

The Travelling Crib: Room in our homes.....

The picture on the cover of this edition is very traditional – Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus, with the donkey of course! They are the central figures in our travelling crib which is, as you read this, travelling around homes in the parish and, in a few cases, beyond. A travelling crib isn't a new idea: many churches around the world have one. It is a lovely, unique way to help families prepare for Christmas. The crib is blessed in church on Advent Sunday and then is taken home by a family who plays host to the nativity characters for the night, reading the Christmas story together. The next day they pass on the crib to another family, saying prayers together as it is handed over.

As well as the central story of the nativity, there are other stories to a travelling crib. The figures of St Mary's crib have been knitted by a number of local ladies (we couldn't find any men willing to knit!) following a central pattern; each figure was made with love and skill which makes them very special and full of character!

When we needed a temporary home for them Geoff Mills came to the rescue with his carpentry skills and imaginatively put together a mobile stable.

Lynda Potter has master-minded all this, sourcing patterns, people and host families – she too has stories to tell! Thank-you Lynda, for bringing it all together; it would not have happened without you.





Through this travelling crib, the Christmas story is becoming real to us; we've had to think about how to make it happen; it's involved pooling our resources to use the many skills we have around us. I can at this stage only guess what might happen in the homes the nativity will visit. Some families weren't too sure when we approached them, others couldn't wait to be put on the rota!

What will it be like to make room in our homes for these special guests for the night? To stop what we're doing and take time to read with our children the story of a Jesus' birth? It will be an opportunity too for families to get to know each other a little better as they receive and then deliver on the crib.

The last family will bring the crib back to us on Christmas Eve when we shall gather for our family Crib Service.

So, an immense thank you to our knitters: Pam Salter, Eve Bowring, Joyce Knight, Josie Thomas, Janet Burbridge, Margaret Walker, and of course, Lynda Potter.

Drawing people together through making something happen, through showing hospitality, and making time to think of how we want to respond to God who comes to us through the life of Jesus. In such simple, inexpensive ways, these can be the stories of our lives as we get ready for Christmas, caught up in Jesus' life whose birth long ago we shall soon celebrate once again. May we be renewed in our hope and catch a fresh vision for God's world.

With love and prayers for a peaceful and hopeful Christmas.

Sally