

Christmas Day recorded service 2020

V1: Welcome

Good morning and happy Christmas! Thank you for watching our Christmas Day service from Cudham and Downe. I'm Rev John Musson, and I'm joined by Helen.

A prayer around the crib...

The Angel said.. I bring you good news of great joy.

A Saviour has been born to you. Alleluia!

To us a child is born, a son is given. Alleluia!

Hear the words of St Luke:

When the Angels had gone from them into heaven, the Shepherd said to one another, "let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." So they hurried, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

He is Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

We worship and adore him. Alleluia!

And now we hear, and feel free to join in with, Cudham School singing Away in a manger..

Confession by advent candles

I'm now going to light our Christmas Day candle alongside the 4 advent candles – Jesus Christ is the light of the world. **A light no darkness can quench.**

And yet we know there are dark places in our lives – as we come with the shepherds before the newborn Christ we open our hearts in penitence and faith.

You Lord, were born for our salvation.

Lord have mercy: **Lord have mercy**

You came as Saviour to bring wholeness and peace.

Christ have mercy: **Christ have mercy**

You came to bring light into the darkness of our lives.

Lord have mercy: **Lord have mercy**

May Almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever. **Amen**

The special Prayer for today, Christmas 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 our eternal God. **Amen.**

Our bible reading today is Luke 2:1-20

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Talk – Rev John Musson

Just what I've always wanted – hope you've been able to say that about your presents this year – or maybe you've not opened them yet? Just what we wanted – do you think the shepherds would have said that? No Things didn't turn out as the shepherds expected, did they – there they were, looking after their sheep, and then – the shepherds were amazed by the words of the angels, amazed when they visited the stable, and so amazed they went back praising God because everything was just as the angels told them. I wonder if your Christmas has turned out different to how you expected? Maybe sadly not seeing the family and friends you expected, or unable to do the boxing day sales tomorrow(!) or doing more walking around our beautiful countryside or no church service?

A different sort of Christmas – wonder if that needs different presents? Apparently these are in short supply again and make excellent presents*(hold up toilet roll)* - no we're not hoarding, the company we get these from send us them in bulk and help provide toilets in the developing world - With the help from toilet rolls 3 words to help us think and ponder the words of the angels how the shepherds felt and acted at this amazing news!

1. Glory - Did you notice exactly what the angelic choir sang – 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.' Glory – it's the same word we hear at the beginning of John's gospel – it's about who God is, and particularly about Jesus what God has done – he offers us his glory in the person of Jesus Christ, the one born in Bethlehem – and so to our 2nd word

2. News - Isn't the news awful at the moment – covid19, Brexit, people we know who are ill, missing our families – but this news wasn't awful news – the angel describes it as 'good news' that will be great joy to all people. Good news – it's the best news ever – and it's for all people. That means you and me. What's really amazing about this event is that the first people who get to know that God's son our saviour has been born is not the roman governor, or Herod in his palace, but the ordinary people, even the outcasts – shepherds then were smelly people, and because of their job, couldn't even get to worship. Yet that's just like God, as we see in the life of Jesus – his concern for the everyday ordinary people- that's good news then, and it's good news now too... so to our 3rd word

3. Joy - Not much joy around this Christmas? maybe we're looking in the wrong place? – This was good news of great joy to all the people – not in material things, not even Christmas pudding or presents, but in a person- a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger- in a cattle stall – do you remember I said the news was for all people? And the simplicity of Jesus birth says the same – not in royal house or hall, but in a stable dark and dim, the word made flesh was born, a light for all. Well that's it then – a story to think about, with the help of the gift of toilet rolls – not quite- one final word...

Go! The shepherds could have stayed frightened in their field, or ignored the angelic messenger – but they didn't – they chose to go – let's go to Bethlehem to see this thing that has happened, which the lord has told us about – they knew that this was the Lord God's message and didn't hang around – they hurried to nearby Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph – and the baby in the manger – and having gone, they didn't stop – they spread the word – in other words, they kept going, and (v20) returned home, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

They'd caught the angel's message, checked it out, made it their own and shared it with others.

What about us – are we ready this strange Christmas to do the same? To see God's glory, to have ears open to hear the news, to be filled with joy because of Jesus birth, and to go and tell others what we have heard and seen?

The Prayers

Today, in all the demands,
we pray for those who are facing a Christmas
without someone they love.
God of goodness,
hear us and be with us.

Today, in all the delights,
we pray for those who are facing a Christmas alone.
God of goodness... **hear us and be with us.**

Today, in all the celebration, we pray for those who are facing conflicts.
God of goodness... **hear us and be with us.**

Today, in all the business, we pray for under stress, and those suffering from covid19.
God of goodness... **hear us and be with us.**

Let's keep a few moments of silence to offer our own prayers to God.

As our saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Peace

To us a child is born, to us a child is given, and his name shall be called The Prince of Peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you:
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace

Our next carol performed by Bearpark and Esh Colliery band and Northern spirit singers, is Hark the herald angels sing.

Communion: While we can't all join in communion together, Helen and I are going to receive on behalf of us all – and I invite you to receive from the Lord Jesus spiritually as we hear this communion prayer and reflect that the baby born in Bethlehem became the king who died for us on the cross.

Lord of all life, you created the universe,
where all living things reflect your glory.
You give us this great and beautiful earth,
to discover and to cherish.

You give us happy times and things to celebrate.
In these we taste your kingdom, a feast for all your children.

You made us all, each wonderfully different,
to join with the angels and sing your praise:
**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and
might, heaven and earth are full of your
glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

We thank you, loving Father, because, when we
turned away, you sent Jesus, your Son.
He gave his life for us on the cross and shows us the
way to live.
Send your Holy Spirit, that these gifts of bread and
Wine may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

On the night before he died, when darkness had
fallen, Jesus took bread.
He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his
disciples, saying: 'This is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,

for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.
As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit,
and change us more and more to be like Jesus our
Saviour.

Help us, Father, to love one another, as we look
forward to that day when suffering is ended,
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.
And now with St Mary, St Peter and St Paul and all your saints
we give you glory, through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit, today and for ever. Amen

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ:
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life. **Amen**

Distribution of Communion

God our father, whose word has come among
us in the holy child of Bethlehem. May the
light of faith brighten our hearts and shine in
our words and deeds through him who is
Christ the Lord . **Amen.**

*Our final carol is 'O come all ye faithful' wonderfully performed by our community choir – if you didn't
manage to see our amazing carol service, have a look out for it on our YouTube channel at
<https://youtu.be/JBu-fa8O71A>*

Conclusion Thanks for joining in with our Christmas Day service – you can find out more about what's going
on in Cudham and Downe on the church website pcd.org.uk. hope you have a great Christmas, different
and strange though it is; just as it was for the shepherds – Here's a closing prayer of 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 Christ child be yours this Christmas.
And the blessing of God almighty ,
the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ Amen.**