

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

---

## What's on

---



**Sunday 31 December - 10:30AM. Church service**

**Sunday 07 January - 10:30AM. Osagie speaking**

**Sunday 14 January - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking**

**Sunday 21 January - 10:30AM. Stefan speaking**

**Sunday 28 January - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking**

*Note: The service on 31 December will be one hour long.  
The children will be in the service.*

---

## Picturing the Story

---

Sometimes things are so familiar that we don't really 'see' them. Rather like when we walk or drive somewhere familiar, and on reflection cannot remember anything about the journey. The story of the Nativity is one of those situations. It is right we come back to the manger every year. It's important that we refresh our minds and hearts. It's healthy to recapture a sense of wonder that God entered our world as a helpless baby.

The question is — how do we keep such a familiar story fresh?

That's what we're going to attempt in our service today. The room will break into four groups each of which will explore part of the nativity event.

1. Journey — one group will look at the journey, Luke 2:1-5.
2. Birth - another group will explore the birth, Luke 2:6-7
3. Shepherds — a further group will examine the experience of the Shepherds, Luke 2:8-20
4. Magi — the fourth group will study the Magi's story, Matthew 2:1-12

Each group will have a mixture of adults and children, large sheets of paper, felt tips and other drawing materials. The task is to discuss the experiences of the characters, then write down a few words to summarise what has been learned, along with drawing pictures to illustrate the events. The key questions to be answered are:

1. What do we learn about God?
2. What do we learn about faith?
3. What is useful for us today?

At the end of 10 minutes I will ask each group to share their conclusions by bringing the sheets of paper to the front, taping them to the screen and explaining what has been written and drawn.

Hopefully, in this way, we will once again truly 'see' the story.

---

## Born to make us wonder

---

What sparks 'wonder' in you? The enormity of creation? Or is it the vulnerability of the incarnation? I read the following in the *Renovare* newsletter (<https://renovare.org/digest>) this week:

*"The arrival of God in human history," writes Mimi Dixon, "was humble and awkward and messy." This was true not just of Jesus' birth, but of everything*

*leading up to and surrounding it: like the trek to Bethlehem, ninety miles for a nine-month-pregnant woman; like the scorn of family and friends who thought they knew where that baby came from; like a cave and straw and animal droppings.”*

It occurs to me that we are often stimulated to awe by God’s spectacular works:

*“Praise the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendour and majesty. The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.” Ps 104:1-3*

But what about awe prompted by the small, insubstantial and fragile? That’s the nativity. That’s the Bethlehem baby. That’s God in a nappy.

Is it time this Christmas to wonder once again at the vulnerable deity?

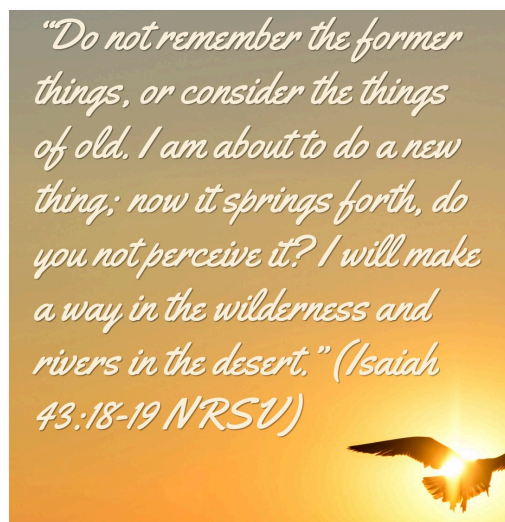
God bless, Malcolm

---

## A New Thing

---

**“A New Thing” teaching and preaching series, January, February and March 2024.**



In this teaching series we will be seeking to learn from the great men and women of faith who encountered something new, were called to something new, took on something new, and left lessons in faith for us who follow after them.

Characters covered will include Elijah and Elisha; Moses and Joshua; Abraham; Rahab; Esther; Nehemiah; Peter, and the Samaritan woman.

---

## HOPE collection

---



WATFORD CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

<https://www.hopeworldwide.org.uk/give>

To give online:



- Select amount
- Tick “I am a UK taxpayer” if you are one (this gets an additional 25% from the government)
- Select “Afghanistan General” from designation dropdown
- Put “Watford Collection” in the comment box

**IF you can give via bank transfer please see Watford Word for details**

If you want to make your donation via bank transfer, please put the reference Afghanistan/Watford (or an abbreviation which makes it clear that it's for Afghanistan from Watford). The bank account details are the normal cash donations account details, account number 01410415 sort code 30-97-81, account name HOPE worldwide. Thank you for your continued support for the amazing work that happens in Afghanistan.

Thanks, Leon

---

## Watford Media

---

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-1aef90>