

**Christmas morning 25<sup>h</sup> December 2020  
at 10.00am**

**Welcome and announcements:**

**Christians, awake! Salute the happy morn**

on which the saviour of the world was born;  
rise to adore the mystery of love  
which hosts of angels chanted from above!  
With them the joyful tidings first begun  
of God incarnate and the virgin's Son.

Then, to the watchful shepherds it was told,  
who heard the angelic herald's voice: 'Behold,  
I bring good tidings of Messiah's birth  
to you and all the nations upon earth!  
This day hath God fulfilled his promised word;  
this day is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord!'

To Bethlehem these eager shepherds ran  
to see the wonder of our God made man;  
they found, with Joseph and the holy maid,  
Jesus, the saviour, in a manger laid.  
Amazed, with joy this story they proclaim,  
the first apostles of his infant fame.

Let us, like those good shepherds, now employ  
our grateful voices to declare the joy:  
trace we the babe, who has redeemed our loss,  
from this poor manger to his bitter cross;  
treading his steps, assisted by his grace,  
by faith again we see the Saviour's face.  
*John Byrom 1692-1763*

**Prayer**

**Children's talk:**

**O what a mystery I see**  
What marvellous design  
That God should come as one of us  
A Son in David's line  
Flesh of our flesh, of woman born  
Our humanness he owns  
And for a world of wickedness  
His guiltless blood atones

This perfect Man, incarnate God  
By selfless sacrifice  
Destroyed our sinful history  
All fallen Adam's curse  
In him the curse of blessing turns  
My barren spirit flowers  
As over the shattered power of sin  
The cross of Jesus towers

By faith a child of his I stand  
An heir in David's line  
Royal descendant by his blood  
Destined by Love's design  
Fathers of faith, my fathers now!  
Because in Christ I am  
And all God's promises in Him  
To me are 'Yes, Amen!'

No more then as a child of earth  
Must I my lifetime spend  
His history, His destiny are mine to apprehend  
Oh what a Saviour, what a Lord  
O Master, Brother, Friend!  
What miracle has joined me to  
This life that never ends!

*Graham Kendrick  
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**Bible reading: Luke chapter 2 verses 1-20**

And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup> So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup> to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. <sup>6</sup> So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. <sup>7</sup> And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup> Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. <sup>10</sup> Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

<sup>15</sup> So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. <sup>18</sup> And all those who heard *it* marvelled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. <sup>20</sup> Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,**

all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down  
and glory shone around.

'Fear not,' said he - for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind -  
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and all mankind:

'To you in David's town this day  
is born of David's line  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.  
And this shall be the sign:

'The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands  
and in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus  
addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace;  
goodwill henceforth from heaven to man  
begin and never cease!'

*Nahum Tate 1652 - 1715*

**Message: "Reactions to the birth."  
(and the importance of gift tags!)**

**Angels, from the realms of Glory,**  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
heralds of creation's story  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:

*Come and worship  
Christ, the new-born King.  
Come and worship  
Worship Christ the new-born King.*

Shepherds, in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with man is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant-light:

Though an infant now we view Him,  
He will share His Father's throne,  
gather all the nations to Him;  
every knee shall then bow down:

*James Montgomery, 1771-1854*

**Closing prayer**

Hymns 1,2 and 3 Thanks to Evangelical Movement of Wales  
Congregational Hymn Singing for Christmas

Thanks to St Helen's Bishopsgate for the 4<sup>th</sup> hymn

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