

REVIVE!

This Christmas, may God grant us the power to: "grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and know this love that surpasses knowledge ..." (Ephesians 3:18,19)

I suspect if I asked 100 people what Christmas meant to them, I would get 100 different responses. Take a moment, and ask yourself, *"What does Christmas mean to me?"*

Be encouraged, be inspired, and may your faith rise as we explore this very special season together.

I was with a group of twelve clergy recently and we were asked to say what we would preach on Advent Sunday. One after the other, the clergy wisely spoke about guiding parishioners in their waiting, watching and preparing for the second advent (coming) of Jesus. I was surprised by what bubbled up inside of me! I said, *"I see a picture of Jesus excitedly preparing to return to earth to be with each of us. He was laughing and smiling, spurred on by His love for you and me."*

I still think there is some merit in the picture. Our proof of course is Christmas – His first coming.

His first coming certainly did involve God taking the form of a helpless baby, Jesus, whose mission was to save a badly broken world, finding lost people and bringing light into the darkness.

These are all deeply theological and profoundly significant truths, but also, at the heart of Jesus' coming, was His love for us. WE excite Him!

Be reminded of the overflowing richness of God's immeasurable love this Christmas, and the truth that He wants us to live in joyful union with Him and with each other, enveloped in His peace.

God's Love, Joy and Peace to you and from all of us at CCHC.

Steve and Veronica

Seven Christmas Ponderings

Luke 2:19,
'Mary
treasured
up all these
things and
pondered
them in her
heart.'



The first Christmas was certainly full of mind-boggling events and surprises! Ponder one of these points each day as Christmas approaches.

1. God keeps His promises

The people of Israel had been expecting a Messiah, because God had promised. See Isaiah 7:14 & 9:6; Micah 5:2; there are others – can you list some? What Biblical promises are you walking in now and what are your expectations of God for your future?

2. God became a man

We believe Jesus was 100% man and 100% God. Ask God the Holy Spirit to help you reflect on this mystery and to show you something new that it means for you today – give Him time to show you.

3. Look at where Jesus started

In poverty, obscurity and in the least expected company! (I have to pinch myself here – we are talking about God, the creator and sustainer of the earth!) It is surely a lie of the enemy that would have us think that Jesus would not want to be with us, just as we are. What is the story of Jesus coming to you? Where, when, how? How is He speaking to you today? What is He saying?

4. Jesus shows us what God is like

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). God is born as man and in so doing He experienced birth, vulnerability, danger, rejection and near death in a world of uncertainty. What does this teach you about God and how does that help you on your journey?

5. Jesus brings Joy

It's heart-warming to read the joy that Jesus' birth brought – '*they returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen.*' (Luke 2:8-20). Take time to reflect and praise God for all you have heard and seen of Him in your life, and in those around you. Would it bring joy to someone else to hear your good news stories?

6. Jesus' birth challenges

King Herod was not happy; the presence of Jesus made him uncomfortable, to put it mildly (Matthew 2:16-18). The truth is, we are all made uncomfortable by some of His teaching. What areas of your life need a touch from Jesus Christ to help you to be all you are created to be? Ask the Helper, Holy Spirit, to help you attend to these things?

7. Through Jesus salvation is possible

Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you: He is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2:11). The starting point is knowing I am a sinner and I need a Saviour! Have you received God's salvation? If yes, rejoice with great joy and praise Him. If you're unsure or know you haven't, but would like the guarantee you are forgiven for your sins, and that He is your Saviour, then pray a simple prayer. Say sorry for all that is wrong in your life and ask Jesus to come into your life to be Lord and Saviour. Ask for an infilling of the Holy Spirit; He is here to help us walk with Jesus.

Mother of all Miracles

Is God being born on earth in Jesus the Mother of all Miracles?

One of our founding Chaplains, George Bennett, argues: *"If we believe Jesus performed miracles while on earth; and we believe Jesus died, rose again and is alive today; and we believe that he is the same yesterday, today and forever – then surely our conclusion is that we believe he still performs miracles today!"*

R.T. Kendall describes a miracle as 'the extraordinary that cannot be explained naturally', and also 'anything from an answer to prayer, to awesome providence to God's raw power.'

What is your personal experience of miracles? Reflect on some miracle stories and allow your faith to be stirred. We follow a miracle working God!

Immanuel - God with us

Scripture records that 'God with people' is **noticeable**, for example:

Abraham: Genesis 21:22

Joseph: Genesis 39:2-4

Moses: Exodus 33:14-17

and appealing:

Zechariah 8:23; *"Let us go with you, because ... God is with you."*

Imagine the stir a walk down the street with the Queen would cause! How much more so with God?

Scripture promises that God is with you:

Isaiah 43:1-4; Matthew 18:20 & 28:20; and John 15:5-7ff – the promised Holy Spirit.

With God, we are a witness and a light to the world – shine brightly and confidently!

Expressions of Faith this Christmas

Lord, your Holy Spirit came upon Mary and also comes upon us. And though I resist and quench Him ...

Today, I choose to believe

Lord, Mary obediently responded to your call. And now, called as I am, but with doubts in my heart ...

Today, I choose to believe.

Lord, the angel announced Good News of great joy for all people. And though surrounded by fake news and lies ...

Today, I choose to believe.

Lord, no-one is overlooked by you, not even the shepherds. And though so unworthy, I still am your child ...

Today, I choose to believe.

Lord, you are called Immanuel – God with us, and Jesus – for you save. And though I feel alone and guilty ...

Today, I choose to believe.

Lord, the angel choir sang, 'Glory to God and peace on earth.' In the midst of uncertainty and surrounded by darkness ...

Today, I choose to believe.

*Invite Him in this Christmas
This Saviour from above;
The gift He seeks you need not wrap -
He only wants your love!*

(Wilda English)



Coffee time!

Limerick Competition:

Can you do better than this? Send in your suggestions!

*Poor Rudolph one night hurt his hoof
By landing on somebody's roof.
I got a good look, a photo I took,
But then lost it and dang went my proof!*



Nativity word search

N	S	E	B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	S	E
D	A	B	E	F	S	S	H	S	U	S	E	J	T
A	H	E	Y	S	Y	E	P	G	D	H	E	N	E
P	H	B	D	N	L	H	M	O	A	R	A	Y	U
L	T	M	A	B	N	H	Y	L	R	G	A	C	S
N	S	O	A	B	I	I	R	D	H	I	P	H	B
B	Y	T	H	L	Y	E	R	U	G	E	E	Y	R
S	S	E	R	M	R	T	H	A	N	P	E	C	N
H	E	C	R	A	E	R	M	R	H	K	H	M	A
E	H	N	E	R	A	S	S	E	N	N	R	S	D
R	E	N	D	Y	S	M	R	O	N	J	A	D	S
O	E	N	B	N	R	D	D	K	B	N	T	S	A
D	D	C	E	N	S	U	S	I	S	N	S	B	O
A	M	E	S	N	E	C	N	I	K	N	A	R	F

Census, Donkey, Gold, Jesus, Magi, stable,
Shepherds, Baby, Bethlehem, Herod, Star,
Frankincense, Myrrh, Mary, Inn

<https://thewordsearch.com>

CCHC Prayer Requests

Thank you for praying for us and for the Lord's work here. Give thanks to God for sustaining us through the extremes of this year, spiritually, physically and financially. Glory to God in the highest heaven and here at CCHC!



Please pray for the following:

1. The Trustees have authorised the renewal of the broken-down boiler system. By Gods' grace we have already received 24.5k towards this. We need another 15.5k. We are grateful for every large and small gift we receive toward this vital project. Thank you!
2. Please pray for the 2021 programme in this uncertain climate. Give thanks for the times when we have been open, and for the lives that have been touched by the Lord in 2020.
3. Please pray that our on-line work will experience a breakthrough and reach a much wider audience than presently. Give thanks for the much improved audio/video technology, and pray that we would learn to make best use of the new equipment.

May God grant you ...

*The light in Christmas, which is faith;
The warmth of Christmas, which is love;
The radiance of Christmas, which is purity;
The righteousness of Christmas, which is justice;
The belief in Christmas, which is truth;
The all of Christmas, which is Christ."*

(Wilda English)



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