

The Dunster Benefice
Carhampton, Dunster, Timberscombe,
Withycombe with Rodhuish, Wootton Courtenay
Newsletter 23rd December 2020 - 3rd January 2021



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**HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM
THE DUNSTER BENEFICE**



Bishop Ruth will be live on BBC Radio Bristol from 8.35am on 3rd January with a New Year reflection.

A Christmas Prayer Card is attached to this newsletter. More Christmas Prayers are available on the Church of England's website by clicking [here](#).

Online Services from Wells Cathedral are available on the Cathedral website by clicking [here](#). Amongst other things a Diocesan Carol Service will be available from 5pm tonight and a Eucharist for Christmas Day will be available from 10am on 25th.

TV & Radio Christmas Eve BBC Radio 4: 3pm Carols from Kings, **11pm** Once in Royal David's City - former choristers share memories of singing the solo at Kings College & **11.30pm** Midnight Mass from Manchester Cathedral. **ITV: 11.15pm** Carols at Christmas. **BBC 1: 11.45pm** Midnight Mass from Clifton Cathedral.

Christmas Eve and Day

Collect & Readings

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

Isaiah 52: 7-10 & John 1: 1-14

Sunday 27th December (First of Christmas)

Collect & Readings

God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love: gather the nations to be one family, and draw us into your holy life through the birth of Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Galatians 4: 4-7 & Luke 2: 15-21

Sunday 3rd January (Second of Christmas)

Collect & Readings

God our Father, in love you sent your Son that the world may have life: lead us to seek him among the outcast and to find him in those in need, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Ephesians 1: 3-14 & John 1: 1-9

Common Worship Collects taken from Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England © The Archbishops' Council 2000

If you do not have a Bible to hand you can find the readings on these websites:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/> or <https://bible.oremus.org/>

Services on Christmas Eve

St George Dunster – 3.30pm Carol Service

All Saints Wootton Courtenay – 10pm Christmas Mass

Services on Christmas Day

St John the Baptist Carhampton – 10am Christmas Mass

St Petrock Timberscombe – 10am Christmas Mass

St Bartholomew Rodhuish – 11am Christmas Mass

Services on Sunday 27th December

St John the Baptist Carhampton – 11am Benefice Holy Communion

Services on Sunday 3rd January

St John the Baptist Carhampton – 9.30am Holy Communion

St Nicholas Withycombe – 9.30am Holy Communion

St George Dunster – 11am Holy Communion

St Petrock Timberscombe – 11am Holy Communion (BCP)

All Saints Wootton Courtenay – 11am Holy Communion

Most churches will be open for private prayer on a Sunday or some other day of the week, please keep an eye on the notice boards.

Rector's Note

For churches, the run up to Christmas is a 'all hands to the pumps, take a deep breath, go for it' time. Not only does all the family stuff have to be done but all the services, church opening, closing, arranging, flowers, where are the carol books? Sorts of moments. This year, things are a bit quieter, in every way. Some planned singing has been abandoned, just to be on the safe side, some people cannot be with us and some have the sadness of sudden illness and unexpected calls on energy and love.

We also have the living embodiment of no room at the inn, in Dover, there are thousands of lorry drivers stranded and unable to go home, filtering slowly through the re-opened port. There are food shortages and we face the inevitable prospect of another lockdown after Christmas.

I have started asking for good news – does anyone have any? Yes, we celebrate the birth of Christ, yes we still live in a country with a (creaking) health service. Yes, there have been many times when things have been worse.

I am now at the stage when the radio plays a favourite tune, I think it's a gift from God especially for me. Or I heard a thrush singing its heart out next to a streetlight. OK, so the thrush is affected by light pollution, but you have to take what you're given. God gives in all sorts of ways. We are through the darkest, longest day. The Christ child is with us. We can look towards the light.

Caroline