

**Dorset South & West Written Service, Sunday December 25th  
2022.**

**The Kings Speech. Prepared by Revd Jean Quick**



**ADVENT CANDLE LITURGY**

JESUS, THE CHRIST CHILD IS BORN,  
GOD IS WITH US, GOD DOES REIGN

It's Christmas!  
And Jesus, the Christ child, Immanuel,  
is born amongst us, born for us on this very special day.  
Born for you and me.

Immanuel

**God is with us**

Born for people who are different from us.

Immanuel

God is with us

Born for the world.

Immanuel

**God is with us**

Born for the marginalised.

Immanuel

**God is with us**

**STF 196**

*Chorus*

*Come and join the celebration,  
it's a very special day;  
come and share our jubilation,  
there's a new King born today!*

See the shepherds hurry down to Bethlehem,  
gaze in wonder at the Son of God who lay before  
them:

**Chorus**

Wise men journey, led to worship by a star,  
kneel in homage, bringing precious gifts from lands  
afar, so,

**Chorus**

God is with us, 'round the world the message bring,  
he is with us, 'Welcome,' all the bells on earth are  
pealing:

**Chorus**

**Prayers of Adoration and Confession**

Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
That we may share in the song of the angels,  
The gladness of the shepherds,  
And worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate  
And open the door of love all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
And good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing, which Christ brings  
And teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us  
Happy to be thy children  
And Christmas evening bring us  
To our beds with grateful thoughts  
Forgiving and forgiven  
For Jesus sake

**Amen.**

— Robert Louis Stevenson

## Christmas presents

In some churches on Christmas Day we ask what people have received for Christmas. There might be the novelty tie or socks. A child's intriguing toy proffered with a smile nearly as big as the toy. I like this reflection I found on the web and offer it as a gift for us all to share today.

The gifts I'd leave beneath your tree,  
Aren't those that you can touch or see,  
No toys meant just for pointless play,  
But gifts to bless you every day.  
The gift of friendship warm and true,  
Is one that I would leave for you.  
Good health and happiness and cheer  
To keep you smiling through the year.  
The gift of peace that comes from God,  
With prayer to guide each path you trod.



And when your heart has lost its song  
The gift of hope to cheer you on.  
These are the gifts I'd leave for you.

## Bible Reading Luke 2:1-7. The Birth of Jesus

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

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 guest room available for them.

## STF 202

Hark! The herald-angels sing  
glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim:  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark! The herald-angels sing  
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,

late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!  
Hail, the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel:

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that man no more may die,  
born to raise the sons of earth,  
born to give them second birth:

## Reflection.

**First....** May I wish you a very happy Christmas. I hope everyone will have time in the midst of their busy 'Christmas' celebrations, to take time out and think about the central message of this very special day. If your thinking there was a spelling mistake in that last sentence, well not really. You see for many the real centre of Christmas gets left out. We wish each other a merry Xmas and Father Christmas seems to have centre stage. However even his origins are glossed over. Now before I begin to sound like The Grinch, I just loved the festive amusing picture included below of a downhearted Dog looking at the Christmas tree, *making the comment!*, "you won't let me bring a stick in the house, yet you have brought in a whole tree!"

Christmas is so full of the oddities. But practically all of our Christmas traditions stem from a symbolic religious significance. The Christmas tree that points to heaven. Giving of gifts as a



token to how we were given the greatest gift of all in Christ. The mince pie that traditionally represented the manger. We just need time to reflect on the true meaning of our symbols and give thanks through them for the God of love that is ours.

For us sharing in this service we are intentionally trying to celebrate what is important about this day that Christ came to be born among us. God sent us His only begotten Son, to show us the depths of His love for us. A Saviour, a King of Kings born among us. What could make us happier than to know we are loved so much? 'For God so loved the world, He gave....'

**Second.....** We all like Christmas questions, even the corny Christmas cracker ones. What do you think will be the most watched program on television today?

I am pretty sure it will be The King's speech. It's going to be a poignant moment. The first time in our lives we have not been addressed by the Queen at 3pm. I recall at how in my family home everything stopped at 3pm and we watched the Queen's speech and then we would have our Christmas dinner and festivities.

For many Christmas is a difficult day as we remember those that are not with us anymore. For a few years I was privileged to share a colleague's family's Christmas Day. After we had taken our respective Christmas Day services we would gather at their home. The first thing we would do was to stop and remember absent friends and family.

I wonder as I write what King Charles will have to say to the nation as he addresses us? This has been a difficult year for us as a nation and the events and suffering of our world have been hard to grasp. We cannot forget that, even royalty will be grieving this Christmas. Indeed in the Queen's last Christmas message, she paid tribute to her late husband, Prince Philip, after his death in April 2021.

She said there was "one familiar laugh missing", "His sense of service, intellectual curiosity and capacity to squeeze fun out of any situation were all irrepressible."

Losing a loved one is never easy no matter how long their life.

**Third ....** What would the king of Kings message be too us? We try to depict the nativity in cute stable pictures. If we assemble our own nativity scene we try to get all the elements right. Shepherds, angels etc. I remember in one church we tried through Advent to move the respective figures from windows to window in a kind of mock procession towards the empty stable on the communion table. So that on Christmas Eve we could put the baby in the manger and then a week later the wise men and camels would arrive.

Just before Christmas Eve, oh the embarrassment to find someone had stolen the baby Jesus! However a generous spirited person said it all in the comment, "perhaps they needed the baby Jesus more than we do?" I hope so. I wonder if God himself could personally address us, what would he say about losing his only begotten Son? Did he grieve? We have the scripture's that foretold and endorsed the reality that we needed the Christ child more perhaps than we fully understand.

New born babies can't physically talk, but they do have a way of communicating the best of those deeply felt good emotions within us. Profound Joy, love, warmth and celebration about life. So I wonder what the king of kings, the Christ child is saying to you today as you celebrate this very special day? I do hope that despite all the difficult things we are facing; that you will know and feel that profound and deep love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus.

### **Prayers of intercession**

Christ, for whom there was no room in the inn,  
give courage and comfort to all who are homeless.

We pray for all who will be trying to serve their needs today.

We think of the many projects in our area working to meet some of the basic needs of those in such difficult times.

We pray that what help and charity which is offered in this season may continue until we can find suitable ways to provide shelter for all.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Christ, who fled into Egypt, give comfort to all refugees;

We think of the many in the news and the multitude who have slipped out of the media spotlight but their plight is still urgent.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Christ, who fasted in the desert, give relief to all who are starving;

We may be feasting today but for many the economic crisis has made life so difficult.

We pray for all who need food banks and aid agencies.

We pray for those who volunteer and work in those much needed roles.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Christ, who hung in agony on the cross,  
give strength to all who suffer;  
The Christmas festive time seems to exasperate  
All that we struggle with, loss, loneliness, despair  
Let the love of Christ fill the hearts and needs of all today.  
Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.  
Lord of the Church  
hear our prayer,  
and make us one in heart and mind  
to serve you with joy for ever. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **STF 212**

O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him,  
born the King of angels:

*O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!*

True God of true God,  
Light of Light eternal,  
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Son of the Father,  
begotten, not created:

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;

### **The Blessing**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

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we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:

Lo, star-led chieftains,  
Magi, Christ adoring,  
offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
we to the Christ-child  
bring our hearts' oblations:

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:  
'Glory to God  
in the highest:'

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be glory given:  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing:

