



**Thought** - "The <sup>Real</sup> Christmas Story"

We all know the Christmas story don't we? The many nativity plays we've seen must surely give us a good impression... a nervous Mary and Joseph kneeling alongside a straw-filled manger... the rosy little faces of the tinsel covered angels... the wise men that always fluff their lines, and the shepherds who forget where they're supposed to stand!



Amongst the comedy show that is the typical children's Christmas play, there are a few important details you may have missed...

Jesus' makeshift cot, "a manger" was actually where the animals usually fed from. But why was he placed there, of all places? Perhaps the animals in the stable would have trampled him if he were laid on the floor, perhaps there was just too much dung underfoot! The basic fact of the matter is: the Son of God was born in a dirty, stinking animal enclosure! The poverty of Jesus' birth is the appropriate beginning of "God's good news to the poor".

What about those rather excited angels... "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests" they proclaimed to the shepherds. According to the Bible, the angels have had some rather unpleasant jobs in the past, but this was quite simply the best news they'd ever told anybody. Something wonderful had happened and the angels just couldn't keep it in; God's long foretold rescue plan for the earth had begun.

Maybe this is the year to take a fresh look at the real Christmas story and at what its ancient message has in store for us today. (Please read in your bible or on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com): Luke 2, Matthew 1 & 2, Isaiah 9:1-7)

**In Focus -**

*Bethlehem at the Bethel*

Come and join us for a free fun morning out for *all* the family!

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December between 10.00am and 12.30pm, The Bethel is going to be open for a morning of Christmas Fun for all the Family.

'Bethlehem at the Bethel' will be a chance to explore the real meaning of Christmas with lots of different Christmas craft activities, nativity dressing up and photographs, a cafe and much, much more.

*'Bethlehem at the Bethel' is open to all.*

*All Free!*

*Drop in anytime between 10.00am and 12.30pm.*

All children **must** be accompanied by an adult.



**What's On?**

(At Henrietta St. unless otherwise stated)

Sunday evening Services at 2:45 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month and 6:00 pm at other times.

DATE	SUBJECT	TIME
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Bethlehem at The Bethel (See above)	10:00 am
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Carol Singing	Meet at 2:45 pm
Sun 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	"Sing the Christmas Story"	6:00 pm
Sun 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Family Carol Service	6:00 pm
Sat 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Christmas Morning Service	11:00 am
Sun 26 <sup>th</sup> Dec	"Don't pack your life away in a box"	6:00 pm

**Regulars:**

- Sunday
  - Breaking of Bread Service 10:30 a.m.
  - Youth Church 2:45 pm (From Kids aged 3 up to Adult Discussion Group)
  - Evening Service 2:45 pm or 6:00 pm (See above for details)
- Tuesday
  - Coffee Morning 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
  - Junior Youth club 6:45 p.m.
  - "The Bible Course" 7:15 p.m. at Chorlton Adult Education Centre
- Thursday
  - "Playtime" Parent & Toddler group 10 am-12 pm (Term time only)
  - Bible Class 8:00 pm
- Friday
  - Senior Youth Club 7:30 pm

Web site: [www.thebethel.org](http://www.thebethel.org) Email: [info@thebethel.org](mailto:info@thebethel.org)