



# Welcome to Stoneleigh Methodist Church

## Sunday 20 December 2020

### 10:30am: Morning Worship with Richard Graham

Watch live on YouTube: [youtu.be/tT7SA61iBGU](https://youtu.be/tT7SA61iBGU) or join on Zoom: [bit.ly/2J5jvY8](https://bit.ly/2J5jvY8)

**6:30pm: Carol Service** - online only, at [bit.ly/SMCTube](https://bit.ly/SMCTube) and Zoom

## Prayers

Please pray for Richard here and Emma at Ruxley today, for Paul & Dawn, for our Stewards, for others within the Church and beyond who continue to work tirelessly for the benefit of all, and for the continued health of our key workers and all the National Health Service, on whom we depend so much now, and at all times.

Please pray also for those of our Church family who are unwell or finding their mobility limited and consider whether they might welcome a call from friends.

*"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13*

## Notices

**The Church is now open for congregational worship.** It has been quite a while since we were able to worship together in person, and it is very possible that you might like to wait a few more weeks before coming back yourself. That is absolutely fine, and you will continue to get your News and Service sheets delivered every week.

There are a few changes required by the Government to help protect you if you do come; there will be door Stewards there to help you.

- Masks must be worn by everyone, except the preacher and readers when speaking (unless you are exempt of course).
- The pews are marked out to help you, or your family group, sit at least 2metres apart – not all pews are in use.
- Singing is not allowed (you can hum or mime!)
- No 'in-pew' collection, but there will be bowls for envelopes etc on your way out.

**The Deadlines for donations to the specific Christmas appeals by Whitechapel and Foodbank** have now passed, but the usual general donations may now be left at the bottom of the stairwell at Church, or in the porch of 198 Stoneleigh Park Road, and they will be taken forward from there. Should you wish to donate directly to Whitechapel by cheque, their address is 212 Whitechapel Road, E1 1BJ; for Foodbank it's Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, Generation Resource Centre, Ruxley Lane, Ewell KT19 0JG. *Robin*

## Services for the remainder of December

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 6:30pm** – Carol Service; a dramatized telling of the Nativity and sing along to some favourite Carols. Online only, at [bit.ly/SMCTube](https://bit.ly/SMCTube) and Zoom.

**Christmas Eve, 4:00-5:00pm** – Visit the Nativity at Church; drop in and see our Nativity scene and pray in private with your family.

**Christmas Morning, 10:00am** – a joint Service with Ruxley Church, online, only at [bit.ly/SMCTube](https://bit.ly/SMCTube) and Zoom.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December, 10:30am** - Circuit Service with Rev Paul Timmis, Rev Emma Cusack & Deacon Dawn Canham – online only, at [bit.ly/SMCTube](https://bit.ly/SMCTube) and Zoom.

## Around the Trolley

**Christmas cards.** Last week we mentioned that we could not organise Christmas Card exchanges through the Church this year (many other Churches have come to the same conclusion.) And then I had a call from Jill, who has asked that I include “best wishes from her and her family to all friends at Stoneleigh, a Happy Christmas and hopes for a better year in 2021.” And so, from other friends: -

**Jean P** – “best wishes and hope for a better year to all at SMC, and I do hope you are well and are able to enjoy Christmas and the New Year.”

**Emma, Bill & Miles** – “Wishing you all a good Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year”

**Geetha & Gopal** – “We should like to wish all our friends at SMC a very Happy Christmas, hopefully in the company of family and friends to the extent allowed by the Covid restrictions, and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year. Thanks to Zoom we have joined in some your activities over the past few months and found these to be insightful and spiritually uplifting. We look forward to having face to face meetings in 2021.”

**Helen** “sends prayers and good wishes to all her friends at Stoneleigh Methodist Church. I hope you all have an enjoyable Christmas time and enter the New Year with fresh vigour and stamina. I look forward to joining with you in a service as soon as it is feasible. With love and prayers.”

**Cubs Christmas Sleepover.** Despite the latest restrictions, Cubs have continued to meet on Zoom with a wide range of fun activities, quizzes and badge work organised by their leaders. This week was due to be their last meeting and so, on Friday, they celebrated with a virtual sleepover; how does that work you may ask, as I did?

The evening began with 24 Cubs and some parents (who seem to enjoy all this as much as the children) taking part in an ‘edible snowman make’ followed by games. Then everyone settled down to watch a Christmas film accompanied of course by popcorn. Following the film, it was time for bed in a den they had built themselves and, in theory, they settled down to sleep. Early on Wednesday morning they were online again for a shared breakfast and a catch up, then a ‘Christmas hunt’ before saying goodbye for the Christmas break. Everything needed to make the sleepover a success, including popcorn, was delivered to their door in a goodie bag by the Leaders; this included badges won during this term and Christmas cards.

3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh Cub Leaders have done an amazing job throughout these past 10 months, and we wish them a well-deserved rest this Christmas. *Lesley.*

**There are an amazing number of houses with Christmas lights** on, especially Walsingham, where they are collecting for the Marsden, but I also liked this Christmas top for the letter box outside Joan Tolley's house. *Catherine*



# Wimbledon Circuit - Prayers from the District

Some of you may know there is a weekly District email, encouraging us and giving us news. Emma wrote the prayers for 13<sup>th</sup> December issue, accompanying them with this photo of our church.

By the way, if you'd like to receive this regular email, do let me know - *Vivienne*

**Sunday 13 December 2020**

God of hope and redeemer of the world,

During this advent, we imagine you coming as though we sit in a waiting room, eager to see the door open and our name being called,

A voice beckoning us to come in so that you may help us with our need

A place of hope to dispel our fear of the worst

And to leave in hope, knowing that healing has begun  
Amen.

The people of the Wimbledon Circuit ask your prayers:

- To continue to be thankful to the Lord for all the positives at such difficult time
- for time and space to do the things we have put on hold for a long time,
- for learning new ways of being church,
- the discovery of zoom and other initiatives which nurture our spiritual growth
- for not being rushed off our feet from one meeting to another and having the opportunity to sit and eat together as a family
- For church members and people, we have come to know who are struggling to face each day
- For wisdom to work through the challenges which has affected our churches throughout the outbreak of Covid and being in lockdown



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## Contact Details

**Contact:** Jeananne (07729 028850) - [contact@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:contact@stoneleighmethodist.church)

**All items for future NewsSheets** – to [news@stoneleighmethodist.church](mailto:news@stoneleighmethodist.church) or phone 020 8393 2155

### Online Services etc

**Our weekly News/Service sheet** is delivered to every member, and also a YouTube or Zoom Sunday Service is available to those able to receive it. A DVD copy is also available – contact Jeananne.

**The Ruxley/Stoneleigh Thursday Morning prayer** (10:00am) by Zoom is open to all. It is followed by Chat Time and virtual tea/coffee from 10:45-11:15. Email to [publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk](mailto:publicity@ruxley-church.org.uk) by Tuesday for details and a copy of the liturgy too.

# Morning Worship – Sunday 20 December 10:30am

*Fourth Sunday in Advent. Led by Richard Graham.*

Watch live on YouTube: [youtu.be/tT7SA61BGU](https://youtu.be/tT7SA61BGU) or join on Zoom: [bit.ly/2J5jvY8](https://bit.ly/2J5jvY8)

To join the Morning Service through Zoom go to [bit.ly/2J5jvY8](https://bit.ly/2J5jvY8)  
and if prompted, use Meeting ID: **874 6773 6490**, and Passcode **702336**.

On your home phone, dial **020 3481 5240**, listen to the announcement and enter the meeting ID **874 6773 6490** followed by # (hash) when prompted; just # on its own when asked for your Participant ID; and when prompted, the passcode **702336** followed by #.

And that's it: you should be connected and are able to listen into the service.  
Simply hang up when the service finishes, or whenever you want to leave.

To unmute yourself during the post-service chat time, press \*6

## Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26

(MSG)

Your love, God, is my song, and I'll sing it!  
I'm forever telling everyone  
how faithful you are.  
I'll never quit telling the story of your love—  
how you built the cosmos  
and guaranteed everything in it.  
Your love has always been our lives' foundation,  
your fidelity has been the roof over our world.  
You once said,  
"I joined forces with my chosen leader,  
I pledged my word to my servant, David, saying,  
'Everyone descending from you is guaranteed life;  
I'll make your rule as solid and lasting as rock.'"

A long time ago you spoke in a vision,  
you spoke to your faithful beloved:  
"I've crowned a hero,  
I chose the best I could find;  
I found David, my servant,  
poured holy oil on his head,  
And I'll keep my hand steadily on him,  
yes, I'll stick with him through thick and thin.  
No enemy will get the best of him,  
no scoundrel will do him in.  
I'll weed out all who oppose him,  
I'll clean out all who hate him.  
I'm with him for good and I'll love him forever;  
I've set him on high—he's riding high!  
I've put Ocean in his one hand, River in the other;  
he'll call out, 'Oh, my Father—my God,  
my Rock of Salvation!'

## Advent Candles – Fourth Sunday in Advent

(Roots)

*The first Advent candle is lit:*

We light the first candle to say that we believe in the healing light of God.

*The second Advent candle is lit:*

We light the second candle to affirm that we believe in the power of forgiving love.

*The third Advent candle is lit:*

We kindle the third candle to declare that we believe it is God's will  
to bring all into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

To remember how Jesus came in deep humility, full of grace, to wash the feet of the world,  
we light the fourth candle.

*The fourth Advent candle is lit:*

We believe that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

## Hymn:

Ding dong! Merrily on high,  
in heaven the bells are ringing,  
ding dong! Verily the sky,  
is riven with angels singing:

*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*

E'en so here below, below,  
let steeple bells be swungen;  
and io, io, io,  
by priest and people sungen.

*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*

Ding dong! Merrily on high,  
the curse of sin is broken:  
ding dong! Open up your eyes,  
the celebration's starting!

*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*

*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,  
fa la la la la, la la la la;

'tis the season to be jolly,  
fa la la la la, la la la la.

Strike the harp and join the chorus,  
fa la la, la la la, la la la;

all together sing we joyous:

fa la la la la, la la la la.

G. R. Woodward (1848-1934), T. Oliphant (1799-1873)  
Adpt. Rend Collective, © 2014 Thankyou Music,  
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## Prayers of Praise & Confession

We may be weary or downhearted.

Still we say: let our hearts be glad for God is always here.

We can approach God with confidence,

knowing that God has always been with us.

Let our hearts be glad!

God, you hovered over chaos, like a brooding hen, bringing order over chaos. But we – through thought, deed, misdeed and omission – have quenched the spirit of life that you give us. We have turned our faces away. So now, we turn my faces back to you, light of all light, God of all gods, and ask for the light of your life to lift us again. Bring us out of chaos into the order of creation, for your name's sake, and for the sake of your goodness that surrounds us.

*Pause*

Jesus, son of God and son of Mary, you came among us, baptising with fire and light, calling all to the true vocation of humanity: to reflect the glory of the creator. We thank you for your work among us, how you gathered, how you spoke, how you ate and drank, how you left your Spirit to lift us up and hold us in the light. We praise you, because you came to us, and keep coming to us, because of your great love. Amen.

## Magnificat: a reflective monologue based on Luke 1: 26-38

(Roots)

## Hymn: Singing the Faith 186

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of his word;  
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!  
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
his holy name — the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;  
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!  
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and for evermore!

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## Message

## Song: Mary did you know?

## Prayers of Intercession

(SU)

Lord, we pray for those who feel undervalued, who feel that they are no good at anything; those who feel sidelined or ignored at work; those who feel they are invisible. Father, in your sight each of us has value and worth. Help us to look for good things in others.

Lord, we pray for those who feel they are alone; deserted by friends and family; deserted by you. Father, you have promised that you are with us wherever we go and whatever we're doing. We can never escape from your presence.

Lord, we remember those who are afraid, of people, of events, or the unknown. Father, drive away their fears and comfort them with the assurance of your love.

Lord, we pray for the lost, especially those who see no purpose to their life, or those who have addictions. Father, help them to know your love. Place them in the warmth of families and the family of the church.

Lord, we remember those who have been hurt by mean words and unkind treatment from other people. Father, give us the opportunity to treat them with kindness, generosity and love.

Lord, we sympathise with those who feel they are powerless and have no influence, who feel that nobody listens to them or cares about what they say. Father, give us all a sense of how great you are. You are God Almighty.

We ask these prayers in the name of Jesus who showed us that God has not left us lost and alone, but showered his generous love upon us. **Amen.**

## 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.  
Forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

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: Singing the Faith 350

I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship,  
should set his love upon the sons of men,  
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers,  
to bring them back, they know not how or when.  
But this I know, that he was born of Mary  
when Bethlem's manger was his only home,  
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,  
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

I cannot tell how silently he suffered,  
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,  
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,  
the crown of pain to three-and-thirty years.  
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted,  
and stays our sin, and calms our lurking fear,  
and lifts the burden from the heavy-laden,  
for yet the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is here.

I cannot tell how he will win the nations,  
how he will claim his earthly heritage,  
how satisfy the needs and aspirations  
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.  
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,  
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,  
and some glad day his sun shall shine in splendour,  
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,  
when at his bidding every storm is stilled,  
or who can say how great the jubilation  
when all the hearts of men with love are filled.  
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,  
and myriad, myriad human voices sing,  
and earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, will answer:  
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

William Young Fullerton (1857–1932)  
Public Domain

## Blessing

Have no fear;  
whoever we are, wherever we go;  
the Lord is our strength and our song.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

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# Carol Service – Sunday 20 December, 6:30pm

Watch on YouTube: [youtu.be/tQdtMUy-yTY](https://youtu.be/tQdtMUy-yTY) or join on Zoom: [bit.ly/2J5jvY8](https://bit.ly/2J5jvY8)

*The Carol Service will be available on YouTube from 6:30pm on Sunday evening, and will also be on Zoom at the same time for those who wish to connect via phone.*

To join the Carol Service through Zoom go to [bit.ly/2J5jvY8](https://bit.ly/2J5jvY8)  
and if prompted, use Meeting ID: **874 6773 6490**, and Passcode **702336**.

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*Based on 'The Picture of the Manger'  
Roots for Churches Ltd*

*A big "thank you" to all who took part  
in the Service, and to the technical team  
for putting it together.*

# Christmas Day service with Ruxley Church – 10:00am

Led by Rev Emma Cusack

Watch on YouTube: [youtu.be/doxfmCqYVa0](https://youtu.be/doxfmCqYVa0)  
or join on Zoom: [us02web.zoom.us/j/6641594384](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6641594384)

To join the Christmas Day Service through Zoom go to [us02web.zoom.us/j/6641594384](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6641594384) and if prompted, use Meeting ID: **664 159 4384**, and Passcode **123123**.

*Note that these are different Zoom credentials than our usual services as this service is being hosted by Ruxley Church.*

On your home phone, dial **020 3481 5240**, listen to the announcement and enter the meeting ID **664 159 4384** followed by # (hash) when prompted; just # on its own when asked for your Participant ID; and when prompted, the passcode **123123** followed by #.

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## Advent Candles – Fourth Sunday in Advent

(Roots)

*The first Advent candle is lit:*

We light the first candle to say that we believe in the healing light of God.

*The second Advent candle is lit:*

We light the second candle to affirm that we believe in the power of forgiving love.

*The third Advent candle is lit:*

We kindle the third candle to declare that we believe it is God's will to bring all into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

*The fourth Advent candle is lit:*

We lit the fourth candle to remember how Jesus came in deep humility, full of grace to wash the feet of the world.

*The centre Advent candle is lit:*

We light the glorious candle to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world. May the light of Christ shine in our lives, shine through our eyes and illumine the whole world.

**Amen.**

## Carol:

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!*

God of God,  
Light of Light,  
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
very God, begotten, not created:

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:  
'Glory to God, in the highest:'

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be 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!*

Attributed to John Francis Wade (c. 1711–1786)  
Public Domain

### **Opening Prayer**

Here we are, Jesus, on this Christmas Day  
Here you are, Lord Jesus, always ready for us.  
Here I am God, ready for you  
Here you are Emmanuel, always with us  
Grant us your Spirit of joy and peace.

### **A Christmas Collect**

(MWB)

God of light and hope,  
Of stars and surprises  
Open our eyes to your glory  
and our hearts to your presence,  
that we may respond with joy to the angel song  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### **Christmas Presents - show and tell**

#### **Carol:**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!  
Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Isaac Watts (1674–1748)  
Public Domain

### **Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

(TLB)

The people who walk in darkness shall see a great Light—a Light that will shine on all those who live in the land of the shadow of death. For Israel will again be great, filled with joy like that of reapers when the harvest time has come, and like that of men dividing up the plunder they have won. For God will break the chains that bind his people and the whip that scourges them, just as he did when he destroyed the vast host of the Midianites by Gideon's little band. In that glorious day of peace there will no longer be the issuing of battle gear; no more the bloodstained uniforms of war; all such will be burned.

For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. These will be his royal titles: 'Wonderful', 'Counsellor', 'The Mighty God', 'The Everlasting Father', 'The Prince of Peace'. His ever-expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule with perfect fairness and justice from the throne of his father David. He will bring true justice and peace to all the nations of the world. This is going to happen because the Lord of heaven's armies has dedicated himself to do it!

### **Carol:**

Hark! The herald-angels sing  
glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim:  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark! The herald-angels sing  
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!  
Hail, the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel:

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun 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:

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)  
Public Domain

### **Short Reflection**

#### **A time of Prayer**

### **Carol:**

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all the earth!  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him still  
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in;  
be born in us today!  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Immanuel!

### **Closing prayer**

God, you remind us that the truest gift is the gift of love.  
Today, the giving and unwrapping gifts, with joy and maybe even disappointment,  
let us love one another,  
because love comes from you.  
And love is the best thing worth celebrating.  
**Amen.**

### **A prayer of blessing**

May the wisdom of the Wonderful Counsellor,  
The peace of the Prince of Peace,  
The love of the everlasting Father  
And the blessing of our mighty God  
Rest on us and all those we pray for  
This Christmas Day and always. **Amen**

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# Circuit Service – Sunday 27 December 10:30am

Led by Rev Paul Timmis, Rev Emma Cusack, and Deacon Dawn Canham

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## Welcome & Introduction

Rev Paul Timmis

## Call to worship

Rev Emma Cusack

Let us all, here, young and old,  
be like Anna and Simeon –  
nurtured in the place of prayer,  
and looking to the world for the signs of God's presence.  
Held together by this beloved truth,  
we turn together to worship  
the one who calls us all  
in prayer and practice  
towards the works of love. **Amen.**

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## Hymn: Singing the Faith 215

See, amid the winter's snow,  
born for us on earth below,  
see, the Lamb of God appears,  
promised from eternal years!

*Hail, O ever-blessèd morn!  
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!  
Sing through all Jerusalem:  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

Lo, within a manger lies  
he who built the starry skies,  
he who, throned in height sublime,  
sits amid the cherubim!

Say, ye humble shepherds, say,  
what's your joyful news today;  
wherefore have ye left your sheep  
on the lonely mountain steep?

'As we watched at dead of night,  
lo, we saw a wondrous light:  
angels, singing "Peace on earth,"  
told us of the Saviour's birth.'

Sacred infant, all divine,  
what a tender love was thine,  
thus to come from highest bliss  
down to such a world as this!

Teach, O teach us, holy child,  
by thy face so meek and mild,  
teach us to resemble thee  
in thy sweet humility.

Edward Caswall (1814–1878)  
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**God our Saviour: A prayer of praise and thanksgiving**

*Rev Emma Cusack*

God our Saviour,  
as Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple  
to present him before you,  
we, too, come just as we are,  
with praise and thanksgiving in our hearts,  
to offer our lives to you, our gracious God. **Amen.**

As one year ends and a new one is about to begin...  
As the year draws to an end we reflect on this past year.

What a year it has been.

We think about all we did and said that caused harm or upset.  
We think about all we did and said that brought peace or joy.  
We think about all we didn't do and say that might have made a difference.

Lord, we come before you now,  
as we offer you all the things we hope to do and say next year.  
Help us to speak words to bring peace and joy.  
Help us to act with a spirit of generosity  
so that you will be recognised through all we do and say.

**Amen.**

**Reading: Isaiah 61:10-62:3 (MSG)**

*Deacon Dawn Canham*

I will sing for joy in God,  
explode in praise from deep in my soul!  
He dressed me up in a suit of salvation,  
he outfitted me in a robe of righteousness,  
As a bridegroom who puts on a tuxedo  
and a bride a jewelled tiara.  
For as the earth bursts with spring wildflowers,  
and as a garden cascades with blossoms,  
So the Master, God, brings righteousness into full bloom  
and puts praise on display before the nations.

Regarding Zion, I can't keep my mouth shut,  
regarding Jerusalem, I can't hold my tongue,  
Until her righteousness blazes down like the sun  
and her salvation flames up like a torch.  
Foreign countries will see your righteousness,  
and world leaders your glory.  
You'll get a brand-new name  
straight from the mouth of God.  
You'll be a stunning crown in the palm of God's hand,  
a jewelled gold cup held high in the hand of your God.  
No more will anyone call you Rejected,  
and your country will no more be called Ruined.  
You'll be called Hephzibah (My Delight),  
and your land Beulah (Married),  
Because God delights in you  
and your land will be like a wedding celebration.

The Message, Eugene H Peterson  
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**Hymn: Singing the Faith 187**

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,  
most highly favoured lady.' *Gloria!*

'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,  
all generations laud and honour thee,  
thy son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold;  
most highly favoured lady.' *Gloria!*

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,  
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,  
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name:'  
most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!*

Of her, Immanuel, the Christ was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
and Christian folk throughout the world  
will ever say,  
'Most highly favoured lady.' *Gloria!*

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924)  
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**Address: Hopes for a New Year**

*Rev Paul Timmis*

<b>My hopes for 2021...</b>	<b>Simeon's hopes for the world in 2021...</b>

## Hymn: Singing the Faith 204

In the bleak midwinter  
frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter,  
long ago.

Heaven cannot hold him,  
nor the earth sustain;  
heav'n and earth shall flee away  
when he comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter  
a stable-place sufficed  
God, the Lord Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels  
may have gathered there,  
cherubim and seraphim  
thronged the air —  
but his mother only,  
in her maiden bliss,  
worshipped the Belovèd  
with a kiss.

What can I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man  
I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him —  
give my heart.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894)  
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## Prayers of Intercession

*Deacon Dawn Canham*

### 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.  
Forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

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: Singing the Faith 206

It was on a starry night  
when the hills were bright,  
earth lay sleeping, sleeping calm and still;  
then in a cattle shed,  
in a manger bed  
a boy was born, King of all the world.

*And all the angels sang for him,  
the bells of heaven rang for him;  
for a boy was born, King of all the world.  
And all the angels sang for him,  
the bells of heaven rang for him;  
for a boy was born, King of all the world.*

Soon the shepherds came that way,  
where the baby lay,  
and were kneeling, kneeling by his side.  
And their hearts believed once more,  
for the peace of all;  
for a boy was born, King of all the world.

Joy Webb  
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It's not over, this Birthing.  
There are always newer skies  
into which God can throw stars.

When we begin to think  
that we can predict the Advent of God  
that we can box Christ  
in a stable in Bethlehem,  
that's just the time when God will be born  
in a place we can't imagine and won't believe.

Those who wait for God  
watch with their heart and not their eyes,  
listening, always listening,  
for angel words.