

Service for Week 22nd -28th December

2025 Christmas by Chaplain Andy



Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we thank you for the joy of Christmastime: the joy you gave to Mary, the shepherds and the magi as you entered the world in Christ. Inspire us afresh each day with the good news that Christ brought and the reality of his presence in our hearts.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading Luke 2:4-20

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. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and 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.

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. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

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 favor rests." 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."

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

**Holy words, Holy wisdom,
Thanks be to God.**

Reflection

We heard again in our reading the gospel account of Jesus' birth. We have seen it acted out in Nativity plays, and we hear it through the words of the carols that we sing each year. It is for us a very familiar story, and some would say a nice story to tell, and share with the children at Christmas time. The scene in the stable –The shepherds with their lambs standing by. The baby lying in a manger Mary close by with Joseph in the background, the three wise men with their gifts of Gold, Myrrh and Frankincense.

But we need to think beyond that scene – to think what does it mean? What significance is the coming of a baby 2000 years ago to our life today.

Before Jesus people across the world had some very wrong ideas of what God is –and sadly there are many in our world today who have a wrong idea of what God is and how God wants everyone to live. But what did God do to put this right? – He sent himself in the form of a human baby – Jesus Christ. Because in that way of sending Jesus –as a human just like all of us –we can relate to him, to learn from his teachings about what God is really like and to live in the way that God wants us to– in peace and in harmony together.

So, it was through a frail body such as ours that God chose to come. Jesus

needed a human womb from which to be born, a human breast from which to feed, a loving family which took him safely away from Herod to escape to Egypt, and later a very close group of friends to help and support him.

That is what Christmas is all about and is why we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. Yes, there are still those who don't get it – they prefer to think of it as just another nice fairy story. But for many millions of people across the world and for us – it is much more, much more than a story – it is the celebration of when we first got to know God – up close and in a very personal way –and that was brought about through that tiny defenseless baby, born in a manger –born to be Jesus the Christ. **Amen**

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus , I was not there at the stable like the shepherds; I was not one of the twelve you chose to be your Apostles; I was not able to see you heal the sick; I was not there as you broke the bread in the upper room, as they pressed the crown of thorns on your head, as you suffered on the cross, as you appeared to the disciples following your resurrection, as you ascended into heaven.

Yet I can know you as much as any who *were* there, for you are with me now, always by my side.

Amen

Prayers inspired by 'Prayerfully Yours' by Nick Fawcett