

Epiphany News

The magazine of Holy Epiphany Church

December 2021/January 2022



*“The Word became
flesh and made his
dwelling among us.*

*We have seen his
glory, the glory of
the one and only
Son, who came from
the Father, full of
grace and truth.”*

John 1: 14

May you know God's love, peace, hope and joy this Christmas and in the New Year

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From the Editor

Happy Christmas to all our readers! This magazine is available in printed form and online.

Contributions are welcome by 10 January please, for the February/March edition, to be published on 30 January. Please consider donating towards the cost of publication.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in Epiphany News are those of contributors, not the editor or the ministry team.

We reserve the right to edit or shorten articles or hold them for a later edition. Mary Hogg, Editor



A letter from Mark Payne

We all have our favourite things about Christmas.

They may be family traditions that bring just the little extra joy we all need in wintry times.

Perhaps we celebrate with a glass of mulled wine and indulge in the biggest dinner of the year? Or a musical feast - Handel's Messiah or a Michael Bubl  Christmas Special? As enjoyable as our earthly pleasures are, as Christians our focus is on Jesus – He is the reason for the season. Taking Christ out of Christmas leaves us with M&S! Today the real message of Christmas is overshadowed by commercialisation and secularism and many Christmas cards avoid any mention of Christ.



The recent world leaders' conference and constant reference to 'climate change' have provided a very real focus on the finite

nature of the created world. Mark 13, with its focus on the end of the world, comes to mind. A few years ago, if you spoke about the world ending people would have questioned your sanity. Not now. Major disasters have happened around the world during the past couple of years, along with a world pandemic.

The Bible has a lot to say about the future of planet Earth and yet it's a message that is largely ignored by world leaders and people in general. So, what hope do we have as Christians? Advent has its focus on the second coming of Christ. This is an event Christians are looking forward to. Mark 13: 26-27 says, ***"At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens."***

Those who trust and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are His elect and will be taken out of this world. We are privileged indeed to once again be the recipients of God's love and grace towards his people. Many people have attempted to interpret world events and come up with a date for the return of Christ. Listen to this warning in Mark 13: 5-8, ***'Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains."*** The fact is we don't know when Christ will return but Jesus encouraged his disciples to 'keep watch.'

Christmas is always a great reminder that the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of Jesus came true, ***"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."*** (Isaiah 9: 6)

Last Christmas many of us did unusual things due to the restrictions of Covid. My family met up at the RSPB nature reserve of Arne near Wareham. This year will be different but wherever we are, let's lift our eyes to God in thanks for his intervention on planet earth as we look forward to his return in glory. Let us also refocus our hearts and minds on our love and service for him in the time that he so graciously affords us.

Diane and I wish you God's blessing as we remember the real reason for the season.



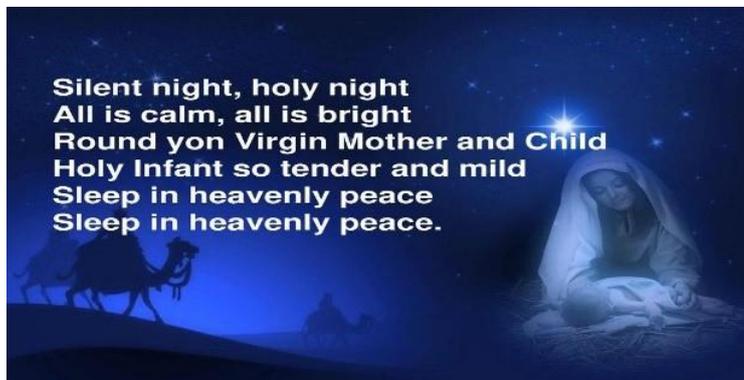
Christmas Peace - by Joanne Davis

*This year I thought I would look at one of my mum's favourite carols
"Silent Night"*



This carol is about a calm, bright silent night, and the wonder of a tender and mild new-born child. It is an expression of deep reflection and spiritual longing for peace and was written in 1816 by a young Catholic priest, Father Joseph Mohr, in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. "Stille Nacht" was first performed on Christmas Eve 1818, at St Nicholas Parish Church in Oberndorf, a village in Austria where Mohr had arrived the year before. On Christmas Eve 1818, Mohr brought the words to Franz Xavier Gruber, a schoolmaster and organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf. He asked him to compose a melody and guitar accompaniment for that night's mass, after river flooding had possibly damaged the church organ.

Nearly 100 years later on Christmas Eve 1914, a 19-year-old soldier, Charles Brewer, stationed on the front lines, noticed a faint sound that he had never before heard on the battlefield - a Christmas carol. The German words to "Stille Nacht" were not familiar, but the tune "Silent Night" certainly was. When the German soldiers finished singing, their foes broke out in cheers. Used to returning fire, the British now replied in song with the English version of the carol.



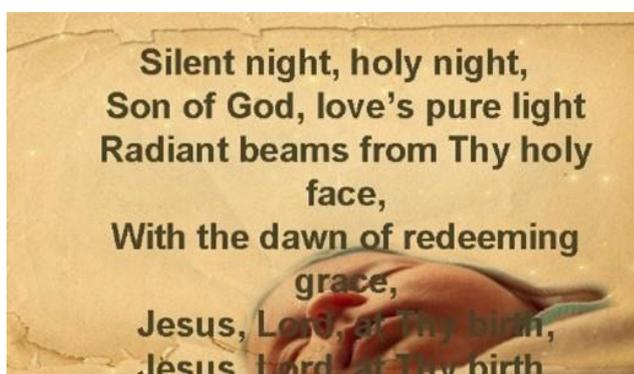
Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace.

*"She gave birth to her firstborn, a son.
She wrapped him in cloths and placed him
in a manger, because there was no room
for them in the inn." (Luke 2: 7)*

*"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."
"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests". (Luke 2: 8 - 9, 13 - 14)*



*Silent night, holy night
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glorious stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia
Christ the Saviour is born
Christ the Saviour is born*



Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy
face,
With the dawn of redeeming
grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the Father full of grace and truth." (John 1: 14)

This special Christmas carol truly is a song of peace and calm about the night our Saviour and Lord was born, coming to give us hope. May you all find peace and hope in Jesus this Christmas time and always.

Poems and comment on the Apostles' Creed - by Tony Ingleby



Maker of Heaven and Earth

God's signature's clear on creation:

His hallmark of love is its chief decoration.

Not scratched in a corner for experts to find

But pervading the whole,

From the pips to the rind.

Like 'Blackpool' in rock you can cut anywhere

In its length, breadth, or depth

And find love written there.

Because love crafted all

with compassionate care.

Maker of Heaven and Earth

When a connoisseur writes about flavours of blackberries and old leather in a wine, I presume that they are writing as a columnist.

They are being paid to write something entertaining and their description comes more from their imagination than their palate.

Am I acting like that when I notice the flavour of love in life processes, social organisation, beauty, music, speech and all things that bring pleasure and purpose to our lives?

And, admitting there are darker flavours like pain, misery and injustice, am I deluded in seeing love in the way some people are moved to take more than their share of the bitterness as they work to reduce these things for other people?

To me these things clearly say, God is Love. Simply recognising that gives me greater pleasure than my favourite wine.

Love came down at Christmas...

Parish Registers from October and November

Baptisms : We welcome into the church family

23rd October Alaia Rue Felicien Malcom

24th October Henry Lee

31st October Charlie Antonio Millatt Belo



Funeral: We extend our deepest sympathy

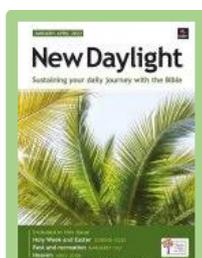
25 October Elizabeth Poole (at Bournemouth Crematorium)
With tea afterwards at Holy Epiphany



What's happening now in Holy Epiphany?

<p>10.00am Sunday</p>  <p>services here</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Worship and Praise Services with Holy Communion 2nd and 4th Sundays</p>  <p>Sunday 5th December Breakfast@9 Christmas Special booking required 10.00am Toy Service</p> <p>Sunday 19th December 10.00am Readings and Carols with mince pies</p> <p>Friday 24th December 4.00pm Carols by Candlelight 11.00pm Midnight Communion - Rev Robin Harger</p> <p>Christmas Day 10.00 am Holy Communion - Rev Paul Collins</p> <p>No Service on Sunday 26th December</p> <p>Sunday 9 January Patronal Festival - Rev Robin Harger</p> <p>Rev Robin Harger is taking Holy Communion Services on 23rd and 30th January</p>
	<p>Home Group – a friendly group who meet fortnightly to share fellowship, study God's word and pray. We meet on alternate Thursdays in the Jubilee Room, from 10.30 - 11.30am. All are welcome so please contact Alan or Mary Hogg on 01202 511759 if you would like to join.</p>
<p>PRAYER <i>changes things</i></p>	<p>Prayer Meetings are taking place weekly, via Zoom, mostly on Wednesdays from 6 – 6.40pm. All are welcome.</p> <p>Contact Mark Vincent, Joanne Davis, or Alan Hogg for details of how to join.</p>
	<p>Epiphany Bright Stars – our parent/carer and toddler group has re-started on Tuesday afternoons in term-time from 1.30 – 3.00pm in the church.</p> <p>A booking system is in place, please email Epiphanybrightstars@gmail.com if you wish to attend. All adults are asked to take a lateral flow test within 24 hours of coming to the group. At the moment we will not be offering refreshments so please bring your own drink.</p> <p>Cost is £1 per family. Contact Jodie Burge on 01202 776270.</p>
	<p>Messy Church – family fun for parents and children followed by a shared meal. Games, craft activities, biscuit or cake decorating, Bible stories and buffet tea. Usually on the 3rd Sunday of the month - 3.00 – 5.00pm in the church.</p> <p>Meetings are still on hold: contact Mary Hogg on 01202 511759</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For a Christmas Messy Church at home - Google Messy Christmas at home (messychurch.org.uk)</p>
	<p>Muscliff Care Home Service: – monthly on Mondays at 2.30pm</p> <p>Monthly visits are still happening via Zoom.</p>
	<p>Epiphany Pre-School meets Monday - Friday in the church hall during term-time from 9.00am to 3.00pm. Please check dates with the pre-school staff.</p> <p>Phone 01202 612337 for more information</p>

	<p>Tea Cosy – Meetings are still on hold.</p>	
<p>All are welcome</p>	<p>Wednesday Coffee Mornings Weekly from 10.30am – 12.00 noon. All ages are welcome. Christmas Special with buffet lunch December 22nd - Coffee from 10.30 with Christmas Carols from 11.30am followed by a buffet lunch. For catering purposes, please let Joanne Davis know if you want to stay for lunch. The event is free but there is a voluntary collection for Hope for Food, for those less fortunate this Christmas. If you need a lift, please also let Joanne know. No meeting on December 29th</p>	 <p>Choir practices Fridays 7-8pm</p> <p>3rd December 10th December 17th December 7th January 2022 21st January</p>
	<p>Coffee and Cake at The Barn will re-start in the Spring</p>	
	<p>Hymns and Cake – Join in with some favourite hymns, learn a little about them and afterwards enjoy tea and cake. We hope to start up Hymns and Cake again in the New Year. Keep an eye out for information in the notices or speak to Joanne Davis for more details on 07906 355271.</p>	
	<p>Beavers Jacqui Elena jacqui.elena15@gmail.com Cubs Jan Kingsland 01202 517627 Scouts Simon Blake 07500 901 561</p>	 <p>Brownies Vicky Williams brownies-40thbournemouth@outlook.com Guides and Rainbows Sandra Coomber 07712 129445</p>



Daily Bible notes are a great way to root our lives in the Bible through reading, reflection, and prayer.

Through them, God will enable us to grow and deepen our faith.

New Daylight or Day by Day with God can be ordered now.

See Mary Hogg for more information



0800 804 8044
DailyHOPE
A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

The Church of England's 'Daily Hope' phone line

If you have no access to the Internet, you can listen free, each day, to a hymn with an encouraging talk and a prayer, lasting about 20 minutes.

Telephone number 0800 804 8044

Friendship line 01202 022987

If you're feeling lonely, or just a bit out of sorts, then give the PramaLife friendship line a call. They have a team of volunteers who would love to chat with you. All volunteers are local people, who will be happy to listen, or talk about whatever is on your mind.

“A Guest for Christmas” – by Marion Richards



***Jesus, Immanuel, Saviour and Lord,
How do people see you at home and abroad?
When they look with delight upon Christmas card scenes
Do they stop to consider what your birth really means?
Jesus, the Christ Child born in a stable
Wrapped in swaddling and bearing the label:
‘God’s own dear Son sent from Heaven above,
Precious gift to mankind, delivered with love.’***

***Jesus, Immanuel, Light of the World,
When people receive you, your love is unfurled.
You shine through the darkness with conviction of sin
And freely forgive sinners who welcome you in.
Jesus, Immanuel, Lord of Salvation –
God’s Word to mankind before all creation –
God’s glory revealed in a Bethlehem manger,
Our Rock, our strength, our rescue from danger.***

***Jesus, Immanuel, Servant and King,
Do people worship you when they blithely sing
Their carols at Yuletide in candlelight’s glow?
Do they truly give thanks for the mercy you show?
Jesus, Immanuel, Pure Prince of Peace,
When will our wretched stubbornness cease?
When will lost souls of every torn nation
Open their hearts to your gentle persuasion?***

***Jesus, Immanuel, Redeemer and Friend,
Your birth is the beginning of life without end.
God’s Gospel desire is to dwell within hearts -
And when hearts meet with Jesus true relationship starts.
Jesus, Immanuel, God with us – always,
When will folk honour you with sincere heartfelt praise?
When will the world see amidst earth’s short-lived pleasure
God’s gift in Jesus is our eternal treasure?***

***Jesus, Immanuel, both Divine and hu-man,
Please help us to seek your Kingdom plan.
To reconcile mankind to God is why Jesus was born
On that first Christmas Day in the wake of a new dawn
Jesus, Immanuel, our New Life and our Rest,
Please help us to invite you to be our Christmas guest:
When seated at table, feasting on turkey and wine,
May we feast forever with the Christ-child Divine.***



I wrote this a few years ago but regard the content as relevant today as it was when I first had the inspiration to write it. God in Christ invites us to draw close to him in a Christian family relationship.

I pray at this special family time of year all people will invite Jesus to be their Christmas guest. May his light shine to reveal his glory and the richness of God's blessings in Christ and remain with us not only for Christmas but for all the days to come.

What a wonderful and precious gift we have when we choose to invite Jesus into our lives.

Obituary: Elizabeth Poole 1st May 1935- 27th September 2021



Sadly, Elizabeth Poole passed away on 27th September 2021. Her funeral was held at Bournemouth Crematorium on 25th October with many family and friends in attendance and Mark Payne taking the service.

Elizabeth was born at Studland in 1935 and moved to Bournemouth when she got married in 1957. Elizabeth worshipped at Epiphany Church for over 50 years, after the family moved to Muscliffe Lane in 1970, and had fond memories of the church. Her son Chris was baptised there in 1971 and he attended confirmation classes with the Rev. Allan Swain at the vicarage in 1982.

Elizabeth always enjoyed the 'holiday at home' weeks that the Rev. Ken Batt organised each year. Elizabeth ran the playgroups at Priory View Road and in Epiphany church hall for 27 years and she was a school governor at Epiphany school when it opened in 1987. She loved children and at her funeral service everyone sang the nursery rhyme, 'The Wheels on the Bus Go Round & Round'. Her greatest love was for her two sons Andy and Chris. Her sister Ann lives in Kent where the family would visit every year. We all know Elizabeth has gone to a better place where we will meet again one day.

***"When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home – what joy shall fill my heart
Then shall I bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, my God how great Thou art!"***

Praying with St Paul – Galatians 4: 4 - 7



"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

We tend to think the New Testament was written in the order we find it in the Bible, the gospels, going on to Acts of the Apostles and the letters being written later. In fact, our quotation from St Paul, above, comes from possibly the earliest New Testament document, his letter to Christians in Galatia, now part of Turkey. Paul does not talk in detail about Jesus' birth but tells us here how very important it was.

These verses are not a prayer in themselves, but they describe what and who makes us able to pray at all – how it is that we can call God our Father. It's because Jesus, God's son, born of a woman, subject to God's law, kept that law perfectly and was therefore able to save us from the penalty of our law-breaking and make us sons of God – all achieved by the work of the holy spirit in our hearts.

We meet for prayer by Zoom - get in touch with Mark V or Joanne, if you have a prayer request.

News from Malawi – Agape Outreach Ministry – Dennis and Sheila Eaton



For over eighteen months the challenges of Covid-19 have been with us and uncertainties continue. But how re-assuring it is to know that God is in control – the times and seasons are in His hands! This for us has meant we have been restricted to the UK whilst Malawi was a UK “red” listed country.

The incidence of Covid-19 in Malawi has, thankfully, not reached the large figures we have experienced in the UK. Some in our village have had Covid, including a village chief who subsequently died.

But God’s work is not hindered – He is working through our dear and faithful friends, Syford and Elizabeth, who have been kept free from the virus and in good health. Has it ever struck you that God often leads His people into situations which, humanly speaking, make them feel powerless – people standing on the banks of the Red Sea, or facing seemingly impenetrable city walls, or a small bunch of insignificant people sent out to change the world? God asks us to trust Him and step out in faith. Ours is to obey, and then to stand back in wonder, worship and praise, acknowledging that all that is achieved is all of Him, and not of us.



Here is a brief update of how God has been guiding the work up to September 2021. As Syford and Elizabeth faithfully continue to make Christ known over the months, they have been encouraged to see new people attending the eight churches spread across the bush area, as well as seeing spiritual growth. Syford recently wrote, “We thank God that we are able to see the fruit of repentance in many individuals. There is much love, forgiveness, tolerance and unity among many members. This we know is not from men, but God is helping us. We thank you very much for your faithful prayers.”



We praise the Lord that in our children’s work numbers have risen, with 120 to 140 children, aged 4 to 13, attending each week. Just before this increase, five new workers from our church joined the work – helping in both caring and teaching. Please pray the children will come to a living faith in God and won’t be damaged by godless example of people who profess a faith in Christ but have no relationship with Him. For the first time in our area, Samaritan’s Purse delivered Christmas shoe boxes to the children. They were thrilled with the contents and each box included a small gospel booklet in their language.



Through the farming activities God enabled us to establish, much blessing is being brought to many. We thank God for the water supply from the borehole and for the effectiveness of the solar-powered irrigation system. The food from our field feeds the 100+ orphans and vulnerable children in our 2 pre-schools and is given to widows and to disabled and vulnerable people. The abundant supply of vegetables was given to 200+ patients in a government hospital. These have been opportunities for Gospel witness, with people praising the Lord for showing His love through such kindness.



We are constructing a new church building to replace one which is in a state of imminent collapse. Church members of all ages worked to make 27,000 mud-bricks – ladies fetching water and men digging and mixing mud. Very hard work in the hot sun! We are assisting with the cost of iron roofing sheets and cement. Please pray the building work will be completed safely and be a place where God’s Word is faithfully taught, and many be born-again of the Spirit of God and live lives worthy of the gospel, to God’s glory.



Bible Thought – from Nick Hiscocks.

Some years ago, someone worked out that the third Monday in January was officially the most depressing day of the year! Cheery thought!

But it does resonate - there is a lot that makes life hard going at this time of year.

We cling. He upholds - Psalm 63: 8

Psalm 63 verse 8 is a treasure. It is the testimony of God's King, David, in the first place. And it is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus knew that as he clung to his heavenly Father, as we hear him clinging on the cross, crying out to his Father, that his Father God would uphold him and keep him - as we see in the resurrection. And as those who are secure in Christ, we can echo his words and say too, *'My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.'* We cling. He upholds.

We cling – but the question is, 'what does it mean to cling to God?' The rest of the psalm gives lots of answers to that. Basically, the psalm describes David continuing to direct his whole life to God, not to anywhere else.

God is still the one we long for – look at verse 1.

"You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water."

Clinging doesn't mean enjoying life all the time. It doesn't mean getting from God everything we want or think we need. But it does mean knowing that the Lord God is who we need.

Let us keep seeking God. That is, let's keep making Him the one we go to. So even when life feels impossibly pressured, clinging to God at least means still talking to God. Going to Him with everything you feel and want and hope for. Don't stop going to Him, rather than anywhere else. We still seek Him.

We also still praise God - look at verses 2-5,

"I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you."

I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name, I will lift up my hands.

I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you."

As we start a new year, I am reminded of the practice of recording regular thanks to God, for example, by thinking of 5 things every day for which to give sincere thanks.

Don't underestimate the invisible blessings of God when the visible ones are hard to spot. Keep counting the blessings of salvation; our peace with God, forgiveness for sinful hearts, power from Him to live His Way, the fellowship of His people and ultimate certainty about the future. They are not less real than the blessings of warmth, food and having better day than we feared.

Let's remember he upholds us.

In verse 8, David says,

"Your right hand upholds me."

It's the hand of power and authority. On the small scale we know that when we look back over our day and realise that He has got us through. He has answered our prayers, sometimes as we hoped, sometimes in different ways. He has not failed on His promise to be with us everywhere we are and all the time.

But on the large scale too. He upholds us until we are all praising Him together. He upholds us until that day when every enemy and everything that is against us is finally dealt with. Say this to God before the end of the day: - you pledge to cling to Him, and He promises to uphold you.

Nick Hiscocks is vicar of Christ Church Westbourne

This Bible Thought was first published online during lockdown and is reproduced here with permission.

Family Page: In the beginning...



At Christmas time we are used to hearing Bible readings about the time more than 2,000 years ago when Mary was told by an angel from God that she was going to have a special baby. He was to be God's son and would be called Jesus. We know from Luke's gospel how Mary was engaged to Joseph, and they had to travel to Bethlehem because the Roman emperor had ordered a census of all the people under his rule.

We hear how the baby was born and the angels visited shepherds keeping watch over their flocks of sheep to tell them that his birth meant good news of great joy. From Matthew's gospel we know about the wise men from the east, who had seen a mysterious star and had come to worship the new-born king.

But if you are in church for the Lessons and Carols on 19 December you will hear the first 14 verses of John's Gospel read. In John chapter 1 there's no Mary and Joseph, no birth, no shepherds, and no wise men. How do these verses relate to Christmas? They give us the backstory.

Who is the baby?

John chapter 1 talks about the beginning of the world, much in the same way as the first chapter of the Old Testament does, in Genesis 1, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*". John says that together with God, right at the beginning, was 'the Word' – a person - and he was God too! He was always at the heart of God. He was the baby at Bethlehem, and he was truly God and truly human.



He made everything, he created all of life and he gives understanding for life, for he gives light to all people. Like in the account of creation in Genesis 1, his light shines in darkness, the darkness of a world that has turned away from God, and it shines among people who reject him.

What has God done?

This is the baby who is born in Bethlehem. God has taken on our human nature. Jesus is ready to heal the great divide between humankind and God by becoming like us – but as a perfect person, without any of the things we do wrong – and dying for us. Christmas is full of wonder. God came in human flesh into human history. John, the writer, was an eyewitness – a friend and follower of Jesus, and he has written his gospel so that we too may believe and trust Jesus.



Sunday 5th December

Christmas Special: Breakfast @9 for Families

Come and hear how God prepared for Jesus' coming as we count down to Christmas

Continental breakfast will be served at 9.00am in the Jubilee Room

You are invited to bring a new toy to contribute to our gifts for children in need

All families are welcome but for catering purposes please contact

alanhogg7@gmail.com to book

and

Worship and Praise: Toy Service at 10.00am



Please bring new toys, unwrapped, for the Salvation Army to give to children who will not otherwise receive many gifts this Christmas