period....look out for the beginnings of OPERA (e.g. Purcell's Dido and Aeneas) - bringing together virtually every aspect of Baroque music: drama, emotion, ornamentation, orchestral accompaniment, contrast and virtuosity. It also helped establish the orchestra and developed the role of the professional singer.

What's new	*A good example*	*Listen out for.....*
Ornamentation	Vivaldi - Four Seasons - 'Spring'	Elaborate, decorative violin passages, trills and rapid notes
Contrast	Handel - Music for the Royal Fireworks	Dramatic changes in volume and the contrast between different instrumental groups
Basso Continuo	Purcell - Dido's lament - Dido & Aeneas	The repeating descending bass line supporting the vocal melody
Drama & emotion	Monteverdi - L'Orfeo	Expressive singing, dramatic storytelling and emotional intensity
Regular rhythm	Bach - Brandenburg Concerto No 3	A strong, driving and continuous rhythmic pulse

"For Always" by Will Fish

In 1994, two Americans answered an invitation from the Russian Department of Education to teach morals and ethics (based on biblical principles) in the public schools. They were invited to teach at prisons, businesses, the fire and police departments and a large orphanage. About 100 boys and girls who had been abandoned, abused, and left in the care of a government-run program were in the orphanage. They relate the following story in their own words.

"It was nearing the holiday season, 1994, time for our orphans to hear, for the first time, the traditional story of Christmas. We told them about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem. Finding no room in the inn, the couple went to a stable, where the baby Jesus was born and placed in a manger. Throughout the story, the children and orphanage staff sat in amazement as they listened. Some sat on the edges of their stools, trying to grasp every word. Completing the story, we gave the children three small pieces of cardboard to make a crude manger. Each child was given a small paper square, cut from yellow napkins I had brought with me. No colored paper was available in the city. Following instructions, the children tore the paper and carefully laid strips in the manger for straw. Small squares of flannel, cut from a worn-out nightgown an American lady was throwing away as she left Russia, were used for the baby's blanket. A doll-like baby was cut from tan felt we had brought from the United States. The orphans were busy assembling their manger as I walked among them to see if they needed any help. All went well until I got to one table where little Misha sat—he looked to be about 6 years old and had finished his project. As I looked at the little boy's manger, I was startled to see not one, but two babies in the manger. Quickly, I called for the translator to ask the lad why there were two babies in the manger. Crossing his arms in front of him and looking at his completed manger scene, the child began to repeat the story very seriously.. For such a young boy, who had only heard the Christmas story once, he related the happenings accurately—until he came to the part where Mary put the baby in the manger.



Then Misha started to ad lib. He made up his own ending to the story as he said, "And when Maria laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told him I have no mamma and I have no papa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus told me I could stay with him. But I told him I couldn't because I didn't have a gift to give him like everybody else did. But I wanted to stay with Jesus so much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. So I asked Jesus, 'If I keep you warm, will that be a good enough gift?' And Jesus told me, 'If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody ever gave me.' So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and he told me I could stay with him—for always."

As little Misha finished his story, his eyes brimmed full of tears that splashed down his little cheeks. Putting his hand over his face, his head dropped to the table and his shoulders shook as he sobbed and sobbed. The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon nor abuse him, someone who would stay with him—FOR ALWAYS.

Have you checked out the Chaplaincy website lately?
There's lots of information there so it's well worth doing so.
www.churchinaquitaine.org

Jesus and the Elves

by John Leo, US News & World Report columnist & author of book,"Two Steps Ahead of the Thought Police."

And Joseph went up from Galilee to Bethlehem with Mary, his espoused wife, who was great with child. And she brought forth a son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

And the angel of the Lord spoke to the shepherds and said, "I bring you tidings of great joy. Unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." "There's a problem with the angel," said a Pharisee who happened to be strolling by. As he explained to Joseph, angels are widely regarded as religious symbols, and the stable was on public property where such symbols were not allowed to land or even hover. "And I have to tell you, this whole thing looks to me very much like a Nativity scene," he said sadly. "That's a no-no, too."

Joseph had a bright idea. "What if I put a couple of reindeer over there near the ox and ass?" he said, eager to avoid sectarian strife. "That would definitely help," said the Pharisee, who knew as well as anyone that whenever a saviour appeared, judges usually liked to be on the safe side and surround it with deer or woodland creatures of some sort. "Just to clinch it, throw in a candy cane and a couple of elves and snowmen, too," he said. "No court can resist that."

Mary asked, "What does my son's birth have to do with snowmen?" "Snowpersons," cried a young woman, changing the subject before it veered dangerously toward religion. Off to the side of the crowd, a Philistine was painting the Nativity scene. Mary complained that she and Joseph looked too tattered and worn in the picture. "Artistic license," he said. "I've got to show the plight of the haggard homeless in a greedy, uncaring society in winter," he quipped. "We're not haggard or homeless. The inn was just full," said Mary. "Whatever," said the painter.

Rum pa pum pum. Two women began to argue fiercely. One said she objected to Jesus' birth "because it privileged motherhood." The other scoffed at virgin births, but said that if they encouraged more attention to diversity in family forms and the rights of single mothers, well, then, she was all for them. "I'm not a single mother," Mary started to say, but she was cut off by a third woman who insisted that swaddling clothes are a form of child abuse, since they restrict the natural movement of babies.

With the arrival of 10 child advocates, all trained to spot infant abuse and manger rash, Mary and Joseph were pushed to the edge of the crowd, where arguments were breaking out over how many reindeer (or what mix of reindeer and seasonal sprites) had to be installed to compensate for the infant's unfortunate religious character. An older man bustled up, bowling over two merchants, who had been busy debating whether an elf is the same as a fairy and whether the elf/fairy should be shaking hands with Jesus in the crib or merely standing to the side, jumping around like a sports mascot. "I'd hold off on the reindeer," the man said, explaining that the use of asses and oxen as picturesque backdrops for Nativity scenes carries the subliminal message of human dominance. He passed out two leaflets, one denouncing manger births as invasions of animal space, the other arguing that stables are "penned environments" where animals are incarcerated against their will. He had no opinion about elves or candy canes.

Signs declaring "Free the Bethlehem 2" began to appear, referring to the obviously exploited ass and ox. Someone said the halo on Jesus' head was elitist. Mary was exasperated. "And what about you, old mother?" she said sharply to an elderly woman. "Are you here to attack the shepherds as prison guards for excluded species, maybe to complain that singing in Latin identifies us with our Roman oppressors, or just to say that I should have skipped patriarchal religiosity and joined some dumb new-age goddess religion?" "None of the above," said the woman, "I just wanted to tell you that the Magi are here."

Sure enough, the three wise men rode up. The crowd gasped, "They're all male!" And "Not very multicultural!" "Balthasar here is black," said one of the Magi. "Yes, but how many of you are gay or disabled?" someone shouted. A committee was quickly formed to find an impoverished lesbian wise-person among the halt and lame of Bethlehem.

A calm voice said, "Be of good cheer, Mary, you have done well and your son will change the world." At last, a sane person, Mary thought. She turned to see a radiant and confident female face. The woman spoke again: "There is one thing, though. Religious holidays are important, but can't we learn to celebrate them in ways that unite, not divide? For instance, instead of all this business about 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo,' why not just 'Season's Greetings'?" Mary said, "You mean my son has entered human history to deliver the message, 'Hello, it's winter'?" "That's harsh, Mary," said the woman. "Remember, your son could make it big in midwinter festivals, if he doesn't push the religion thing too far. Centuries from now, in nations yet unborn, people will give each other pricey gifts and have big office parties on his birthday. That's not chopped liver." "Let me get back to you," Mary said.

Christmas Quiz

1 Who told Mary and Joseph to go to Bethlehem?

2 True or False: Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus because they were following a star.

3 What form of transportation did Mary and Joseph use to get to Bethlehem? The answer is not a taxi cab.

4 Which Old Testament prophet had the most to say about the birth of Christ?

5 In the accounts announcing the birth of Christ (Matthew 1 and Luke 1 and 2) how many times did an angel or angels appear?

6 Who told Joseph the baby's name was to be Jesus?

7 Can you list 5 names of Jesus found in the Bible? Some are from Old Testament prophecies.

8 What are the meanings of the names Jesus and Emmanuel?

9 The shepherds and the wise men went to see Jesus. Which group followed a star and which group went to find the baby because an angel told them where to look?

10 What did the angels sing to the shepherds?

11 When the shepherds went looking for Jesus, what was the sign they were to look for?

12 How many wise men or kings or magi came to see Jesus?

13 Matthew 2:8 says that Herod asked the wise men to inform him where the baby Jesus was. What does this verse say he wanted to know?

14 How old was Jesus when the wise men found him?

15 What are the three gifts which are mentioned being given by the wise men?

16 Which king ordered all the young children be killed?

17 What animals does the Bible say were present at the birth of Jesus?

18 What was the name of the unkind innkeeper who would not allow the pregnant Mary to lodge in his inn?

19 What is the name of the person who was told he would not die until he saw the Saviour?

20 Two of the four Gospels do not mention the birth of Christ. Which two?

Answers (some you may find surprising) on page 22



Do you think you may have a problem with alcohol ?

Alcoholics Anonymous is here
to help and support you

There are 2 AA meetings locally
Castillonnes Tues 12 - 1.15pm
Montflanquin Thurs 7 - 8pm - also on zoom

There are also many more meetings all over SW france both in person and on zoom. All addresses and contact details are on the AA website - aafrance.net.

Alternatively you can contact Debbie by email deborahcaswell9@gmail.com or call 0674578164 and she will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Around the Chaplaincy: news and events from our churches



Chancelade and Négrondes

Chapelle Saint Jean, Rte des Carrières, 24650 Chancelade
Église Saint Pierre ès Liens, 24460 Négrondes

Warden:	Fiona Calvert	06 73 21 58 77
Magazine contact:	Sheryl Tully	05 53 52 77 15
Prayer Chain	Fiona Calvert	06 73 21 58 77
	Beryl Wood	

Future Services

Sunday December 13th	**10:30**	**Carol Service**	**Négrondes**
Sunday 20 December	**14.30**	**Carol Service**	**Chancelade**
Thursday December 24th	15:00	Christmas Eve Communion	Négrondes
Sunday 10 January 2027	10.30	Holy Communion	Négrondes
Sunday 17 January	10.30	Holy Communion	Chancelade

When we think of `steel drums' we think of calypso music. The steel drum also known as `steel pan' was originally created in Trinidad and Tobago in the 1930's. It was established in contexts of Carnival resistance, its history being traced back to the enslaved Africans who were brought to the Caribbean in the 1700's. The convex dent at the base of the drum is tuned to distinct musical pitches. You would certainly not be expecting to hear classical music being played on the steel drums but an evening concert of such was held at Négrondes back in October and those that attended had a very entertaining evening. I wonder what Chopin and Tchaikovsky would have thought?





The colourful Autumn is coming to an end with leaves falling to expose bare branches that hang like skeletons in the thin sunlight. It is a time for the ground to fall asleep as we find peace and stillness within ourselves. **All Souls Service on the 1st November** was a time to reflect on those we have lost. We were invited to write the names of the departed to be then read out loud in church. Graves are adorned with vibrant chrysanthemum plants as their hardiness can withstand the harshest of weathers. In St. Paul's letter to the Romans ch 8, we read *`For I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels, rulers nor things present nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God.'*

Remembrance Sunday Service on the 8th November was led by the Rev'd Helen Savage accompanied by Patrick Sturges. It was a day to commerate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian service people in the two World Wars and later conflicts. A poem by Irina Ratushinskaya was read by Beryl Wood to mark those persecuted for their faith. *'And then unsleeping I would know a huddle by an icy wall. Someone is thinking of me now. Petitioning the Lord for me'.* The most recognisable symbol of Remembrance Sunday is the red poppy which became associated with World War l memorials after scores of the flowers bloomed in the former battlefields of Belgium and Northern France. In the Gospel of Luke 21: 5-19 *'Countries will fight each other and kingdoms will attack one another. There will be terrible earthquakes, famines and plagues'.*

We live in a fragile world where conflicts still exist. The ever increasing threat of global warming which we experienced this year and the risks of AI. We are told to stand firm in our belief because God is with us.

The Church at Bertric-Burée

L'Eglise Saint Pierre – Saint Paul,
Le Bourg, 24320 Bertric Burée

Wardens:	Ann Knight	anniechezfoucaud@gmail.com
	David Stacey	davidandla3@aol.com
Magazine contact:	Ann Knight)	
	Rosie Marland)	bertriccomms@gmail.com
	David Stacey)	
Prayer Chain:	Sheila Marshall	sheilamarshall24600@gmail.com

Future Services

Sunday 6th December	10:30	*Open Door, church is open for prayer*
	16:00	Advent Carol Service
Wednesday 9th December	11:00	BCP Holy Communion
Sunday 13th December	10:30	Holy Communion
Sunday 20th December	10:30	Morning Worship
Thursday 24th December	**17:00**	**Carols in the Square**
Friday 25th December	10:30	Christmas Day Holy Communion
Sunday 3rd January 2027	10:30	*Open Door, church is open for prayer*
	16:00	Epiphany Carol Service
Sunday 10th January	10:30	Holy Communion
Wednesday 13th January	11:00	BCP Holy Communion
Sunday 17th January	10:30	Morning Worship

Bible in a Day

How much of the Bible can you get through in a day?



On Thursday, 5 November, we gathered at Bertric-Burée to find out, with the Rev'd John Bavington as our guide.



John made it a thoroughly enjoyable day. He brought the Bible to life, showing how the different books, people and events fit together.
Stepping back helped us spot connections we might miss when reading one passage at a time.
Warm thanks to everyone who helped organise the day and to all who came along.





Bordeaux	Protestant Temple, 283 rue Frédéric Sévène, 33400 Talence	CW	Barry Gardiner Milly Vulakoro	barrygardiner54@gmail.com 06 22 29 07 62
		ML	Adrien Etienne	e.j.ad@hotmail.fr
		PC	Milly Vulakoro	06 22 29 07 62

Future Services

Saturday 05 December	**16.30**	**Carol Service at Arcachon Temple**
Sunday 06 December	15.00	Holy Communion
Friday 11 December	**18.00**	**Carol Service at Flaujagues Temple**
Sunday 13 December	**17.00**	**Carol Service**
Sunday 20 December	15.00	Praise and Prayer
Christmas Day 25 December	10.30	Christmas Celebration
Sunday 27 December	15.00	Praise And Prayer
Sunday 03 January 2027	15.00	Holy Communion
Sunday 10 January	15.00	Praise And Prayer
Sunday 17 January	15.00	Praise And Prayer

Welcoming our Chaplain and his wife to their new home

Our entire community is delighted to welcome Reverend John Bavington and his wife to the presbytery in Floirac. We hope he makes this house a true haven of peace, conducive to prayer, fellowship, and the flourishing of his ministry among us.



The Parable of the Ten Virgins

At our service on 8th November, we heard how Jesus told the story of ten bridesmaids waiting through the night for a wedding. All ten brought lamps, yet only five thought to pack extra oil. When the groom finally arrived at midnight, the unprepared women ran out of light and missed the celebration, because they could not borrow oil from their friends at the last minute. This simple story from Matthew 25 holds a clear lesson for our faith today: we cannot rely on someone else's walk with God or wait for an emergency to get ready. True readiness comes from quiet, everyday habits—like praying, reading Scripture, and trusting Jesus—that fill our lives now so our light stays bright no matter how long we wait.



Remembrance Sunday service 2026

On Sunday, November 8th, our community gathered in Talence for a deeply moving Remembrance Day service led by the Chaplain John Bavington. In the quiet reverence of shared prayer and reflection, we honoured the courage and sacrifice of those who laid down their lives so that others might live in peace. Let us keep praying for peace :



Prayer: *Let us pray for the peace of the world; for statesmen and rulers, that they may have wisdom to know, and courage to do, what is right; for all who work to improve international relationships, that they may find ways to reconcile people of different race, colour and creed; for all men and women,*

that they may have justice and freedom and live in security and peace; for all who are currently serving to restore and maintain peace and order.
Let us pray also for all who suffer as a result of war; for the injured, the disabled and the distressed; for those who mourn their dead, those who have lost family members. Amen

Christmas Bazaar, the event of the year



As the Advent season invites us to slow down and celebrate the warmth of Christ's love, the true spirit of Christmas shines brightest when we gather together in fellowship. This year, our community is delighted to welcome friends, neighbours and families to our annual **Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, December 5th** - a joyful celebration of generosity and togetherness. Whether you are searching for thoughtful gifts or simply looking to share in the festive cheer, there is something special waiting for everyone. Treat your holiday table to homemade jams, fresh baked goods, and delightful Christmas goodies, or select a fine bottle of wine to toast the season. You can also browse through racks of quality clothes and shelves of captivating books for your loved ones, or take a well-deserved moment to unwind and be pampered at our festive nail bar. Come join us as we share laughter, build community, and celebrate the blessing of this wonderful season side by side.

Dondas — St Médard on D245 north-east of Agen

L'Eglise Saint Martin,
Rte du Bourg, 47470 Dondas

Contact: Maggie & Dave Lee dondasanglican@churchinaquitaine.org
Prayer Chain: Dave Lee drl4747@gmail.com

Future Services

Friday 11 December	**18.00**	**Carol Service**	**St Médard**
Wednesday 16 December	**16.00**	**Carol Service**	**Dondas**
Sunday 20 December	10.30	Holy Communion	Dondas
Sunday 17 January 2027	10.30	Holy Communion	Dondas

November started with the second of our informal Church meetings. Due to clashes with other services and events we were few in number but nevertheless had a good discussion about the second chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We also had a talk and discussion about the GDPR regulations concerning prayer.

Our service of Morning Prayer on the 15th November was led by Georgina Hodgson – the first time that she has led a service for us and it was very well received with a very interesting homily based on Jane Williams' Lectionary Reflections. The weather was very foggy, but we had a good congregation and rousing singing of well-known hymns. As always, a big thank you to David Warner-Howard for his music and to all those who helped to bring the service together in so many ways.
Our next service will be one of our fifth Sunday services on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29th and will be Holy Communion led by Rev'd David Marshall. We shall, as in previous years, be collecting chocolate for our local Restos du Cœur to be delivered in time for Christmas.

Our **Carol Service** will be on **Wednesday 16th December** and it will be led by our Chaplain. This year the service will again be bi-lingual and of course, there will be the traditional mulled wine and mince pies to follow.

Our final service of 2026 will be a service of Holy Communion on Sunday 20th December led by Rev'd David Marshall.

Ste. Nathalène

Le Bourg, Rte de Sainte-Nathalène,
24200 Sainte-Nathalène

Warden:	Alexandra Billing	05 53 52 27 71
Magazine contact:	Alexandra Billing	05 53 52 27 71
Prayer Chain:	Sheila Campbell	05 53 59 68 78

Future Services

Sunday 6th December	11.00	Prayer & Praise
Tuesday 15th December	**15.00**	**Bilingual Carols**
Sunday 03 January 2027	11.00	Home Service
Sunday 17 January	11.00	Home Service

1st November All Saints lead by Amanda Allchorn. *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" A thoughtful, poignant service. We paused to hear Christ's invitation, to receive His loving comfort. He understands what grief feels like. He says 'I am with you always.'*

We were given paper hearts to write the names of loved ones who had died recently and invited to place them on a prayer tree. Jan and Glenn were remembered with love. We sang the wonderful words of 'Beautiful Saviour' by Stuart Townsend. The gospel, statement of faith and hope of heaven all wrapped into one song. Countless worshippers will honour the Lamb who is worthy and reigning over all.



Closing prayer from the Northumbria Community.

"Do not hurry as you walk with grief, It does not help the journey.
Walk slowly, pausing often, Do not hurry as you walk with grief.

Do not be disturbed by memories that come unbidden,
Swiftly forgive if you need to, and let Christ speak for you unspoken words.

Be gentle too with the one who walks with grief. If it is you, be gentle with yourself.
Swiftly forgive, walk slowly, pausing often. Take time, go gently as you walk with grief."

It was just about warmer out than in but we did need to keep our coats on for lunch in the sun!

15th November Communion led by Rev. John Bavington.

We were delighted to have John and Jeanie with us. Now they have moved, it was a 2 hr 15 min journey!



Murder mysteries are very popular. Most of us like a riddle to solve. The passage was Matt 22: 34-46 where the religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus but they didn't get the better of him. The whole Torah is like a puzzle with clues about the Messiah. Although the religious leaders knew every word of it, they failed to solve it, even when the answer was standing in front of them, quoting scripture that He had fulfilled!

Some of the things we do and say in church are a riddle to unbelievers. How can people know God? It is impossible, unless someone explains it and the Spirit draws them to a revelation. Our job is to help people answer the riddle. No-one is too far from God that they can't be shown the answer to the puzzle.

It was just about warmer outside than in so we braved lunch outside. We were warmed by a welcome bowl of soup, thank you Sheila. However, no one took their coats off!

Let us endeavour to be like Jesus on the road to Emmaus, opening up the Scriptures so others can join up the dots!

Doudrac L'Eglise Saint Jean Baptiste, Place de l'Eglise, 47210 Doudrac

Warden: Richard Morris tractorboy2447@gmail.com
Magazine contact: Charles Bethune bethune.charles@orange.fr

Future Services

Sunday 06 December	11.00	Holy Communion
Sunday 20 December	**17.00**	**Carol Service**
Christmas Day 25 December	11.00	Holy Communion
Sunday 17 January	17.00	Evening Worship

Our worship has been guided by two contrasting and thought provoking services at Doudrac during the month of November.



Our Holy Communion service on Sunday 1st was led by Rev'd Liz Morris, as we gathered to celebrate All Saints Day, including an Act of Remembrance.

With music chosen to reflect the themes, including Elgar's 'Nimrod', and the moving strains of the 'Last Post' before two minutes of silence, and laying of the wreath, it was a poignant time of reflection and tribute.

On the third Sunday, we were delighted to welcome Tim Heathfield, one of our Chaplaincy Wardens, to lead our evening worship. Tim and Linda have recently returned from a trip to Uzbekistan, and Tim took as his theme the persecution of Christians worldwide, focusing particularly on places such as Afghanistan and Nigeria – and highlighting the dangers for Christians desperate to practise their faith in oppressive regimes.

Tim shared information compiled by Open Doors International including data from their World Watch List which helps us identify those countries where Christians are under the most threat. Huge thanks to Tim for a prayerful and powerful time of worship.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalm 23:4

We now look forward to our Advent worship, Carol Service, and a joyful Holy Communion on Christmas Day!

Wishing you all a very Happy, Peaceful and Blessed Christmas!



Monteton

Notre Dame de Monteton,
47120 Monteton, Lot-et-Garonne

Contact: Morag Scott
moragfscott112@gmail.com

Future Services

Tuesday 15 December	**17.00**	**Carol Service**
Thursday 24 December	16.00	Holy Communion
Sunday 03 January	10.30	Morning Prayer

On **Sunday, 25 October**, the church hall was filled with the wonderful aromas of home cooking, the hum of lively conversation, and the warmth of our church family coming together for our **Bring-and-Share Lunch.** Following our morning service people gathered around the tables to enjoy a feast that truly showcased the generosity and culinary talents of our congregation. From comforting savoury bakes and colourful salads, to an array of cakes, and puddings, the buffet table was overflowing—and just like the loaves and fishes, there was more than enough for everyone to go back for seconds!



The afternoon wasn't just about the delicious food, though. It was a brilliant opportunity to slow down, catch up with old friends, and extend a warm welcome to several newer faces in our congregation, sharing stories and laughter over glasses of wine. It was a genuine reminder of the joy and strength we find in fellowship. We also had a raffle which raised 120euros for the church and its charities.

A huge thank you to everyone who cooked, baked, or brought a dish along to contribute to the spread. We are also especially grateful to our wonderful hospitality and setup teams, who worked quietly behind the scenes arranging tables and clearing away afterwards.

Events like these remind us that sharing a meal is one of the simplest yet richest ways to build community. If you missed out this time, we would love to see you at our next church gathering—keep an eye out for upcoming dates!

Sadly this was the last event we saw Charles Clarke at and he produced two excellent dishes which were quickly devoured! Charles died on the 16th of November. He will be remembered and missed.

Whilst Norma and Leslie Eckett were part of our church community, they used to hold a **monthly coffee morning** at their home, where they had a large garden for summer use and a large room in their gîtes for the use in winter. It seemed a shame to let this tradition fall into disuse after their return to England and so we decided to hold our first coffee morning. Not having an appropriate venue we asked for the use of the church which was agreed to both by our Chaplain and the Monteton Mairie. So on **14th November,** having borrowed tables from Adrian and set up the day before, we held our first Norma and Leslie style coffee morning.





To our surprise 27 people came and we were overwhelmed with delicious cakes and dear Fiona behind the coffee urn kept us well caffeinated ! Wayne gave us some music and generally the atmosphere was one of bonhomie. Also the raffle was a lot of fun and some lucky people went away very happy with their winnings.

We would like to make these coffee mornings a monthly event on the second Saturday of the month. For the **12th December** we are planning a ***Coffee, Cakes And Carols*** coffee morning. You choose your favourite carol and we all sing it together. A convivial start to the Christmas season.

Maybe we'll see you there!

Condom	Chapel Notre Dame de Piétat, 54 Av. Aquitaine, Condom (32)	ACW ML PC	Caroline Herbert Caroline Herbert Marion L'Estrange *Vacancy*	bcherbert101@gmail.com bcherbert101@gmail.com marian82condom@gmail.com

Future Service

Friday 18 December 17.00 **Carol Service**



The Remembrance Service was a lovely occasion, and together we raised an impressive €348.31 for the Royal British Legion through the retiring collection and the Poppy collection box. Many thanks to everyone who contributed.



Our **Christmas Carol Service** will take place on **Friday 18 December 17h**, with the Festive Bakes charity stall as part of the celebrations. Donations of mince pies and other festive bakes would be very welcome. Mince pies are always our best sellers, so even half a dozen would make a difference!

The next Chaplaincy service will be on Thursday 28 January.

Wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

Libourne	Protestant Temple, Place du Doyen Carbonnier 33500 Libourne	Contact:	Elaine Dinghin	elainedinghin261@gmail.com

Future Services

Saturday 04 December	**18.30**	**Carol Service in La Chapelle de Condat**
Sunday 13 December	17.00	Holy Communion
Saturday 19 December	**17.00**	**Carols by Candlelight**
Christmas Day 25 December	10.30	Christmas Communion
Sunday 03 January 2027	17.00	Evening Worship
Sunday 10 January	17.00	Evening Worship
Sunday 17 January	17.00	Evening Worship



We look forward to seeing you.

Everyone is welcome



Limeuil	(24) near Le Bugue, Eglise de Sainte Catherine in Limeuil Haut	CW	The Team	07 66 53 18 33 06 52 26 70 08
		ML	Linda Heathfield	07 49 80 71 16
		PC	Sandy Berkeley	06 13 74 76 61

Future Services

Sunday 13 December	**17:00**	**Carol Service at Eglise St Martin de Coux**
Friday 25 December	10:30	Christmas Praise
Sunday 10 January 2027	10:30	Holy Communion



At the end of October, we had a celebration lunch to thank our former Chaplaincy Administrator, Amy Owensmith, for all her hard and dedicated work over many years in the Chaplaincy. Amy's two sisters were visiting from the States, and a good number of folk from across the Chaplaincy joined us, including our Chaplain and both Wardens. Many from the Chaplaincy had signed an on-line card which had been printed out for Amy, together with a gift – both of which were presented to her.





On Remembrance Sunday, Rev'd Steven Evans led a poignant Communion service, including an Act of Remembrance: Bob Sweetman laid the wreath, Roger Doidge read out the Roll of Honour – a list of names of those connected to members of Limeuil Church who had died in various conflicts over the years, and finally David Albrecht read the Dedication and the Kohima Epitaph, with a rendering of the Last Post on guitar by Roger.

At the end of November, Tim Heathfield led a service of Morning Praise – a fitting start to the Advent season.

The sale of Raffle tickets for a Christmas Hamper, and other goodies, is going well – but it's not too late to buy one (or two …!). All profits will go to our church charities and Chaplaincy funds, and the prize draw will take place at our **Carols by Candlelight service at Le Coux on 13 December.** We hope to see you there!!



There are also a couple of extra opportunities for meeting together over the Advent season:
Advent Morning Coffee - Wednesday 2 December, chez Sweetman in Bouillac - please contact Gill for details: bobgillsweetman24@gmail.com
Advent Afternoon Tea - Friday 11 December, chez Heathfield in Tremolat - please contact Linda for details: heathfieldfamily@gmail.com



We wish everyone who worships at Limeuil, residents, swallows and visitors, a very Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Eymet Temple

(24) Eymet Temple, Eymet

Contact:: Anne Nadal
aenadal@gmail.com

Future Services

Sunday 06 December	10.30	Praise And Prayer
Sunday 13 December	10.30	Praise And Prayer
Wednesday 16 December	**17.00**	**Ecumenical Carols at Eymet Church**
Sunday 20 December	**10.30**	**Carol Service**
Christmas Day 25 December	10.30	Christmas Celebration
Sunday 03 January 2027	10.30	Praise And Prayer
Sunday 10 January	10.30	Holy Communion
Sunday 17 January	10.30	Praise And Prayer



Here in Eymet we suddenly find ourselves plunged into winter. The restaurants and bars on the square are closed for the season, and much as we love the hustle and bustle of the summer season, the noise of the tourists has departed. Instead, the bouncing of rain is the loudest sound on a Saturday night in the Bastide, the grus fly overhead and during a walk in Bretou, the mist hangs just above the ground as the trees give a splendid display of reds, ochres and yellows. It is a peaceful moment to reflect on God's gifts to us.



God's ultimate gift to us of his son Jesus has been the centre of our recent **Alpha course,** which has just ended. Every Friday morning, Liz and the Church team have provided us with croissant breakfasts and as a group we have been enriched and reflected on the weekly subjects of God's gifts - Jesus, the Bible, prayer, healing and faith. A highlight of the course was a day hosted by Tina Marshall, learning about the Holy Spirit.

One of the most powerful metaphors that C S Lewis uses in his "Narnia" books is that the world ruled by evil is always Winter and never Christmas. As Christmas approaches, it has special meaning for us if we consider a life with Jesus at the centre. Without him, we walk in winter. As the season of Christmas comes, we celebrate at Eymet Temple with our services and "Taste of Heaven" events. Pop in, and celebrate the coming of Christmas with us.



Answers to the Quiz

1 Caesar Augustus. He ordered the people to go back to the city of their forefathers. Joseph's family was from Bethlehem. Luke 2:1.

2 False. As in the previous answer, they went not because an angel told them or because a star led them. They were obedient to the established governmental authority.

3 The Bible does not say how they went from Galilee to Bethlehem. It was an 100km trip for them. It is likely that they rode some type of animal, but the Bible gives no details. It is commonly depicted that Mary rode a donkey while Joseph walked alongside. But that is simply an artistic depiction. We don't really know.

4 The book of Isaiah has much to say about the birth of the Saviour. If you have ever heard the oratorio by George Handel called The Messiah, you have heard many direct quotes from the book of Isaiah concerning the birth of Christ.

5 At least 3 angelic announcements for the birth of Christ and 1 for the birth of John. For Christ, an angel appeared before Mary and Joseph individually and a multitude of angels spoke to the shepherds. For John's birth announcement in Luke 1, Gabriel appeared before John's father to announce the birth of John the Baptist. Matthew 1:20-24; Luke 1:11-20; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:9-15.

6 An angel in Matthew 1:21. The Bible does not say that this was Gabriel; however, it is assumed to be him since he was the one specifically mentioned as the messenger to Mary and Zacharias in Luke 1.

7 Jesus, Emmanuel, the Christ, Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:21, 23.

8 Jesus means Saviour and Emmanuel means God with us. Jesus is the same name as the Old Testament name Joshua which also means Saviour. Matthew 1:21, 23.

9 The shepherds followed the instructions of the angels in Luke 2:9-15. The wise men followed the star to find the place where Jesus was. Matthew 2:1, 2.

10 Technically angels are never said to "sing" in the Bible. Each time they appear they only speak. However, to answer the question, the angels praised God with these words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14.

11 A baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Luke 2:12.

12 The Bible does not say how many wise men there were. Tradition says there were three because of the three gifts. There are even names given to the three wise men in different countries and cultures, but we don't really know their names. It is also very likely there were many more than just three.

13 So that he could worship the child. But we know that his intentions were far from worship. Matthew 2:11-18.

14 It is certain that Jesus was somewhere between a month old and a couple of years old. The wise men saw His star at his birth and began following it. If the journey was 800 kms from Persia and Mesopotamia (around modern day Iraq) then it would have taken at least a month. By the time they arrived Jesus and His family had moved into a house. Later in the story Herod ordered all the children aged 2 years and younger to be killed. Therefore, Jesus was at least a month old and not yet 2 years old. Matthew 2:9-18.

15 Gold, frankincense and myrrh. Matthew 2:11.

16 This was Herod. He ordered all the children in Bethlehem and the outlying areas who were 2 years old and younger to be killed. However, Jesus and His family had already moved to Egypt (Matthew 2:13).

17 In the New Testament accounts of Christ's birth there is no mention of any animals. However, Isaiah 1:3 could be a prophecy talking about at least a donkey seeing the crib of his Master (God). It could allude to the fact that an ox was there too. If a bunch of shepherds were there, one would assume sheep would have been present. But there is no definite list of animals mentioned in the Bible.

18 The Bible does not say. Nor does it even say that they were inhospitably turned away from an inn. It just says there was not room in the inn at Bethlehem. There may have been many hundreds of people camping in the streets and countryside during the mandatory census. Luke 2:7.

19 Simeon. Luke 2:25, 26.

20 Neither Mark or John tell the story of the birth of Christ.

https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/christmas-bible-quiz-20-good-questions/

Thank you

to everyone who has contributed to 'Spreading the Word' during 2026



Happy New Year

Be someone who listens, and you will be heard.
Be someone who cares, and you will be loved.

Be someone who gives, and you will be blessed,
Be someone who comforts and you will know peace.

Be someone who lives with joy, with Purpose as your own light brightly shines.

Be in every moment, the special Someone you are truly meant to be.



Wishing a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year to all our readers