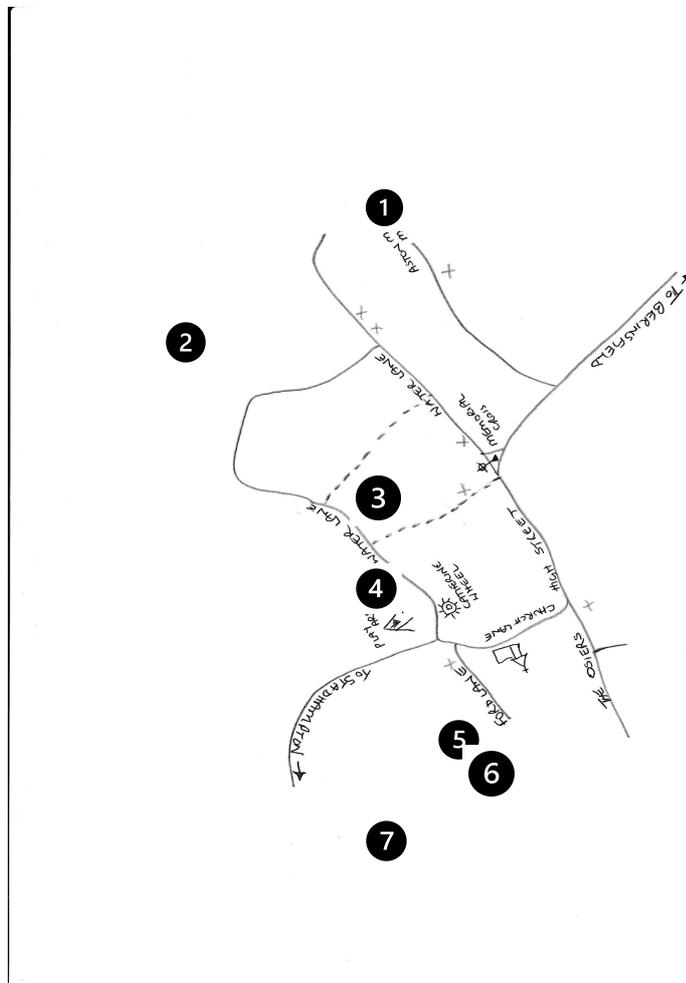


Drayton St Leonard



Posada Trail



Posada Trail stops

- 1) The Herlihys at 3 Ford Lane: **Look for Mary**
- 2) The Frys at Chapel House: **Look for the Angel Gabriel**
- 3) The Hindes up Gravel Walk: **Look for Joseph**
- 4) The Fahys at Rock Cottage: **Look for the Donkey**
- 5) The Davieses at Well Cottage: **Look for the Baby Jesus**
- 6) The Wrights at Barley House: **Look for the Shepherds**
- 7) The Coxes at Red Tile Cottage (follow signs to the Aston Martin Museum): **Look for the Wise Men**

Welcome to the Drayton St Leonard Posada Trail

Posada is a Spanish word meaning 'inn'. The Posada celebrations come from Mexico where children dress up as Mary and Joseph and walk from house to house in their village telling the Christmas story. On Christmas Eve the children put on a nativity play and bring figures of Mary and Joseph to be placed in a crib.

This year St Catherine and St Leonard's Church invites you to do the same. Follow the Posada Trail around the village and hear again the wonderful Nativity story of how Jesus came to be born in a stable. The houses you will visit will have one of the figures displayed in a window for you to enjoy and you can sing Christmas carols to help you tell the story.

You might want to start your Posada Trail with this prayer:

Loving God,

We thank you for Mary and Joseph and for their courage and trust.

Thank you for the way their journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was paralleled in their journey from being ordinary people to the extraordinary people you called them to be.

Please be with us as we travel through Advent this year, and as we seek to become the people you call us to be.

May we too have courage and trust.

We pray for all those looking after the Posada figures in our village and ask your blessing on all those who encounter them by following this trail.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

God chooses Mary

Our story begins when God chose Mary to be the mother of His son, Jesus. Mary was just an ordinary young woman looking forward to her wedding to her fiancé Joseph. But then....." In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in



Galilee called Nazareth, to a young woman engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The young woman's name was Mary." Luke chapter 1 verses 26-27

Think! Be thankful for all the ordinary people who do extraordinary things! Especially for all those in this Village who have helped during the pandemic.

Sing! Mary had a baby, yes, Lord;
Mary had a baby, yes, my Lord;
Mary had a baby, yes, Lord!
The people keep a-coming for to see her child

Mary gets a visitor!

Angels are God's messengers, and the Angel Gabriel had a very special message for young Mary, she was going to be a Mum! This is what he said: "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God is pleased with you. Listen! You will become pregnant. You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and people will call him the Son of the Most High." Luke chapter 1 verses 30-32



Think! Surprises can be scary but sometimes when life takes an unexpected turn, we can discover strength within ourselves or better still love and support from family or friends. Who do you turn to in a crisis? Give thanks for them.

Sing! Angels from the realms of glory
Wing your flight through all the earth
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth
Gloria In excelsis deo, Gloria In excelsis deo

Joseph trusts Mary



Joseph was surprised when he heard that Mary was having a baby and he was confused, what did this mean? In the night an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him that everything would be alright if he trusted in God and did not give up on Mary. In Matthew chapter 1 verse 20 the angel says, “Joseph, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The baby in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Think! Making a difficult choice in life can be hard to do. Joseph did the right thing by Mary even though it meant risking the good opinion of his friends and family. Do you have any friends or family members making hard decisions at the moment? Why not send them a text to cheer them up and let them know you support them.

Sing! In the bleak midwinter

Frosty wind made moan

Earth stood hard as iron

Water like a stone

Snow had fallen

Snow on snow on snow

In the bleak midwinter

Long, long ago

Journey to Bethlehem

A new law was passed soon after Mary and Joseph were married, which meant they had to go to their hometown of Bethlehem to register for tax purposes. Joseph and Mary didn't have much money and so Joseph had to walk all the way with Mary riding on a donkey even though she was nearly 9 months pregnant! It might have taken them 5 days or more travelling the 90 miles across desert and hills and camping out each night before they arrived at Bethlehem.



Think! During the pandemic journeys have been difficult. It has not been possible for many people to see their families who live in a different part of the country or even overseas. Even short journeys have been more difficult if you do not have a car and must use public transport. If you know of someone who is lonely and far away from family, why not arrange to meet them for a coffee or facetime them for a chat?

Sing! Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards with your precious load
Been a long time, little donkey, through the winter's night
don't give up now, little donkey,
Bethlehem's in sight

Born in a stable



Bethlehem was bursting with people who had come to register for taxes and all the B&Bs and guest houses were full. Mary desperately needed somewhere safe and warm to give birth to her baby so in the end they had to stay in a stable. In those days the stable was not a separate building but would have been part of a peasant house; the ground floor would have been hollowed out of the rock to form a type of basement where the animals were kept.

Think! Can you imagine looking after a baby in a room where animals are kept? It's always difficult looking after a new baby but the recent months have been especially hard for new parents coping with a new-born for the first time. The

usual support of the extended family and health visitors has not been possible.
Spare a thought or say a prayer for all new parents.

Sing! Away in a manger

No crib for His bed

The little Lord Jesus

Lay down His sweet head

The cattle are lowing

The poor Baby wakes

But little Lord Jesus

No crying He makes

Shepherds get a shock!



The little town of Bethlehem was built in the Judean mountains, land fit only for sheep farming! The sheep roamed free on the hillsides but needed the shepherd to prevent them from straying and falling down the mountainside, or to protect them from wild animals such as wolves and bears. The shepherds would spend

weeks living on the mountainside with their flocks, camping out under the stars even though temperatures could get below freezing in the winter. One winter night this happened: “some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. Suddenly an angel stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and they became very frightened. The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. Today your Saviour was born in David’s town. He is Christ, the Lord. This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke chapter 2 verses 8-12

Think! Can you imagine seeing angels in the sky? Would you be glad if they spoke to you? Sometimes the most unexpected people bring us good news, even strangers can make our day with cheery conversation or a helping hand! Why not make someone smile today with a random act of kindness?

Sing! 1. While shepherds watched their
flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down
and glory shone around.

4. 'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands
and in a manger laid.'

2. 'Fear not,' said he - for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind -
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind:

3. 'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be the sign:



Strange visitors

The three Wise Men had certainly come a long way to visit the baby Jesus. Melchior from Iran, Caspar from India, and Balthazar from Saudi Arabia. They were looking for a great king but found a small baby living in very poor circumstances.

Their symbolic gifts of Gold, Incense and Myrrh show Jesus would become a leader of power, prayer and hope.

Think! What is it that you hope for this Christmas? How far are you prepared to go to make sure your hopes for the future become a reality?

Sing! We three kings of orient are

Bearing gifts we traverse afar

Field and fountain

Moor and mountain

Following yonder star

O star of wonder, star of night

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading, still proceeding

Guide us to thy perfect light

Happy ever after

I hope you have enjoyed your Posada journey around Drayton St Leonard thinking about the meaning of Christmas and sharing some special time with family and friends.

Merry Christmas everyone!

Rev Teresa

