

OUR NEWS

CHRISTMAS 2023



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WHAT WAS GOD UP TO?

I mean really, of all the things He could have done, why this? Why did He send a vulnerable baby to live with a young mum and an uncertain dad in a desperately dangerous world? Why did He do it like this?

If He really wanted to change the world, if He really wanted to bring about a revolution of love and of justice and of mercy, if He really wanted to give creation a new start. Why did He do it like this?

But this is what He did and there was no other plan.

Christmas is God's great response to the mess of the world. A child in a stable born in a backwater town called Bethlehem. And He did do it like this. And that means that God's interested in us, that He's involved with us, that He doesn't need us to have it all sorted before He gets stuck in. It means that He's interested in the lives of uncertain new parents in all of their joy. It means that He's interested and involved in the happy laughter of children playing or in the conversation of friends or in the generosity of a stranger giving to a food bank. It means that He's God with us, not God far from us.

But Christmas wasn't just God coming to be with us. Christmas is also God

changing the world. Jesus came to change the world and He's still changing it today in big ways and in small ways. He's still here today, bringing love and justice and mercy.

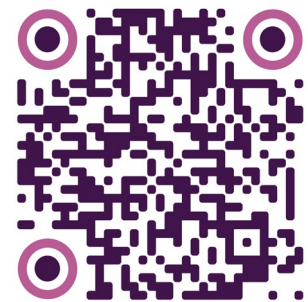
Jesus came to change the world. And still today Jesus' Christmas revolution is underway, often in small and hidden and fragile places and in the midst of suffering and the difficult things of life. Still today, Jesus is changing the world.

We might sometimes wonder what God's up to and why He doesn't do more or do it differently. But Christmas is His promise that He's with us and that He is changing the world.

Christmas is His plan. And the child in the manger, which seems such an unlikely way for God to change the world, invites us to ask ourselves the question, What is it that we long for? What is it that you long for in your own life? In the life of your community, in the life of the world as a whole? And then to take those longings, those those deepest of longings and to lay them down before the manger, before Jesus.

And then one more question to be asked, how is it that we're to be involved in Jesus' Christmas revolution?

Happy Christmas and God bless.



GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS

With Christmas just over three weeks away, give a gift of hope this Christmas by supporting the most vulnerable in our communities through local charities.

The Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue features many worthy local groups and charities who are all working in Cornwall to provide assistance, support, activities, beds and more to people in our own community.

Gifts start from just £1 and you will receive a gift certificate. You can buy online, by post or over the phone.

For more information or to request a printed catalogue email cornish.christmasgiving@truro.anglican.org or call 01872 274351 or scan the QR code above.



SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH & MISSION: [SIGN UP TO PARISH GIVING](#)

ADVENT ADVENTURES

Wise men marched as glitter flew in churches in Falmouth, Penryn, and the surrounding villages as 350 school children aged five to eight enjoyed Advent Adventures workshops.

The workshops gave pupils the opportunity to make Christmas wreaths, dress up as nativity characters, hear the Christmas story, and make prayer baubles helped by an army of volunteers from the churches. Biscuits and refreshments were then enjoyed as the sessions ended.

The Advent Adventures workshops took place in five different church buildings with nine schools across 13 sessions. It was led by Jane Wheeler, Schools and Families Lead, in Carnmarth South deanery, who was assisted by three curates as well as church volunteers.

The workshops, which started two years ago, have proved popular with schools. During the first year in 2021, Jane worked with just two schools, King Charles and St Francis in Falmouth. Last year five schools had signed up to take part and this year there are nine schools including Flushing, Mawnan, Mabe, Marlborough, and Penryn Primary.

Jane said: "I am a teacher and I understand what schools need in terms of the curriculum as well as the stresses on teachers. This sort of thing is a good learning experience and is also great fun and that's why it's successful."

Part of the curriculum focusses on what churches do during Advent and that's where these sessions are useful. Jane said: "We can help pupils to learn about this. We talk about the

Christmas Wreath and the colour change in altar tablecloth to purple, we also tell the Christmas story."

Zoe Mitchell, year 1 class teacher at Flushing School, said: "We try to come to the church a couple of times a year. The children recognise it's a special place and it's good for them to meet and work with people in their local community. We are working on the Nativity as part of the RE curriculum and coming to the church for this workshop helps with that."

The workshops are part of Carnmarth South's deanery plan to build relationships with children, young people, families, and schools. Ensuring volunteers from each church take part in the workshops to develop the building of relationships with their local school is a vital piece of the work.

At St Peter's Church in Flushing for the first workshop, volunteer Leslie gets busy helping a group of five, five and six-year-olds to stick holly leaves onto plates. Leslie, who is also a governor at the local school, is a familiar face to the youngsters. For the last 16 years Lesley has gone into the school every Monday to take an assembly. And it is easy to see Leslie's importance to the children as they are keen to see if she will be attending their Christmas concert.

Jane added: "Relationship building is really the key thing. It is good for the churches and it's also good for the children and schools."

If you would like to find out how you could run something similar in your parish, benefice or deanery next year, please do get in touch with Jane via [email](#).





VACANCY IN SEE UPDATE: HAVE YOUR SAY

The people of Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly, and two parishes in Devon are being invited to help the Diocese of Truro seek a new diocesan bishop following the departure of the Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Truro.

The diocese has started the appointment process with the launch of a survey as part of wide consultation about what best describes the diocese and what particular qualities are sought in the new bishop.

The feedback received from parishes and the wider community will help inform a Statement of Needs created by a **committee** formed to oversee the process, chaired by The Very Revd Simon Robinson, Dean designate of Truro. Called The Vacancy in See Committee it is made up of diocesan members, mostly elected from parishes and deaneries.

This committee will work with the

Crown Nominations Commission that is made up of local and national members who will consider the long and short-listing and interviewing of candidates before making a recommendation to the Prime Minister and King for approval.

Fr Simon Robinson urged everyone to take part in the survey and asked: "Please do pray for this whole process, for all those tasked with discerning who will be the next Bishop of Truro."

The survey is available here on the diocesan website, on social media, and in local media. It can also be emailed and posted. The closing date is **December 31, 2023, at midnight**. Everyone, whether a worshipper or not, is welcome to complete the short survey and to share views by attending in-person consultations in the new year.

COMPLETE THE SURVEY HERE

FARM HOSTS LIVE NATIVITY IN TRELAWNY BENEFICE

Around 100 people have enjoyed a live action nativity on a farm near Polruan.

Organised by the Trelawny Benefice, the event invited everyone to get involved with anyone interested able to dress up as a nativity character.

The barn at Frogmore was also filled with real donkeys and lambs, making it feel very much like a stable scene with plenty of farm smells.

Revd Richard Allen retold the Christmas story with plenty of actions for the characters who ages ranged in age from 2 to 80! Afterwards everyone hung around for the traditional mince pies and mulled wine.



NOMINATIONS FOR CROSS OF ST PIRAN AWARDS

Nominations are now being sought for the 2024 Cross of St Piran awards.

The awards, which are held every March at St Piran's Church, Perranzabuloe, recognise the outstanding service given by lay people across Cornwall.

This year there will be a new category – 'The Bishop's Award for Climate Justice and Creation Care'. As always, it is hoped the award recipients will reflect the range of ages in our churches.

The Cross of St Piran is awarded for life and is not restricted to Anglicans. So, if you feel there is someone in your deanery who is deserving of a Cross of St Piran, please do speak to your Clergy person, Reader, Deanery Lay Chair or Rural Dean, who will have details on how to nominate.

Completed nominations should be submitted to the Rural Deans and/or Lay Chairs. Please provide details about the person you are nominating and the reason you are nominating them in no more than 250 words. The closing date for entries to be received by the Bishop's Office is January 10, 2024.

Awards will be presented at a special service on Sunday, March 3, 2024, at St Piran's Church, Perranzabuloe, at 3.30pm.

**DON'T FORGET TO
ADD YOUR CHURCH'S
CHRISTMAS EVENTS TO
A CHURCH NEAR YOU**

NEW BEGINNING FOR FOWEY

The new year is set to bring a new beginning for Fowey Parish Church as it celebrates the appointment of a clergy person.

Revd Carol Edleston will take over the reins in March as the Priest for Fowey. Carol is currently a curate in St Austell.

This marks a step in the right direction for the parish, and a strategic appointment, as the parish works towards a new relationship with the parishes of Tywardreath and Golant as envisaged in the deanery plan.

Carol is no stranger to Fowey. Her husband Chris is a 'Fowey Boy'. In 2025 his family will celebrate the 100th anniversary of his family's move to Fowey. Carol has also already officiated at a number of large community events in the town in recent months.

Revd Carol said: "Words can't express how delighted I was to receive the offer of the position of 'Priest for Fowey' from Bishop Hugh. Fowey is where our heart



is; we love the people, the town and of course, the church.

"At community events I have received overwhelming kindness. There is no place I would rather serve. The church has already worked on a vision for moving forward which brings St Fimbarrus into the heart of the community and we strongly support this aspiration. Knowing Fowey as I do, I believe this is what the town would like to see.

"This is the beginning of a new chapter in the life of this ancient church, and I sincerely believe it will be a precious one, with people coming together, finding God's love and peace, and sharing it around ... I can't wait!

"We are incredibly fortunate to have a great deal of talent on our doorstep, and I know that the gifts Revd Shona has, the strong leadership of our Rural Dean, Revd Paul, and the support of the diocese will bring a richness to the work in Fowey, and in turn we will share what we have been given with those around us. There are exciting possibilities ahead."

READ THE FULL STORY HERE

SAFEGUARDING SURVEY: GET YOUR VOICE HEARD

A series of safeguarding questionnaires aimed at getting the views and opinions of people across the diocese have been published.

These surveys are an opportunity for you to share your views so don't miss out. The questionnaires are available until **February 8, 2024**. There are four separate questionnaires aimed at different groups, meaning everyone who wants to share their thoughts can. Simply select the questionnaire that applies to you.

The questionnaires, which seek to find out what you think about the type and amount of safeguarding training asked of you and the safeguarding demands on parishes among other things, are available on the diocesan website here and will be shared on social media.

The questionnaires form part of the preparation work for an External Audit, which will take place in the diocese in April.

COMPLETE THE SURVEY HERE

CREATION CARE NETWORK USEFUL LINKS

The next Creation Care Network gathering is on Thursday, October 12 evening in Truro Cathedral.

- + **CREATION CARE WEB PAGE**
- + **REGISTER FOR THE KERNOW GREEN CHURCH AWARD**
- + **BECOME A CREATION CARE CHAMPION**
- + **SIGN UP TO RECEIVE CREATION CARE UPDATES**
- + **CREATION CARE FACEBOOK GROUP**

DIOCESAN PRAYER DIARY

The Diocese of Truro **Prayer Diary** helps us hold in our prayers the world wide Anglican Communion, bishops and their dioceses, parishes in our own diocese, those who minister both clergy and lay, and all who contribute to the life and witness of our churches.

Becoming Better Together

Saturday 27 January 2024

10am-3.30pm

St Petroc's Church, Bodmin

BOOK NOW on ctcinfohub.org/bbt

AN ACT OF REDEDICATION

Following the tenth Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Intent & Letter of Companionship 2013 by leaders of Churches Together in Cornwall

We invite all Christians in Cornwall to sign a new Covenant

as we commit to share our gifts freely and value each other's treasures as we learn and grow in Christ working for God's kingdom

Guest Speaker: Revd Dr Ben Aldous

Churches Together in England

WORSHIP - EXHIBITION - DISCUSSION - LUNCH & TEA

For details see ctcinfohub.org/bbt

No charge but bookings essential for catering purposes



CHURCHES TOGETHER CORNWALL
inspiring unity sharing our gifts