

**“But Mary treasured up all these things
and pondered them in her heart.”**

(Luke 2:19)

How would you describe Christmas 2021? One adjective that could be used is ‘confusing.’ With so much uncertainty around whether there will be restrictions or whether friends or families will contract Covid around Christmas times, there is a sense of confusion about what is going to happen.

Personally, speaking this is my first year doing Christmas at two churches and there is a certain amount of confusion around all the details that need sorting out! However, God has been good and so far apart from a few technical issues the services seem to have gone well.

For Mary, it must have been really confusing. How was she pregnant when she was a virgin? What had the angel said about her child? How was she going to cope giving birth in a strange town, when there was nowhere proper to stay? Who were these strange shepherds who appeared to see her baby and what were they saying about angels? Mary’s brain must have been scrambled!

Luke tells us that Mary treasured up all this and pondered them in her heart. Once the busyness of Christmas has passed why not take more time to ponder.

We don’t know what 2022 will bring, but why not plan to spend more time pondering what God is doing, through your own prayer and Bible study? See the end of this email for a Bible reading idea.

Paul Worledge

This Weekend’s Services will be livestreamed:

[Details of the Christmas Services including livestreams from last weekend’s services available here.](#)

Crib Service – Christmas Eve, 4pm – Not Livestreamed.

[Traditional Carol Service](#) – Christmas Eve - 6:30pm

[Christmas Day All Age Holy Communion Service](#) – Saturday 11:00am

Joint Service at St. George’s – Boxing Day – Sunday 11:00am – Not Livestreamed

Click the above links to access the livestream for the services. You can also use the link to watch the service at a later time.

Weekly Calendar

Friday 24th

Crib Service (at St. Luke's Church) - 4:00-4:45pm

Traditional Carol Service (St. Luke's Church) - 6:30pm-7:30pm

Saturday 25th

Christmas Day All Age and Holy Communion (St. Luke's Church)
- 11:00am-12:00pm

Sunday 26th

Joint Service - Eucharist (St. George's, 11:00am) – Acts 7:51-end – **Stephen, the First Martyr**

Sunday 2nd January 2022

Family Service and Baptism (St. George's, 11:00am) – John 1:1-18, Seeing His Glory

Taking a Break

The following activities will be having a Christmas break:

- **Daily Prayer meetings.** These will restart on Monday 3rd January.
- **Cafe4All.** Depending on government restrictions will be back on Thursday 6th January.
- **Play and Praise:** Depending on government restrictions will be back on on Friday 7th January.

Prayer Requests

Be assured I will do my best to check that people are happy for the requests to be shared before including them. Please pray for...

- The spread of Covid to be limited over Christmas.
- The rest of our Christmas Services that they will help people to rejoice in God's wonderful gift of Jesus.
- Jean Hann who has been in hospital this week.
- Norah and family after the death of her daughter, Katrina.
- John Galer. Give thanks that he is now back at his home with Nicky. Pray for a good continuing recovery.
- Ken Tipler that the pain caused by his bone cancer can be kept under control.

Please also continue to pray for: Flo Baldock, Nathan Court, Pauline Emptage, Shirley Crabb, Collette Judge, Barb (Gloria's daughter's friend), Jean Simmons, Rita Ryan and Joy Smithers.

Christmas Collections - Tearfund

As is traditional, during our services our collections are for Tearfund. This year, Tearfund are particularly asking for support for the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal.

Afghanistan is in the grip of a catastrophic food shortage – half of the population don't have enough to eat. Now, the bitter cold is setting in, with temperatures dropping to as little as -20°C.

The Disasters Emergency Committee, of which Tearfund is a part, have launched an urgent appeal.

Your support will help our local partners provide emergency food packages, as well as distribute winter kits to help families who have lost their homes stay warm. [Read more or give directly...](#)

Planned Giving - Responses

Thank you to the 16 who replied to the 'Planned Giving' letters back in November. It is not too late to respond and it would be very helpful if you could consider doing so soon, so that we can gain a clearer picture of our financial situation both as we finish 2021 and look forward to 2022. If you plan to keep your giving at the same level, then a simple email to our treasurer will suffice: treasurer@stlukeramsgate.org.

Volunteers for 2022

One of the challenges of the different lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 is that many of our volunteer teams have needed rebuilding. This is an ongoing process. In particular, we could do with more volunteers for our audiovisual and host teams. If you are interested, then please let Paul know as soon as possible, so we can include you in rotas for early 2022.

I am Mark

This performance is going to be postponed from the end of January. We are hoping to have it on Saturday 5th March. Please put in your diaries, more details to follow.

Bible Reading idea for 2022:

[The Way of Wisdom](#), *Timothy Keller*

Why not consider ordering this book as a scheme to use for your studies on 2022. Keller takes you through various themes in the Wisdom literature of the Bible to give insights and guidance to help us live more wisely today.

Each day has a short Bible reading, some reflection, a question to consider and a prayer to pray. Short bites, that over a year could really grow your faith.

Finally, let's remember to rejoice and glorify Christ this Christmas.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Worledge
(Vicar, St. Luke's Ramsgate)