

Christmas Worship at Home 2020

Opening Prayers:

O Lord open our lips

And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

The shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us. So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. (*Luke 2: 15-16*)

Today we remember Jesus and the story of his birth.

Amen

Invitation to confession:

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light, let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

God our Father, you sent your Son full of grace and truth:
forgive our failure to receive him.

Lord have mercy

Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

Christ have mercy.

Spirit of love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:
forgive the hardness of our hearts

Lord have mercy

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself, that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, and may you be cleansed from all your sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Collect (Special Prayer for the day)

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 eternal God. **Amen**

Gospel Reading: Luke 2: 1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

Reflection on the Gospel.

“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people; for to you this day is born to you a Saviour who is Christ the Lord”. I wonder how many times you have heard those words read or said at Christmas. Perhaps in church or on the radio, or perhaps going back to your children’s Nativity play at school, or even further back to your own school days. The words are extremely well known but have you really “heard” them? The angel does not simply say “Christ is born” but, **to you**, Christ is born. Neither does he say “I bring glad tidings” but, **“To you**, I bring, I bring glad tidings of great joy”. So whatever way you celebrate Christ’s birth today, and for most of us it will be in a quieter than usual way, celebrate in the knowledge that Jesus was born for **you**, the gift of eternal life is for **you**, the gift of God’s healing is for **you**, the gift of God’s forgiveness is for **you**. Not just some random person in the world, **but you**, that makes it personal and special! So celebrate the gift that God has given to us in Jesus, his life affirming ways, his teaching, his healing and his love. Jesus - the Christmas gift from God that just keep giving. Amen

The Creed

We believe in God the Father,

from whom every family in heaven and 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

Be still and Pray: Include the needs of the world and your family and community, the NHS and the government. The health and commitment of Queen Elizabeth. Those who suffer illness or discrimination of any kind, the homeless and those suffering loss of jobs. Pray for a better year ahead, not only here but throughout the world.

The Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.....

Blessing:

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christchild be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you today and always.

Amen

Reverend Irene

Merry Christmas from Eddie, Jenny and Irene, may your day be joyous and peaceful