



## **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

### **Luke 2 v 13-14 – The Gloria**

#### **Text: ‘Glory to God in the highest’ part of Luke 2 v 14**

Have you ever listened to a choir or group of singers and as they have sung you have felt truly uplifted, the singing is the best that you have ever heard? I think this is what it must have been like for the shepherds on the hillside that night. Once they had got passed the shock of the angels speaking to them with the news of Jesus’ birth, then they have the great privilege of hearing a host of angels singing to them, with a wonderful heavenly sound and words that glorify God in Heaven.

My daughter Sarah when she was at Jack Hunt School was in the choir and for one of the concerts they were going to sing the Halleluiah chorus from the Messiah. Towards the end of this piece the sopranos have to reach very high notes and it’s very hard for them. All the audience was willing them on to do well in that piece and yes they did it – very well and we all praised them at the end. In the car on the way home I told her that I really enjoyed hearing the choir and what a wonderful musical sound they had provided that night after all their hard work of learning and practicing the music. Practice makes perfect we are often told and it certainly worked for them. Not quite a heavenly choir, but a very enjoyable evening that was had by all.

On this 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent, we continue looking at the songs of Christmas as recorded in Luke’s Gospel and today we come to the Gloria.

This occurs just after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, in a stable at the back of an inn. On the hillside around Bethlehem were shepherds, nothing different or exciting about this, they would have been out every night tending the flocks. But something different does happen, an angel comes to the shepherds with the news of the Messiah’s birth and then the angel is joined by a great company of the heavenly host. Many angels have left the close presence of God for a short while to sing his praises to the earth.

In these few words the Angels from Heaven recognise how wonderful and powerful God is and what a wonderful day this is with the arrival of the promised Messiah. Think of the words that are used – ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven’. The angels putting God in the very highest position possible, no one or thing is greater than God. After all God created the world and everything in it, therefore it is fitting that he is at the highest place possible.

The angels then go on to sing ‘and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests’. What wonderful words these are from God through his messengers, peace to all those



who believe in and love God. These words are a tremendous source of comfort to all believers, you and me.

Last week I asked the question, are we able to glorify our Lord and Saviour this advent season? Hopefully we were all able to answer YES to this question which leads us into this week's words of the Gloria, Glory to God in the highest, again giving us all a chance to praise God.

This week the question is are we able to let the Glory of God shine through us?

How are we going to do this during the current restrictions, when it is harder for us to meet others outside our family groups? Some of us might think this is impossible, but I think that it is possible to let the Glory of God shine through us. We can do this by the way that we interact with people outside our family, either by phoning them, texting them or using social media. If we take time to contact people through these ways, we can show that we care for them and therefore show God's love through these actions.

If we are nervous at doing this, which we all are from time to time, let us all remember the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of the Gloria, 'and peace on earth to those on whom his favour rests'. Let the peace of God surround us at all times, let us listen to God as to what he needs us to do.

As we continue through this Advent season, let each one of continue to praise God, giving thanks for the birth of his Son that we will shortly be celebrating. Let each one of us remember the reason for the season of Advent.

May the Glory of God shine through us 'And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4 v 7).

**AMEN**