



# The Priory Church of St Mary



**Community:** As we face a third wave of Covid in our community, the Diocesan flourish video reminds us how important we all remain connected with the community around us.  
<https://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk/en/clergy-and-members/resources/flourish-a-year-in-review/>

## PRAYERS FOR EVERYONE BY BETTY LEWIS



Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Faithful God, with trust in your love and care we look forward to the new year.

We thank you for the beauty and wonder of creation, for our daily food and all that the earth provides, for our homes and families and friends, and for the community in which we live.

We thank you for minds to think and hearts to love, for health, strength, and skill to work, and for leisure to rest and play.

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Heavenly Father, we are called to be your light in the World and to reflect your love and care for us in our daily lives.

Help us to be mindful that all our lives are bound together in this life in our homes, in our churches, in our communities and throughout our nation and the world. Help us to be mindful that our lives are intertwined with nature and all of creation.

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Heavenly Father, please guide us to fulfil your calling for us with new insight into your purposes for us, and new wisdom and understanding to contribute to a future of unity, peace, sharing, and care for one another and the world around us, which is your will.

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Caring God, please surround all who are in any need at this time with your generous love to provide hope, strength and healing in body, mind or spirit.

May we be strengthened in our faith, our love, and our kindness to others.

With thankful hearts and praise to you our eternal and loving God, we pray in Jesus's name.

**Amen.**

**A reflection for the New Year**

There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens:

- <sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
- <sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,
- <sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
- <sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
- <sup>6</sup> a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
- <sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
- <sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate,  
a time for war and a time for peace.



**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

**St Mary's Churchyard**

The churchyard is looking wonderful at the moment with all the beautiful Christmas wreaths placed on the graves.

However, we are unfortunately no longer able to dispose of this large number of wreaths. As you are aware, there is no garden waste collection at this time of year, there is no local recycling centre and we are limited to two general waste bags per fortnight. We therefore ask, when you remove your wreath, would you please take it away with you for disposal.

Thank you for your cooperation, this will be a great help to us.

**Epiphany 2022 Chalk House Blessing**

It is not too late to bless your house - there are prayers, and chalk blessed by Sally, to be found on the welcome table just inside the North door of St Mary's. Use the chalk to mark the lintel (or wherever you can) of your front door as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 22 -saying:

The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and twenty one years ago.

May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the New Year.

Amen.



**Raven House Trust**

For a number of years the Co-op in Usk has allowed us to place a trolley outside their shop to collect groceries for the Raven House Trust.

This continues to be a very successful project. The people of Usk are extremely generous, this was especially noticeable with all the "Christmas extras" that were donated recently. Raven House are grateful for all donations, requiring packets of dried goods, jars of produce and tinned meats and tinned vegetables. Please ensure a long expiry date if possible.



**Th Uninvited Guest** Like many households Omicron visited our home over Christmas, challenging our plans and hopes of a Christmas shared with family, whilst celebrating the birth of Christ with friends in church. Self isolation proved interesting, putting into place all our contingency plans to ensure we had food over the Christmas holiday and that my father was kept safe was a challenge. However, the support of the community in Usk was amazing with friends from church offering to shop, collect prescriptions, visit my dad and pray. Proving to be a team with a heart who care for the community they serve, the Monmouthshire meals on wheels team were pragmatic and supportive to ensure my father had not only a meal each day but also contact with the outside world. We cannot **thank** the community enough and are so grateful to everyone.

The wall in our church, that shares the work people in our churches do daily, weekly and ad hoc demonstrates a commitment to build our links with the community. Later this month we will be reviewing the survey results at St Mary's, we welcome your thoughts, please share your ideas to continue to build a community based church by contacting Rev'd Sally, Carol Southwell or Sarah Byford.

Should you have to isolate with an uninvited guest, please do not hesitate to contact me and I would be more than happy to support you practically or through prayer. **Debbie Harper**