

Hello Church Family,

A few people have asked me whether or not we are going to have a Carol service this year, and I thought that I would let everyone know my thoughts on this by writing to you.

Because the rules for meeting are so regularly changing, and because we don't have an outdoor space large enough to accommodate 30 people, while observing appropriate social distancing protocol (remember, M&S own the car park behind the church), I do not believe that we should have a Carol Service that meets in person. I know this will be very disappointing for many of you, and I completely understand that disappointment. There was a suggestion that perhaps we could do a large Churches Together outdoor 'drive-in' service, but the logistics of this was just too much to work out on short notice. Big events like this, realistically, must be planned months in advance.

However, although I know you will miss meeting in person for a Carol Service, I have spoken to Rev. Phillip at St. Mary's, and he agreed that you all should be invited to virtually attend **St. Mary's Carols by Candlelight service**, which will be broadcast live on YouTube on the **20th December at 4:00pm**

Also, I want to remind you of what we have going on at our Church during this time!

On **Wednesday, the 9th December, at 7:30pm**, we will have a **Circuit Blue Christmas Service**. This will be held via Zoom, and it was planned by Revd. Bethany Willers and myself. Blue Christmas is a service that seeks to acknowledge that the season of Christmas can sometimes be difficult and painful for people, particularly for those who have experienced a loss in the previous year. We thought that this service would be particularly poignant this year, given all that 2020 has brought. This service of worship includes expressions of grief and pain, as well as an opportunity to focus on the promise of hope. And I hope that you will attend! The Zoom link for this service will be shared next Sunday.

On **Sunday the 20th**, in addition to having Holy Communion in Church that day, we will also see a **Nativity video Presentation** that has been recorded in the homes of Junior Church and Messy Church families, then compiled by Cliff for us to view!

On **Christmas Eve** (Thursday, the 24th), we will have a '**Midnight' Holy Communion Service** that begins at 11:30pm at the Church. As we do for Sunday morning worship, you will need to sign up to attend, but it will also be broadcast on Zoom.

Finally, at **10:00am on Christmas Day**, we will have a service on Zoom exclusively. Join us in your pyjamas, bring your favourite gift, and we'll have a bit of fun together on Christmas morning for a short service.

Details for all YouTube and Zoom services will be made available to you all closer to the date of the service, and services will be made available on YouTube following the initial live broadcast.

I know that things are not as we would want them to be this year for Advent and Christmas, and we can't celebrate in all of the ways that we'd like, but it is still my hope that we can all make the best of this time together, as we anticipate and celebrate the birth of our Saviour!

Blessings and love to you all,
Revd. Rachel