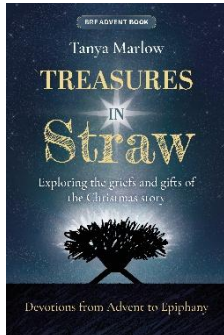


21 August 2026



Treasures in Straw

Exploring the griefs and gifts of the Christmas story

Tanya Marlow

Pb, ISBN 978 1 80039 567 1, £9.99

Christmas can be a magical time, but also a uniquely painful one. Inspired by the difference she sees between Christmas as we mark it today and the original story of the nativity, Tanya Marlow writes for everyone who struggles with Christmas. 'Nowadays Christmas feels like either grief or gift,' she says, 'but the nativity is both grief and gift together... My invitation to you this season is to look afresh at the original Christmas story, with the freedom to be honest in lament, exuberant in praise, or both together. Whether you love Christmas or dread it, this is a chance to treasure those forgotten spiritual blessings that do not perish or fade, and rediscover genuine delight in Jesus, our greatest gift.' *Treasures in Straw* will be of particular value to church leaders looking for a fresh approach to the Christmas story, with a strong theological basis and thorough exploration of the original cultural context.

Praise for *Treasures in Straw*

'Tanya Marlow has written a rare and beautiful book. With theological depth, pastoral wisdom, and remarkable emotional intelligence, Marlow re-enters the Christmas story not through nostalgia, but through the lived realities of ordinary people carrying hidden wounds... This is theology at its most pastoral and pastoral care at its most theological.' — *Timothy Goode, Canon for Congregational Discipleship and Nurture at York Minster*

'A truly stunning and thought-provoking read which brings alive the old, old stories of Christmas. If you have ever searched for meaning behind the tinsel and treats of this season, then I urge you to take up Tanya's invitation to join her on a revealing journey which looks unflinchingly at the human realities of the nativity both then and now.' — *Emma Pennington, Canon Missioner, Canterbury Cathedral*

'Refusing to sentimentalise the nativity story, Tanya Marlow offers us something hopeful and authentic: a vision of God with us in the midst of our real human pain and struggle. I have huge respect for Tanya as a thinker, communicator, and activist. She embodies the hope she describes, making this the perfect way to enter the Advent season.' — *Will Van Der Hart, priest and author*

About the author

Tanya Marlow is a writer, spiritual director, and lecturer in pastoral theology. A popular conference speaker, she has been published by the *Guardian* and *Spectator* and interviewed for BBC TV and radio. Her passion is combining biblical texts and 'sacred storytelling' with honest theologies of disability and suffering. She is mostly bed-bound with chronic illness and does let it limit her. Her books include *Those Who Wait* (2017), and she can be found at TanyaMarlow.com. More information [here](#).

For a review copy or author information, please contact:

Eley McAinsh, Press and Media Officer eley.mcainsh@brf.org.uk or +44 (0)1865 319700 | enquiries@brf.org.uk