



Finding Christmas



Family Nativity Trail
All Saints' Gobowen

Join the Trail

From December 18th until Christmas Day

This year Christmas might feel a bit different to usual. But Christmas isn't lost. Wherever we are this year, whoever we are with, we can know the heart of Christmas.

Around Gobowen are 10 hidden giant presents. There's no need to leave the pavement, and be careful of traffic (especially in the dark). Take a grown-up with you and go on a hunt! Each present is marked on the map below. When you find a present, look up its number in the book and read the next part of the Christmas Story...



Read these when you find
each numbered gift.

1. Promised

Long before Jesus was born at the first Christmas, his arrival had been promised for hundreds of years. People were waiting in great hope. God had made many promises about what his coming king would be like. Here is one promise from about 800 years before Jesus:

"He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end." (Isaiah 9:6–7)

While you walk to the next spot in the trail, chat about what it's like waiting for things. Are you good at waiting? What are you hoping for this year?

2. Announced

After all the years of waiting, God's chosen king Jesus is about to arrive! The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and her normal day became extraordinary! It would be easy to be scared of meeting God or his angel. What would God think of *me*? But Gabriel says "Don't be afraid!"

The angel went to Mary and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. ... His kingdom will never end." (Luke 1:26–33)

As you walk, imagine someone really important was coming to visit. How would you get ready? What would make you nervous? What would excite you?

3. Refugee

Next the angel appears to Joseph and tells him why God is sending the baby Jesus. It's surprising what God is doing: He's sending a saviour on a rescue mission...

An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20–21)

Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem which may have taken them a week to walk! As you walk share memories of your longest ever journey. What was it like? How did you feel in the middle? How did you feel at the end?

4. Homeless

Jesus was not born in a palace, in luxury or wealth, but chose to come from the riches and perfection of heaven and was instantly homeless. There was no room for them anywhere in Bethlehem.

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world ... So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, ... with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child ... there was no guest room available for them." (Luke 2:1–7)

Jesus gave up so much out of love for us.
Share stories of when someone has sacrificed things for you.
What's the best gift you've ever had?

5. God with us

Jesus is also called 'Immanuel' which means 'God with us'. When Jesus was born as a baby in a manger, God himself was coming to be with us. Amazing!

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger. (Luke 2:6-7)

As you walk, why not sing?

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round the virgin and her child: holy infant, so gentle and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace; sleep in heavenly peace.

after J. Mohr (1792-1848) J. F. Young (1820-1885) Public Domain

6. Why Jesus came

Nearby in the fields outside Bethlehem were some shepherds. An angel appeared to them to announce that Jesus had come. The angel explained why Jesus had come. He was born to be a saviour, a rescuer. It's a mission that would take Jesus to the cross at Easter.

That's a long way off, but on that first Christmas it was already really good news. The rescuer has arrived.

"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

As you walk, have a chat. In your family, what makes a really good party?

7. Celebration

Suddenly there were thousands of angels all singing together in happy song. And they were all singing for a scruffy bunch of shepherds. This is good news for everyone. It's worth celebrating!

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests." (Luke 2:13-14)

As you walk, why not sing?

Hark! The herald-angels sing glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful all you nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem":
Hark! The herald-angels sing glory to the new-born King.

C. Wesley (1707-1788), Public Domain

8. Found

Imagine if the Shepherds had heard the angels and just decided to stay in the dark fields! They rushed off to check it out for themselves.

The shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." (Luke 2:15)



As you walk: try and retell the story so far.
How much can you remember? 😊

9. Worshipped

You're nearly there! The Magi (or Wise Men) have also travelled a long way. They saw a star and knew a king had been born. Then they packed their bags, and gifts for the baby. They travelled miles and miles to come and see him. Why do they go so far? Why do they have such expensive gifts? Because they want to worship this new king.

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)

Why do you think they worshipped the baby?

10. Christmas Found

Christmas is about Jesus: into our darkness, he has come as the light. He is full of grace and truth.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

You are warmly welcome to join us at any of our Christmas events,
and online for our Online Nativity Service on Christmas Eve.
Happy Christmas!

Feel free to get in touch at www.allsaintsgobowen.uk/contact-us

You are warmly invited to ...

Doorstep Carols

6pm, Wed 16th Dec

Tune in to Radio Shropshire (96 FM) and join your neighbours to sing from your doorstep. See www.doorstepcarols.co.uk for more information.

Candlelit Carols

4pm, All Saints' Church, Sun 20th Dec

Join us to celebrate Christmas with a service of lessons and carols. We can't currently sing in the building but we will hear and reflect on some wonderful Christmas music.

Book online at www.allsaintsgobowen.uk/blog/findingchristmas or call 01691 658 498.

Online Family Nativity Service

24th Dec

Going live on our website on Christmas Eve, join us online for a family nativity service.

Churchyard Carols

4pm, All Saints' Churchyard, 24th Dec

An informal and family-friendly outdoor carol service in the churchyard. Join us for outdoor carol singing, Christmas Bible readings and take a free Christingle pack home. (Note: the ground is uneven in places, bring a torch if you can and wrap up warm).



Find out more at www.allsaintsgobowen.uk/blog/findingchristmas

or get in touch: allsaintsgobowen@gmail.com

Vicar: Steve Nicholson, 01691 590 564

For more details of all our events and our regular services visit our website above. All our events are COVID secure and will be adjusted to meet government requirements at the time. See our website for updates or get in touch.