

A short time of Silence may be taken.

Prayers

These can be formal or improvised and end with:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Hymn

This hymn can be sung or said as a poem

1. Hark! the herald angels sing

"Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise;
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic host proclaim
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

2. Hail! the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail! the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King"

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Closing Prayer

God our Father,
your Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ the Lord.
Amen.



A Happy and Blessed Christmas
from us all in

The Beacon Team Mission Community

Just a Thought

*Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and
behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.*

Norman Vincent Peale.

Material on these pages is copyright © The Archbishops' Council
of the Church of England or reproduced with permission from other copyright owners.



Mission Community
Together with God-Together for God

Christmas

Day



25th December 2020

Email Sunday Service
A warm welcome to all who worship with us

Introduction

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders

Isaiah 9.6

Hymn

This hymn can be sung or said as a poem

1. O come all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of Angels:
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2. See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks,
draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

3. Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exaltation,
Oh sing all ye citizens of Heaven above;
Glory to God
All glory in the highest
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

4. Yeah Lord we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
O Jesus to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing:
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

John Francis Wade (1711-1786)

Prayers of Penitence

O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Collect

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament: Isaiah 52.7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

New Testament: Hebrews 1.1-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son,* whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you'? Or again, 'I will be his Father, and he will be my Son'? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.' Of the angels he says, 'He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.' But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is* for ever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.' And, 'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.'

Gospel Reading: John 1.1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who

believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,* full of grace and truth.

A short time of Silence may be taken

Homily

Quite often in life we can build up huge expectations about an event. It can be a something, like a birthday party or a holiday or a concert etc... Whatever it is, we can find that we are thinking about it, even talking to ourselves about it all the time, questioning about this and that. It can start to take over all our thinking and doing. But eventually the day comes... and goes. And we often find that after all that preparation, all that stress, it didn't quite go as well, or wasn't really as exciting as we had hoped. But, maybe next time? That happens so often for many people at Christmas time.

Let's look at two sides of Christmas.

First: Christmas often starts at the January sales where there are lots of bargains to be found that will be significantly cheaper than just before Christmas. But later in the year we see the various shops and on-line businesses vying to be the first ones to start the new season. It is quite often September when this happens now, due to an ever-lengthening build up. So by the time that we've actually got to Christmas itself, we can be flagging. We might have spent a lot more than we had intended, already eaten more than we had intended and are generally just 'not in the Christmas spirit.' Christmas day can seem like any other day, no angels in the sky, no heavenly voices to be heard. Then the next day - Boxing day - has been recorded as being many people's least favourite day of the year. That is because they feel empty and depressed as they have overspent, overeaten and generally just overdone it.

Our second look at Christmas: On this day, it is four days after the winter solstice or midwinter, which is often known as the shortest day of the year, so now the days will slowly start to grow longer and hopefully brighter. And if we forget the money spent, Christmas day itself can feel as though it is warmer and brighter and everyone seems friendlier. If you pass someone walking on this day, they will often wish you a merry Christmas and give a smile.

We get a sense of the goodness and warmth of God at this time of the year. We are so heightened by the wonderful stories from the Bible of the birth of Jesus at Christmas time that we can feel a closeness with God that is almost tangible.

We get a feeling of our own goodness and the goodness of others. That feeling can be passed on more at this time of year than at any other time. We don't feel alone and we don't want others to feel that way either. We want to share the love and warmth of Christ, that sense that someone is watching over us all.

If Christmas feels wrong, or we are disappointed after it, then maybe we have not 'read the script' properly, or we've pinned our hopes on the wrong things. Yes, we all like to receive a gift, but if we pin our hopes on Christmas being all about money and things, there is a good chance that we will be disappointed, but not because we are promised too little, but too much - of the wrong things. What we need at this time of year is a taste of the same great joy, that the angels so beautifully announced to the shepherds on that wonderful night.

That is the present that we should all want. One that when opened springs out with the message of great joy:

"Today a Saviour is born; He is Christ the Lord!"

