



Christmas Services at St. George's Wilton

Sunday 18th December, 6 pm Contemporary Community Carol Service *

Wednesday 21st December, 7 pm Traditional Community Carol Service*

Saturday 24th December 4 pm, Christingle Service
11.30 pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 8 am Communion Service
10 am Communion Service for all ages with carols

* Refreshments served in the hall after the service



A Very Happy Christmas and New Year from St. George's Wilton



Christmas News Letter 2011

Have things changed for you, or your family and friends this year? Life for many will have changed considerably. Family life may have altered. Some have faced redundancy. We may have been challenged or worried by the financial situation. Trips to the supermarket cost more, as does filling up our cars at the petrol station. Heating bills have risen. We are told we have to work longer for a smaller pension. Our health and well being may be different. Many say even our climate is changing. At St George's we said goodbye to the Reverend Nick Taylor as he began his retirement – a major change for him and us.



With all that is changing around us in the 21st century, it is something of a relief to realise that the birth of God's son Jesus, in a manger at Bethlehem is for many of us, a certainty, and a fixed point for much of our lives.

Christmas is about the unshakable solidarity of God's love for us in our changing lives. In his coming to earth God has chosen to be with us in our weakness, and walk with us in our daily lives and onward in the 21st Century.

Whatever we think about the tents outside St Paul's Cathedral, that banner that appeared in nearly every shot - "What would Jesus do?" - was a thought provoking and challenging one.



What *would* Jesus do? A few years ago the churches and Christians throughout the world made a tangible difference in their advocacy of debt relief through the Jubilee 2000 campaign. I personally hope that we can do as much again in pressing the government and financial institutions towards justice.

God sent his Son Jesus into the messed up world – Jesus associated with the poor, the weak, and challenged the injustices of society.

We remember not just a birth at Christmas, but that God sent his son into the world, giving his very self away to endure poverty and weakness, with no trumpeting splendour or lavish trappings, no clouds of glory.

God is giving away all that he is, in love, as he empties himself of his own life by dying on a cross. God gave us this incredible gift of his son, who by becoming human and by living among us, set us an example of how to live our lives, who died for our sake after suffering death and humiliation and dying on a cross.

By rising to new life he now is able to enter every struggle of our human life and stand with each one of us, as our rock and helper and as the changeless one, as all around us changes.

No matter how we or other things change. God is the changeless one towards us. The same, yesterday, today and forever.

But change can be good. We only need to look back in history to see that many things have changed for the better. Medical advances, improved health care and life expectancy, amazing communication networks and so on.....

When life is good we may want nothing to change - but imagine if the pain of today never changed to the hope and joy for tomorrow.



Perhaps as you hear the familiar Christmas Story this year, you can enter into it in a different way. Even if you've heard the story a hundred times, don't assume you know all the details. There is always something more to discover, and that amazing event has the power, together with God's Holy Spirit, to transform us and change us. The birth of a baby always changes things. This birth of Jesus is no different. One small life can turn the world upside down. The light of Christ shining in the darkness can change everything.

Have you seen the poster that says "God loves us exactly as we are but too much to leave us that way"? Now that's another challenging thought, and it can only be a change for good! When we allow God to become part of our lives, we invite him to teach us, to lead us, and to change us. Then the news gets even better!

Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year

Jennifer A. Jeffery



Jenny Jeffery - Associate Vicar at St George's Church.