



CROSSWAYS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ST PAUL'S AND WHITWORTH

Christmas stories

By Revd Canon Matt Tarling

WE will all have stories to tell at Christmas. Some will be funny stories about when someone dropped the turkey on the kitchen floor or when the cat pulled over the Christmas tree. Some of our stories will be sad ones, about when the weather stopped someone visiting or there was a family fall-out during the season. Christmas can also be a time of remembering loved ones who used to be with us for Christmas but no longer are. Those stories can be full of happy memories and yet painful and filled with sadness.

We find storytelling helpful for making sense of the joys and hurts of life. Stories tell us about one another, not just the facts and figures but also how we feel about things and what is important to

us. Christmas time can be a time of storytelling as we get together or remember or just try to make sense of the last year as it passes.

What story will you be telling this year? Christmas is the time when we retell the greatest story, the true story of the coming of Jesus Christ. It's the story which reminds us of God's love and the hope that we have. It's the story which inspires us to trust the God who made the world and entered into our broken world. It's the story which leads us to live differently and look forward to the day when Jesus comes again. It's the greatest story, full of joy and sadness, filled with happiness and yet also pain. It's the story which eventually takes us to the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross. But this story is

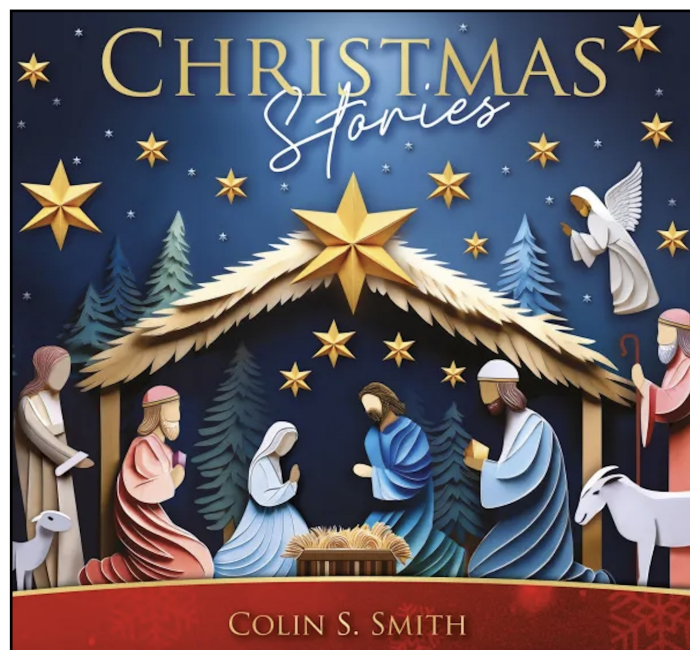


Image courtesy of the '10ofthose' website and author of Christmas Stories, Colin S. Smith

the one which makes sense of life in this world.

During Advent and at our Christmas services we're going to be returning again and again to this story. We're going to do that through listening to the stories told by those who were there at the time of Jesus' first coming as a baby. We'll hear from Gabriel, Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Herod. This year we're giv-

ing away a book called "Christmas Stories" so that everyone who joins us to celebrate can enjoy reading and reflecting on their stories... and encounter afresh the greatest story. It's our prayer that we will be reminded of God's love and our hope, be inspired to trust in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and to live for him until the day that he returns.

PARISH

CHURCH

SERVICES

ST PAUL'S CHURCH

Sundays: 10.30am Holy Communion ('All Together' non-communion on first Sunday)
(live-streamed at www.facebook.com/stpaulsspennymoor)

Wednesdays: 9.30am Holy Communion

Fridays: 10am Play Church (term-time only)

WHITWORTH CHURCH

Sundays: 9am Holy Communion

CLERGY**VICAR**

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

St Paul's Church Spennymoor

Saturday 20th December - 10:30am
RELAXED CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday 21st December - 4pm*
CAROL SERVICE

Christmas Eve - 4pm, repeated at 6pm
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Christmas Day - 10am*
HOLY COMMUNION

 *Services marked with an asterisk will also be live-streamed*
facebook.com/stpaulsspennymoor 



CHRISTMAS

at WHITWORTH CHURCH
off Stanner's Lane, DL16 7QX

Saturday 6th December - 2-4pm
We're open for a Christmas drop-in
with carols and refreshments

Wednesday 17th December - 7pm
Carol Service with The Witness Choir
followed by refreshments
*Parking available at Whitworth Hall
who have kindly made provision for the service*

Christmas Eve - 11:30pm
Midnight Communion


achurchnearyou.com/whitworthchurch

Sing for Life Winter Concert

Saturday 6th December, 4pm

St Paul's Church

Tickets £5 (adults) / £2 (children) are available on the door and refreshments will be available at the interval

THANK you to everyone who contributes towards the production of Crossways each month. To Pauline Storey and Brenda Crooks, who sort the copies ready for distribution, and to the distributors themselves, who deliver the newsletter. As the year draws to a close, could distributors please collect the annual £2.50 subscriptions as soon as possible. Finally, thank you to you, the reader, for your continued support of the parish newsletter. On behalf of the Crossways team, may I wish you a very happy Christmas and a peaceful 2026.

Christopher Luke, Editor

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Introducing ordinand Nathaniel Jackson

and I've always lived there. I have an identical twin brother, and we are very much alike! I grew up going to St Luke's Church and I remember

those days very fondly, being part of the Sunday School group and taking classes for children to be admitted to Holy Communion. In 2010 my grandmother had a stroke, and over time she developed dementia. Due to this, we all stopped going to church and my faith seemed to vanish. For eight years I had completely abandoned God. In 2018, after a series of difficult events, I found myself desperately

praying for God, if he was there, to help me. In that moment, every anxiety and fear disappeared and was replaced by an overwhelming love and peace. I had felt the call to ordination in 2019, and after five years of saying: "Absolutely not!" I finally decided to listen to God and explore my sense of call. This was affirmed by many people around me and by the Church, and now I am almost at the end of my first term at Cranmer Hall. How time flies!

How have the first few weeks been / any particular highlights?

The first term has been wonderful. I've really enjoyed all the different modules I've been

doing, but my favourite has been learning New Testament Greek! I've also really enjoyed leading Morning Prayer and being involved in the different services we have.

What are you looking forward to as you begin your placement at St Paul's and Whitworth?

I'm looking forward to getting to know the congregations a lot more and feeling part of the family. I'm excited to be leading some serves and preaching as well. I've settled in really well and I've felt so welcomed at both St Paul's and Whitworth churches, and I feel like this will be an amazing first placement!

THE parishes recently welcomed Nathaniel Jackson who is training for ordained ministry at Cranmer Hall Theological College in Durham and will be on placement until the spring. In this Q&A, Nathaniel tells us more about himself!

Tell us who you are and your faith journey towards training at Cranmer?

I'm Nathaniel, an ordinand at Cranmer Hall. I was born in Hartlepool,

Environmental Gathering at St Paul's church

THANK you to everyone who came along to the Churches Acting Together in Spennymoor litter pick at St Paul's in November. Due to the wintry weather the original plan had to be scaled back, but it didn't deter the willing volunteers who took part in a clean up of the churchyard, enjoyed crafts and delicious refreshments!



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FOR YOUR PRAYERS

For clergy across the Durham Diocese during Advent and Christmas and those involved in the interviews for the next Bishop of Durham.

For the Revd Lee Trevorrow-Earl and his family.

For all those who will be volunteering behind the scenes to prepare our churches for worship.

For those for whom Christmas will be a difficult time.



PRAYER FOR DECEMBER

Advent Lord, come ever nearer. Come to rejuvenate our faith. Come to fortify our social conscience. Come to open wide our eyes of wonder. So that when the Saviour comes, he may steal into our hearts and find them ready. Even so come, Lord Jesus.
Amen.

Source: The Intercessions Handbook

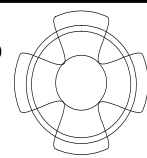
NEWS IN BRIEF

CURATE Lee's daughter, Asia, continues to be in hospital and this has meant that Lee has needed to take some leave for practical purposes and his own wellbeing. He is likely to be off work until the New Year. In the meantime, please pray for him and for Asia and family as they contend with the present difficulties.

THANK you to everyone who filled a shoebox for the Operation Christmas Child appeal. The collections at Whitworth and St Paul's saw more than 100 boxes donated which is amazing and they are now on their way around the world in time for Christmas.

THE Team Solan Support Hub is running a Lunch Club, 11am – 1pm every Friday, and is open to the public with meals at just £5. For this people will receive a two-course light lunch, (main and dessert) and unlimited hot drinks. The Hub can be found at 26-28 High Street in Spennymoor.

Parish Registers



HOLY BAPTISM

St Paul's

9th November	Harry Thomas Batson
23rd November	Otis Matthew Bains
23rd November	Jon-Jo Kailofer

CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

St Paul's

10th November	Derek Aston
17th November	Joseph William Plews
28th November	Neil Bray

LADIES AT ST PAUL'S

ALL WELCOME

WEDNESDAY
EVENINGS

7.30 – 9.30 PM

December 10th Cake Decorating

We welcome you to come along and have fun decorating a Christmas cake. You will need to bring a cake, marzipan, icing, decorations, rolling pin etc.

This is not a demonstration, but we will be following instructions.

Location:
St Paul's Centre Cafe Area

Contact: ladies@stpaulsspennymoor.co.uk



COULD you help with set-up and tidy-up at any of the upcoming wreath-making session at St Paul's? If yes, please contact Matt on 327603. The dates of the sessions are Monday 1st December, Wednesday 3rd December, and Monday 15th December, all at 7pm.

Follow our churches online

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