



Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2021

# "The Heart of Love!"

## AT THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS

"Christmas is for the kids!" "Save our Christmas!"  
"What, no turkeys this year?"

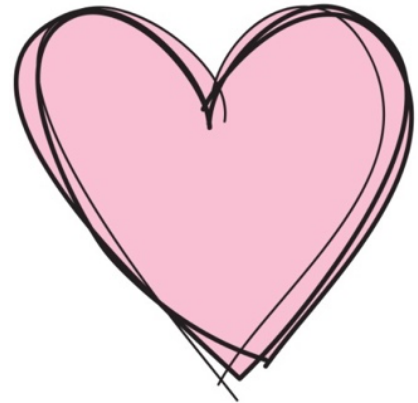
Let's not worry about the trimmings, for a change.  
Let's get to the heart of the Christmas story!

Join us at St John's and St Anne's as we get ready to welcome Jesus, celebrate his birth all those years ago, and ask ourselves how we make him and his message relevant in these strange times of challenge and change.

Let's put Christmas in our hearts, not just our stockings!

# AT THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS

What we usually think of as Christmas falls into three different sections, that it is helpful for us to understand as clearly as we can.



They can be described briefly as

- Getting ready
- Celebrating the birth of Jesus
- Sharing the news of his birth

This year our national church, The Church of England, has chosen the theme of "At The Heart of Christmas". So we have developed that idea to explore the three main phases outlined above, and given titles to our services...

## GETTING READY



This is the season of Advent, and runs for four Sundays from 28th November. It begins with an Advent Carol Service, which tells the story of the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah, and challenges us to be ready to welcome him. For this we need to get into training!

### 28th November - Advent Sunday

1030 St John's

Parish Communion "Wake up!"

1700 St John's

Advent Carols "The Long Road"

### **5th December - Advent 2**

1030 St Anne's Parish Communion "Limbering Up!"  
1600 St John's Christingle Service (The Children's Society)

### **12th December - Advent 3**

1030 St John's Open House "Walking the talk!"  
1700 St John's Informal Community Carol Singalong "Songs along the road"

### **19th December - Advent 4**

1030 St John's Parish Communion "With Joyful Hearts!"  
1700 St John's Christmas Carol Service  
"Sing the Story!"

## **CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF JESUS**

So we come to the heart of the matter, the Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and we seek both to worship him, and to understand more of the ongoing meaning of this most precious of stories. Our Carol Service has become the bridge between getting ready, and celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, our new Beginning, The Word made flesh!



### **23rd December - Thursday**

1400 St Anne's Activities and Crib Service  
"A baby is born!"

### **24th December - CHRISTMAS EVE**

1500 St John's Activities and Crib Service  
"A baby is born!"  
1700 St Anne's Christmas Communion (for those unable to be out at night)  
2315 St John's Midnight Mass "The Heart of Love"

**25th December - CHRISTMAS DAY**

1030 St John's Christmas Family Communion  
"Heartfelt thanks!"



**26th December - Christmas 1**

1030 St John's Morning Prayers "Be still my heart!"

## **SHARING THE NEWS OF JESUS' BIRTH**

Jesus was born in Bethlehem at a given moment in history. But the significance of his birth, and his message, are for all times. The season of Epiphany is about how Jesus is made known to everyone. It is a call to us to respond to his birth by bringing the joy and hope of his Good News into our day, and into our communities. It's the good news that Love is for real, it is at the heart of Creation, it is stronger than death. Good news that we are freed from failure and guilt, and empowered to work for justice, and for peace in our world. The Heart of Christmas beats on for, and in, us all!

**2nd January - Epiphany Sunday**

1030 St Anne's Parish Communion "Brave hearts  
for a New Year!"

**9th January - Epiphany 2**

1030 St John's Open House  
1700 St John's An Epiphany Carol Service  
"Sharing the secret!"