

Christ Church and the Bridgwater Drive Church, Christmas Day 2020

All the music today is pre-recorded from <https://engageworship.org/ideas/christmas-carol-videos>  
If you are watching at home, you may prefer to use the links provided to listen/watch.

**Call to Worship** (based on Psalm 97, set for today)

God rules the Earth with justice:  
Earth and Earth's people rejoice!

All nature serves God:  
Fire clears the way and lightening lights God's path:  
Earth and Earth's people rejoice!

The heavens proclaim God's righteousness;  
All peoples behold God's glory:  
Earth and Earth's people rejoice!

Delight in God, O coastlands and heartlands;  
Give thanks to God, O faithful ones:  
Earth and Earth's people rejoice!

Rev'd Susa A. Blain, UCC

HYMN O come, all ye faithful (R&S 160) <https://youtu.be/5JyWzaCUSkk>

**Opening Prayer**

Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May this Christmas morning make us happy to be your children,  
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

**Lighting of the Advent Candles – Christmas Day Candle**

We light this candle for the baby of Bethlehem,  
For the child born to be king,  
For the boy in the cradle who became the man on the cross,  
The Redeemer and Saviour of the world.  
The darkness is overcome; the light is around us.

**Song – Like a Candle Flame** <https://soundcloud.com/revnev>

**Open the Christmas Gift from the 6 December All Age Service!**

**Reading of the Nativity from Luke: Luke 2:1-20**

HYMN On Christmas Day <https://youtu.be/S5YAVuegic8>

**Reading - Ameliaranne and the Green Umbrella**

Sorry I can't type out the story, but hopefully most of you will be able to watch the service on Facebook or listen to it on CD.

**Yesterday's News** – a poem by Peter Trow from *Shine on Star of Bethlehem*

In the street  
people rushing, pushing and jostling  
all concern for others lost,  
frantically seeking the last present  
thoughtlessly passing the ardent carol singers,  
not even noticing the young man selling the *Big Issue*.  
And I wonder – what does Christmas mean?

In the world,  
children crying at the sound of sirens  
people looking up to the sky fearful not of angel choirs  
but the thunder of jets;  
parents wondering not at good tidings  
but whether sons and daughters will come home again  
from bomber cockpits or army barracks.  
And I wonder – what does Christmas mean?

In the corridors of power, corruption and lies  
politics and partisanship' old scores settled  
anger and bitterness.  
And I wonder – what does Christmas mean?

And I remember:  
in Bethlehem few heard angels, they were busy with other things;  
and Jesus from his birth was homeless,  
and as a man he depended for shelter on others.  
And I remember Herod and recall that lies as the weapons of power,  
oppression and the death of innocents are part of the story  
which we have sanitized into insignificance.

This was yesterday's news.  
Here is today's news:  
In this world of selfishness and sin  
of politics and pain  
Christ was born.  
For this world he died on a cross  
and was raised.

God is with us:  
In this world we have hope,  
in this darkness we have light  
a love which cannot die  
and eternal life

Glory to God!

**Prayers of Intercession** (next page)

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This Christmas, as we remember the birth of Jesus in a stable,  
we are reminded that hope comes in unexpected ways and in unfamiliar places.  
We pray for the work of schools, colleges, teachers, XL mentoring, and Bar n Bus

Wherever the world is in darkness, Lord

**Let there be light.**

This Christmas, as we remember the violence with which soldiers came searching for Jesus,  
we are reminded that conflicts still have devastating effects on children trapped between  
warring sides.

We pray for conflict zones, such as Syria, Yemen and Ethiopia and look for peace.

Wherever the world is in darkness, Lord

**Let there be light.**

This Christmas, as we remember the flight of Jesus' family to Egypt,  
we are reminded of the millions of families now who have not shelter and who face eviction.  
We pray for all homeless people wherever they are in the world, especially Syrian refugees,  
Palestinian refugees and Rohingya refugees.

Wherever the world is in darkness, Lord

**Let there be light.**

This Christmas, as we remember Simeon.

we are reminded of all the elderly who have died with COVID-19 or other causes, those living in  
care-homes unable to see or touch their families for months.

We pray for all those who have been touched by COVID this year – the young who have had their  
educations and careers damaged, workers who have lost jobs, hospital staff, all those who have  
lost loved ones, those whose fragile mental health has taken a battering, and those who have  
slipped into food poverty and debt.

Wherever the world is in darkness, Lord

**Let there be light.**

This Christmas, as we remember those who went to the stable,

we are reminded that we need to make a journey.

We pray for ourselves that as you have come to us,

we may also come to know you,

to know you and to love you more

as we serve other people and reach out to the community around us.

Wherever the world is in darkness, Lord

**Let there be your light.**

HYMN Hark the Herald Angels Sing (R&S 159) <https://youtu.be/MltjJPGXV0>

**Blessing**

Let us go in faith to ponder in our hearts the mystery of this special day.

And may life be born within us,

Christ Jesus be seen among us

and joy surround us like the angels' song. **Amen**