



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF SALISBURY

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2009

From Barbara Meardon - Salisbury Diocesan Children's Work Adviser

barbara.meardon@salisbury.anglican.org

Firstly a huge thank you to all of you for the wonderful work you are doing with children in parishes and schools throughout the Diocese particularly in this Year of the Child. I have had the privilege of meeting lots of you over the last year and have been inspired by your dedication.

This comes with prayers and blessings for all the work you'll do in the next few weeks. As an early Christmas present I have sent a copy of 'Take This' to all incumbents along with a paper copy of this newsletter, courses and publications information. Take This is an activity sheet to give to children produced by children at Hexham Abbey in Northumberland for children. Do order copies for your church via the Year of the Child website (see below). If your incumbent does not receive one please let us know.

Do copy this letter to anyone who works with children in your church (if they then send their e-mail address to me at barbara.meardon@salisbury.anglican.org we can add them to the Mustard Seeds distribution list).

Do try and take some time for yourself; perhaps look at the link below, they also have lots of ideas for working with children and families.

3 minute Christmas retreat

<http://www.loyolapress.com/god-sends-jesus-3-minute-retreat.htm#>

Encourage families to go and see The Nativity a film starring Martin Freeman then use the free resources for services/activities etc at www.damaris.org.uk

Advent & Christmas on the web

6th December - Year of the Child Sunday Ideas, activities, church service outlines to help you. www.yearofthechild.org.uk

www.thischurch.com/liturgy/adventwreath.htm

www.churcharmy.org.uk/posada/

The Church Army have a whole section about organising a Posada including a rota sheet, materials, prayers etc

www.bathandwells.org.uk/changing_lives/youth_and_children/InspirationIdeas.pdf

Leaflets full of ideas including ones for Advent and Christmas (e.g. how to organise a Christmas Posada) Compiled by Jane Tibbs, Children's Adviser for the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Alternative Advent Calendar from Jane - online Jesse Tree at:

<http://www.churchpublishing.org/pdf/AdventChristmas2008.pdf>

Includes: Advent Wreath what, how and why, ideas to celebrate advent at home, Advent calendars, pageants, and a good Christmas pledge idea to explore what Christmas is really about.



Christmas – Expect the Unexpected

New for 2009, and exploring Jesus' birth through a series of questions and answers. A fun and engaging little resource that's perfect for telling the story aloud to children

www.SGMLifewords.com/christmas

www.londonchristmas.org.uk/Children

Modern take on Christmas includes Paperless Christmas (also at barnabasinchurches.org.uk with follow up ideas) an alternative online calendar of short video clips - one for each day of Advent. Short cartoon videos about aspects of Christmas, e-cards, Bible readings prayers etc

www.paperlesschristmas.org

A Jerusalem Production in association with BRF

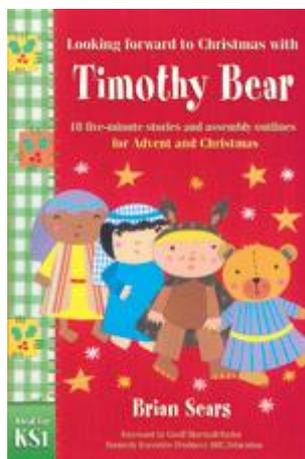
www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/Xmas/calendar/

Online Advent calendar about how Christmas is celebrated around the world

<http://www.whywearewaiting.com/>

Take time out this Advent to slow down and ponder the planet with daily green challenges and thoughts.

New Books and Resources



Looking forward to Christmas with Timothy Bear

ISBN 9781841016238

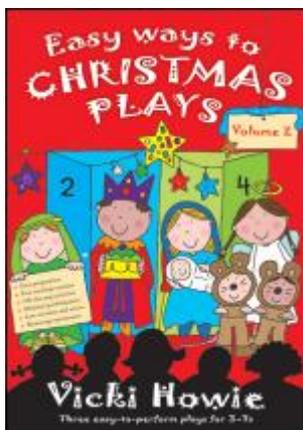
£7.99

www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk

18 five-minute stories and assembly outlines for Advent and Christmas by Brian Sears. For KS1 teachers, complete with memorable easy-to-read stories, telling tips, Bible links, suggestions for songs, optional prayers, and questions and activities to explore and develop the theme of the story - ideal for collective worship and classroom follow-up.

The stories are based on the preparation and performance of a traditional nativity play for Key Stage One pupils, providing an ideal link with the excitement of the school's own nativity production. Topical issues include

- Celebrating Christmas
- Giving and receiving
- The specialness of Christmas foods
- Remembering and valuing special times
- Caring and sharing friendship
- Coping with disappointment
- Finding comfort in times of tragedy
- Working together and supporting each other



Easy Ways to Christmas Plays, Volume 2

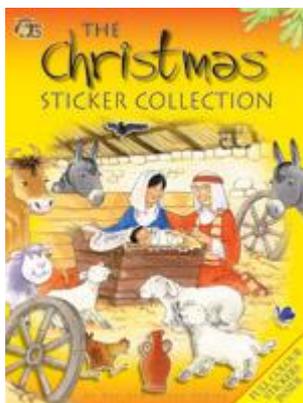
Three easy-to-perform plays for 3-7s by Vicki Howie

ISBN 9781841015859

www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk

£11.99

If you enjoyed Vol 1 this is a great addition

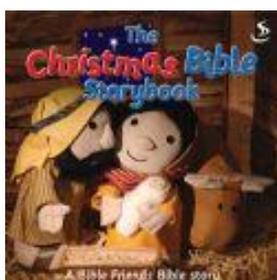


Christmas Sticker Collection By Su Box, Alison Atkins

ISBN 9781841016849 £3.99

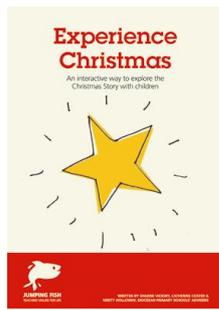
This fun sticker book contains the unfolding Bible stories of Christmas plus a backdrop for the stickers. Hours of interactive fun conclude with two handmade picture books.

Christmas Sticker Collection is ideal for children aged 5-7.



The Christmas Bible Storybook £3.99 Scripture Union

The Christmas Bible storybook is a truly delightful retelling of the Christmas story, especially for under 5s. The book features full-colour photographic spreads of the much loved Bible Friends characters from the award winning Big Bible Storybook and the board book format is perfectly sized for small hands, with short text for a parent or carer to read to the child.



This is an imaginative approach to help children experience Christmas using six easy to assemble, interactive stations set up in different parts of the church.

Classes from the local primary school will be invited by the clergy to visit the church where in small groups they will be guided by a leader from the school around each station.

The pack gives detailed instructions to church members to enable them to create the stations. Also included are careful instructions to help the school group leaders introduce and reflect on each part of the story.

The ideas offer a superb opportunity to strengthen church-school links.

<http://www.glosdioc.org.uk/downloads/430.pdf>

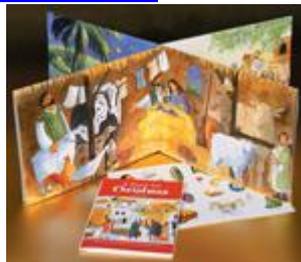
£11



The Christmas Journey by Moira Curry and Gill Morgan is a tried and tested unpacking of the events of the first Christmas. Through a range of interactive storytelling suggestions and imaginative activities children explore the first Christmas journey. A simple transformation of a church can create a delightful walk-through presentation that enables children in school year 2 to appreciate the wonder and significance of the events.

The authors have run such presentations in their own church for several years and so the book contains all the practical suggestions and tips needed to run this. Story scripts and suggestions for events to accompany the presentation are also provided. Look at the website www.christmasjourney.org.uk to read about their own experiences.

Redemptorist have lots of great inexpensive leaflets, books, advent calendars etc for children and families www.rpbooks.co.uk from £1.50



Have a wonderful Christmas

Do send us your photos (with permission for use on the web) or news so that we can add it to the website.

Barbara Meardon

NB: All prices correct at time of print