

Warfield Church



When Christmas Hurts

**A Christmas Service of
Remembrance**

**Sunday 13th December 2020
3pm**

Led by Revd Catharine Mabuza and Revd Michelle Porter-Babbage

Welcome!

Christmas always seems to be accompanied by jolly songs, numerous advertisements, and the expectation that you will have a good time. But that isn't how it feels for many people. Maybe for you this year has been particularly hard, overshadowed by illness, bereavement, loss or isolation. Christmas seems to highlight the difficulties.

We hope that in this service you will find space to acknowledge this and find comfort from the central message of Christmas – that God sent his Son Jesus to be 'Emmanuel' – God with us.

During the service, please join in with the words printed in bold type if you would like to do so. We remain seated for the whole service as we hear readings and listen to Christmas carols – unfortunately this year we are not able to sing. There will also be candles lit in memory of our loved ones.

If you would like us to remember your loved ones by name as part of the service and you have not already spoken with a member of the welcome team, please ask the team to add names to the list. The names will be read aloud during the service as we remember loved ones and give thanks to God for them.

If you need to use toilet facilities, please exit through the main door, turn left and go into the building opposite.

Welcome

We meet in the name of a loving God
who knows our needs,
hears our cries,
and heals our wounds.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The Candles of Hope

We light the Advent candles as a sign that when all seems dark, there is still light, however small or dim it may seem.

True light of the world,
enter the depths of our lives,
flood the dark and hidden places;
overflow our whole being
with the light of your glory. **Amen.**

Carol

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Adonai, Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin text (c.12th century) translated by J.M. Neale (1851)

Prayer

Come, God-with-us:
**who braves our rejection and hurt,
who holds us in acceptance and love.**

Come God-for-us:
**who whispers in our ears
that each of us are beloved children.**

Come God-under-us:
**who cradles us in arms that never grow weary;
whose lap has room for all.**

Come, God-over-us:
**who watches in the long silence of the night,
that we might rest in peace.**

Come, God-beside-us:
**who steadies us when we falter,
who lifts us up when we fall.**

Come, God-behind-us:
**who picks up all the faded dreams
we drop along the way,
and patchworks them into hope. Amen.**

Bible reading - Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

³You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.

⁴For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.

⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning,
will be fuel for the fire.

⁶ 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.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

Carol - A great and mighty Wonder

*sung by St Martin's Voices, directed by Andrew Earis, with organist Ben Giddens.
Recorded for the Church of England.*

Bible reading - Luke 2:1-7

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.

Reflection – *Mr Richard Page*

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.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
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.

Joseph Mohr (1792 – 1848)

Act of Remembrance

Time is too slow for those who wait
Too swift for those who fear
Too long for those who grieve
Too short for those who rejoice
But for those who love, time is eternity

Henry Van Dyke 1852-1933

At this Christmas time, we come in love and thanksgiving to remember those dear to us, but whom we no longer see...

(The names are read in groups. After each group, we use this response:

*In love and thanksgiving, **we remember them.**)*

Pause

For those who have lit our lives with joy,
for those who have touched us with tenderness,
for those whose loss fills us with longing,
we give thanks in glad remembrance.

We celebrate those who have loved us,
stood by us, and at times driven us mad.

We celebrate those who travelled with us
through the ups and downs of life.

We thank you for them, O Lord.

Carol

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air;
but his mother only,
in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man,
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (c. 1872)

Prayers

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank you for all whom we remember today; for those we have known and loved as friends or as members of our family. May we share with them in eternal life.

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We thank you for the love and support from those around us during the difficult times of the past year, especially for the help and encouragement given by family and friends. Bless and increase their love, we pray.

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We remember all those who are unable to attend this service, especially those who continue to feel the pain of loss and separation. May they find comfort and peace in your presence.

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

We offer you all our precious and sometimes painful memories and ask that you will lead us from today to face the future in confidence and hope. Help us particularly through this Christmas time.

Lord hear us, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

The Lord's Prayer

**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 forever. Amen.**

Poem - Our God of hope

There is a God whose light shines in every darkness.
There is a God who hears every lament.
There is a God who transforms
even the deepest grief.
Therefore you have hope.
You shall sing again, but with a different tune.
You shall dance again, but with a different breath.
Not yet, but one day.
For there is a God
who heals your wound with the gentlest hand.

Michael Mitton

Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
and scatter the darkness from before your path;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Please leave only when you are directed by the welcome team, or if
you prefer, please feel free to sit quietly for a while.
Please take your service sheet with you.*



You are warmly invited to other Christmas services at Warfield Church, both in person and online. Please follow this QR code or go to www.warfield.org.uk/christmas



If you would like to find out more about Warfield Church and the Christian faith, please speak to one of the Welcome Team.

Warfield Church

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