

Friday 25th December 2020

United Benefice of Sissinghurst
with Frittenden

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE



Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder
at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you, our
Saviour and our
eternal God.

Amen

A very warm welcome – it's great you've joined us, whether in person or online, as we pause together to celebrate Jesus' birth.

Please join in with the words in bold.

We can't currently sing in our church buildings, sadly - instead we'll listen to a variety of Christmas music and reflect on the words. *Of course, if you're listening online, you're very welcome to sing along!*

I bring you good news of great joy:
a Saviour has been born to you.
Alleluia.

Unto us a child is born,
unto us a Son is given.
Alleluia.



Hear the words of St Luke:
When the angels had gone from them into heaven,
the shepherds said to one another,
'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened
which the Lord has made known to us.'
So they hastened,
and found Mary and Joseph,
and the baby lying in a manger.

He is Christ the Lord. Alleluia.
We worship and adore him. Alleluia.

We listen as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus

1. Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
2. The cattle are lowing the baby awakes
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.
3. Be near me Lord Jesus I ask you to stay
Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

This is true - Allan Boesak (South Africa)

It is not true
that this world and its people
are doomed to die and be lost.

This is true:
God so loved the world
that He gave his only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him
shall not perish but have everlasting life;



It is not true
that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination,
hunger and poverty, death and destruction.

This is true:
I have come that they may have life,
and that abundantly;

It is not true
that violence and hatred should have the last word,
and that war and destruction have come to stay forever.

This is true:
Unto us a child is born,
and unto us a Son is given,
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
his name shall be called
Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace.

We recognise the peace Jesus brings

At the birth of our Saviour the angels sang,
'Glory to God
in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace
to all in whom he delights.'

Alleluia!
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
Peace be with you. Alleluia.

We offer one another a sign (BSL) of peace



PEACE

*Both open hands, with fingers apart,
held in front of body. Hands move
apart while index finger and thumb
on both hands move together to
touch at tips.*



**God our Father,
you have shown us truth
and we have failed to receive it.
You were born in poverty
and we have rejected your ways.
You have called us,
as you called Mary,
yet we have been unwilling to respond.
Forgive us and help us. Amen**

We Hear God's Word - Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned.
You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest,
as men rejoice when dividing the plunder.
For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.
Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

We remain seated as we reflect on Jesus our Saviour and King



1. Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becomes poor.

2. Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
Heavenwards by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man.

3. Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling,
Make us what thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship thee.

We stand to affirm our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**



We remain standing as we hear God's Word - Luke 2:1-14

Today Christ is born! Today the angels sing on earth:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

We consider what God is saying to us at Christmas 2020



- An *Unexpected* Gift:
When we don't get what
we thought we would
- A *Uniquely Tailored* Gift:
God knows ~~what~~
Who we need
- A Gift to be *Unwrapped*:
Freedom from Fear
Peace with God Himself
Great Joy for the taking...

We turn to the God who hears and answers prayer

When you hear: Jesus, Saviour,
Please respond: **hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in God's presence here with us now, so we pray:



**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

We stand and reflect on God's great love in sending Jesus our Saviour

1. Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

2. O that birth forever blessed,
When the Virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Saviour of our race;
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face,
Evermore and evermore!

3. O ye heights of heaven adore Him!
Angel-hosts His praises sing!
Powers, dominions, bow before Him,
And extol our God and King; Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring, evermore and evermore!



Please remain standing as we are sent out into the world
to make known the good news of our Saviour's birth:
strengthened by Jesus – Emmanuel - God with us

The Lord be with you **and also with you.**

May the **joy** of the angels,
the **eagerness** of the shepherds,
the **perseverance** of the wise men,
the **obedience** of Mary and Joseph
and the **peace** of Jesus
- our Prince of Peace -
be yours this Christmas.



And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Thank you so much for joining us, we hope to see you again soon!
Please take this sheet home with you when you leave.
Very sadly we're not permitted to mingle afterwards,
thank you for your help in keeping us safe

Sunday 27th December - 10am Holy Communion at St Mary's Church

You can find details of our services on the church website,
where you can also sign up for regular emails

**Revd Pete and our church wardens
Joanna and Penny, John and Tim
wish you the Comfort of Christ
& lasting Joy this Christmas.**

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