

Broadcasting Bulletin, 19th – 25th December

Saturday 19 December

Music Matters Tom Service travels across the Midlands to experience the importance of music – from brass bands to opera, children’s choirs to pup carols – in villages, towns and cities at Christmas. Visiting Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and the West Midlands, he meets those bringing music to the heart of communities 12.15pm R3

Dermot O’Leary With live music by singer Alisha Dixon and, with carols, Dermot’s Choir of Angels (three indie female stars) 3.00pm R2

BBC Sign Zone: Defying Gravity (9/13) The real nature of the mission is revealed, challenging Paula’s religious beliefs 2.00am BBC1

Sunday 20 December

Bells on Sunday From St John the Baptist, Loughton, Essex 5.43am R4

Something Understood Since time immemorial special occasions have been marked with a festival in which communities join together in celebration. Journalist Madeline Bunting explores our desire to create festivals 6.05am R4

Good Morning Sunday With Aled Jones, Author Ben Schott looks back on 2009 and Canon Ann Easter provides a spiritual reflection 7.00am R2

Sunday Religious and ethical headlines, presented by Roger Bolton 7.10am R4

Sunday Worship On the fourth Sunday of Advent, the story of the angel Gabriel’s visit to Mary is explored on a service from St John’s College, Durham 8.10am R4

Fern Britton Meets...(4/4) Actress Sheila Hancock talks about her faith and losing two husbands to cancer 10.00am BBC1

Film: One Magic Christmas Seasonal drama starring Mary Steenburgen. An angel shows a young mother the true meaning of Christmas 12.40pm BBC2

Tallinn Live From St Nicholas’s Church, traditional Estonian songs alongside music by Bach and Gabrieli and English Christmas carols 2.00pm R2

Choral Evensong Another chance to hear Wednesday’s service from All Saint’s Church, Swanton Morley, Norfolk 4.00pm R3

Songs of Praise For this special edition, Aled Jones visits Jerusalem’s Old City and sings carols with local choirs 5.00pm BBC1

Sunday Half-Hour Brian D’Arcy looks forward to Christmas with carols and readings recorded in St Peter’s Cathedral, Belfast. Featuring clerical singing trio the Priests and Belfast choir Cappella Caeciliana, and BBC Young Choirsters of the Year 2009 Jacqueline Hill and Laurence Kilsby 8.00pm R2

Father Ted The unholy trinity and six other priests get lost in what seems to be the world's largest lingerie department, and only Ted's quick thinking prevents the Catholic Church being rocked by another major scandal of the ecclesiastical comedy 10.20pm Channel 4

Something Understood Repeat 11.30pm R4

Monday 21 December

Daily Service Led by Rev Roy Jenkins 9.45am R4 (LW, DAB each day)

Film: The Ten Commandments Oscar-winning biblical epic. Found and adopted as a child by the Egyptian Princess Bithiah, the Hebrew Moses becomes a favourite with the Pharaoh 12.05pm Channel 4

The Infinite Monkey Cage (4/4) Science and Religion are on the festive menu as physicist Brian Cox and comedian Robin Ince are joined by the Very Rev Victor Stock, Dean of Guildford, who tries to convert Robin, while science journalist Adam Rutherford explains why religion is actually good for your health 4.0pm R4

Belief (1/5) Joan Bakewell talks to people about what they believe and why. Today she talks to historian David Starkey about his Quaker upbringing 8.45pm R3

Keeping Tradition Alive at Christmas (1/4) Radio 2 celebrates mostly forgotten Christmas carolling traditions being kept alive in area of England and Wales 10.00pm

Book at Bedtime: The Ingoldsby Legends (1/10) A distraught husband sits at the foot of his dying wife's bed – and considers who his next wife might be. One of a series of myths, legends and ghost stories popular during the Victorian era and purportedly written by Thomas Ingoldsby of Tappington Manor, though actually by the Rev Richard Barham 10.45pm R4

Tuesday 22 December

Daily Service Led by Mgr Tony Rogers 9.45am R4 (LW, DAB each day)

Composer of the Week: John Rutter (2/5) John Rutter talks to Donald Macleod about Cambridge and his attitude to religion 12.00pm R3

Afternoon on 3 Including The Hymn of Jesus and Four Poems of St Teresa of Avila 1.00pm R3

Performance on 3 Composer of the Year: Purcell. Catherine Bott presents a concert of music by Purcell, given as part of Radio 3's celebration marking the 350th anniversary of his birth. With the choir of Westminster Abbey 7.00pm R3

Celebrity Come Dine with Me Christmas Special Including some Carol singers 8.00pm Channel 4

Belief (2/5) Joan Bakewell discusses belief with novelist critic and cultural historian Marina Warner 9.00pm R3

Keeping Tradition Alive at Christmas Billy Bragg with West Country carolling traditions
10.00pm R2

The Best Christmas Present Ever The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service restores family relationships by tracing recently and long-lost relatives. Hugh Dennis celebrates 125 years of the organisation's work 10.30pm R2

Wednesday 23 December

Daily Service Led by Bishop Nigel McCulloch 9.45am R4 (LW, DAB each day)

Keeping up Appearances Hyacinth orders Richard to dress up as Father Christmas and distribute gifts to the old folk at the church hall in a seasonal episode from 1991 3.00pm BBC1

Choral Evening Prayer Live from St Jame's Roman Catholic Church, Spanish Place, London with the Choir of the Queen's College, Oxford 4.00pm R3

Belief (3/5) Theologian John Hull tells Joan Bakewell how the loss of his sight prompted him to challenge Christian analogies associating blindness with sin 9.15pm R3

Keeping Tradition Alive at Christmas (3/4) Julie Fowlis with obscure Welsh carolling traditions being kept alive 10.00pm R2

Book at Bedtime: The Ingoldsby Legends (8/10) A part-comic, part-terrifying poetic portrayal of baked meat and bloody murder. A housekeeper takes a dislike to her master's house guest. By the Rev Richard Barham 10.45pm R4

Christmas Tales: Angels (3/3) Fiona Phillips delves into the history of angels, including the most famous of all – Gabriel, who has a star role in every school Nativity play 11.35pm ITV1

Thursday 24 December

Daily Service A meditation for Christmas Even led by the Rev Stephen Shipley 9.45am R4 (LW, DAB each day)

Mendelssohn Psalm 42 10.30am R3

Film: The Nativity Story Religious drama. In the small town of Nazareth, teenager Mary is told she has been chosen to bear the son of God 11.45am Channel 4

Film: The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe The film based on CS Lewis' book which some believe shows many parallels to the Gospel 2.15pm BBC1

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Live from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge. The pattern of the Festival – nine Bible readings interspersed with carols – has remained the same for over 90 years. It unfolds the great mystery of how God came into the world in human form, and for millions across the globe it heralds the beginning of Christmas 3.00pm R4

Carols from Kings The chapel choir from King's College, Cambridge sing carols old and new. The story of the Nativity is recounted in the words of the King James Bible 6.15pm BBC2

My Family December 2039: The Harpers gather to celebrate Christmas but it's memories of seasonal disasters past that prevail 8.00pm BBC1

Belief (4/5) Joan Bakewell discusses belief with Cambridge University lecturer and Muslim convert Tim Winter 9.00pm R3

What Scientists Believe (3/3) Stephen Webster investigates the links between scientists' personal beliefs and their research. He talks to zoologist Andrew Gosier whose views about this natural world does not map neatly on to his scientific work 9.00pm R4

BBC Proms 2009 Another chance to hear this late-night jazz Prom from the opening weekend of the 2009 season. Stan Tracey re-creates the biblical story of the Creation as a big bang suite 9.20pm R3

Keeping Tradition Alive at Christmas (4/4) Jon Boden Leigh-on-Sea 10.00pm R2

Christmas Carols with the Troops A special service dedicated to British troops serving in Afghanistan, from the Church of St Clement, London 10.15pm ITV1

Brass and Carols Poet Ian McMillian introduces Christmas classics performed by the Black Dyke Band, singer Joe Stilgoe and the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus 11.00pm R2

Late Junction Powerful group singing from Alabama alongside carol singers at the Royal Hotel 11.15pm R3

Midnight Mass Live from Leeds Cathedral. The celebrant and preacher is the Rt Rev Arthur Roche, Bishop of Leeds 11.30pm R4

Christmas Midnight Mass from Westminster Cathedral The Most Rev Vincent Nichols celebrates his first Midnight Mass as Archbishop of Westminster and a thousand-strong congregation sing well-loved carols 11.45pm BBC1

Various songs and music through the early hours of the morning on Radio 3

Friday 25 December

Good Morning Christmas Aled Jones welcomes Garvase Phinn and Delia Smith. Plus a reflection by the Archbishop of Westminster 7.00am R2

Christmas Service Carols old and new from All Souls Church, Langham Place, London 9.00am R4

Christmas Day Eucharist Live from Chester Cathedral, a service of traditional carols and hymns 10.15am BBC1

Star of Bethlehem Scientists discover whether the three wise men could have followed a real astronomical event 11.30am BBC2

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Repeat from R4 Christmas Eve 2.00pm R3

The Queen Her Majesty addresses the nation and Commonwealth 3.00pm BBC1, ITV, R2 and R4

The Private Life of a Christmas Masterpiece – The Mystic Nativity It's a painting of mystery fiction should love 6.00pm BBC2

Belief (5/5) Joan Bakewell talks to Ann Widdecombe MP 10.15pm R3

We Three Kings Who are these mysterious figures from the East? Ian Hislop examines the legend of the Three Kings of the Nativity to see how history has shaped their legacy 10.15pm R4

Prayer for the Day with Bishop Alan Abernethy (not Sunday) 5.43am R4

Pause for Thought R2

Friday: 6.20am, 9.15am & 3.30am

Saturday: 6.15am and 1.30am

Sunday: 1.30am & 1.30am

Monday: 6.20am, Ruth Scott 9.15am, 1.30am & 3.30am

Tuesday: 6.20am, Pete Tobias 9.15am, 1.30am & 3.30am

Wednesday: 6.20am, Rob Gillion 9.15am, 1.30am & 3.30am

Thursday: 6.20am, Roger Royle 9.15am, 1.30am & 3.30am

Friday: 6.20am, TBC 9.15am & 3.30am

Thought for the Day 7.48am R4

Speakers for the Week:

Saturday Rev Rob Marshall

Monday Rev Dr Colin Morris

Tuesday Anne Atkins

Wednesday Rev Joel Edwards

Thursday Padre Mark Christian