



Have a wonderful Christmas and a very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year, with God's richest blessings.



Christmas 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone is staying well and all are able to enjoy the lead up to Christmas. It was wonderful to share the school's carol service again this week. The children did a great job. Their singing was amazing. It all maybe seems a little more precious this year. We now have the Christmas tree sorted after severe reprimands from one small granddaughter! Our family is beginning to congregate with the possibility we may all be together. We may even get a white Christmas.



Our fairy on the top is 70 years old and still has clothes made by Judy's grandmother. All a bit of a jumble but everything has a story.

If I wrote a Christmas present list this year, these items would probably bring me lots of joy - quality time with my family, an end to COVID and its variants, an end to 'partygate' type revelations, inflation back under control, England winning the ashes and Burnley staying in the Premier League. We would love a joyful Christmas, but worldly joys can sometimes be in short supply. Jesus' birth reminds us of heavenly joys, which do not depend on our circumstances, and are never in short supply.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, give me joy in my heart this Christmas

On Christmas Day God came to live with us here on Earth to bring us joy. God made us to be joyful and happy. He brought joy to the world, independent of our worldly circumstances. This was the joy St. Paul knew and proclaimed when he wrote to the Church in Philippi from prison encouraging them to, "Rejoice in the Lord always". Paul knew that, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" and that "In his presence is fullness of joy".

VERSE FROM A FAVOURITE CAROL

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.



In the same way that a cake is only a Christmas cake if it is made with special ingredients, there are essential ingredients to JOY. Real joy starts with Jesus (J), worshipping the babe in the manger. Real joy depends on our sharing our joy with others (O), especially those who aren't as fortunate as ourselves. The third essential ingredient to Joy is you (Y). Never forget that you are uniquely special and valuable to God and that Jesus was born because God loves you. He loves you so much he wants to share life with you and guide you safely along its journey.

FAVOURITE VERSE FORM THE BIBLE

The Word became flesh and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.
(John 1.14)

I wonder how many shepherds were in the hills around Bethlehem on that Holy Night. Did they all go to worship Jesus in the stable? God not only loves us, he hopes we choose to respond to his love. My prayer this Christmas is that we, like the shepherds who listened and responded to the angel, decide to go and worship Jesus on Christmas morning. That we come into his presence, see him face-to-face and know great joy.

We had a good evening singing carols at Favordale. We were outside and Favordale folk were inside with the windows a little open. They had carol sheets inside and sang along with us. It

was so good to be doing 'nearly' normal things again!



The children at Christ Church School decorated cards for the folk at Favordale. They are beautiful and will certainly put a smile on many faces. Thank you so much.



Last Sunday at our Sunday Worship we made Christmas decorations. It was great to see so many young families and children in church again. There were a good few sequins scattered around by the end!



PRAYER

God of Hosts, rebuild your Church on lives of thankfulness and persistent prayer.

Amen



Advent and Christmas Services

December 5th

- 9:30 Sunday Communion at Christ Church
- 11:00 Christmas Sunday Worship with Carols and Christmas activities at St Mary's
- 14:00 Carol singing at the Hare and Hounds, Foulridge
- 16:00 Christmas Messy Church at St Michael's

December 12th

- 9:30 Sunday Communion at St. Michael's
- 11:00 Christmas Sunday Worship at Christ Church with Carols and Christmas activities

December 17th

- 13:15 Christ Church School Christmas Service
- 18:00 Christingle at St Michael's, Foulridge

December 19th

- 9:30 Said Communion at St Mary's
- 11:00 Nine Lessons and Carols at St Michael's
- 11:00 Nine Lessons and Carols at Christ Church
- 16:30 Christingle at St Mary's

Sunday 19th to Thursday 24th 5.00pm Advent Evening Prayer (on Zoom) for twenty minutes, john.knott51@icloud.com

December 23rd

- 18:30 Carol Singing at the Trawden Arms

December 24th

- 16:00 Crib Service at St Michael's
- 16:00 Christingle at Christ Church
- 18:30 Christingle at Christ Church
- 11:30 Midnight Mass at St Michael's
- 11:30 Midnight Mass at St Mary's

December 25th

- 10:00 Christmas Day Communion at Christ Church

If you are able, do join us this Christmas to worship Emmanuel, God with us, to worship the Christ Child on his birthday. We have services at 11:30pm for midnight mass at St Michael's, Foulridge and St Mary's, Trawden. We also have Christmas day communion at Christ Church at 10am on Christmas Day.

Sunday Communion this week is a traditional said Book of Common service at St Mary's Trawden at 9:30 am.

At Sunday Worship this week, we prepare for Jesus' coming with our take on 'Nine lessons and Carols' at 11am both at St Michael's, Foulridge and Christ Church. **Masks are worn at all our services.**

I'm attaching a copy of our 'Nine lessons and carols' service sheet, which provides some Christmas readings, in case you want some helpful bible passages to read in the run up to Christmas. We will be reading two of these together each day next week during evening prayer on zoom (Monday to Thursday at 5pm). Do let me know if you would like to join us I'll send you a zoom invitation.

As always I am thinking and praying for folk. If there is anything you need please call. If you have special prayer requests please let me know. I love to pray each day and if you are happy for us to do so, we pray for folk each week at compline.

I wish everyone the most amazing Christmas and a very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year with all God's love and blessings. This will be our last letter until New Year. The next one will be for Sunday 9 January. Have an amazing time in whatever way you can.

With love and blessings, Rev John

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THE UNENDING CHRISTMAS STORY

We've often heard the story of Jesus and His birth.
We use the phrase quite freely: "The Saviour of the earth!"
But do you know the meaning? And do you know it's true?
And do you know the birth of Jesus happened just for *you*?
And do you know He loves you, and that is why he came?
If there were only *you* on earth, He still would do the same!
For yes, He thinks *you're* worth it!
And yes, His love is real.

And yes, today, He knows exactly what it is you feel.
So don't just hear a story: He wants you to be part
Of this year's special chapter when you let Him in your heart.
Just open up and listen to what God has to say.
Then be a part of the unending story,from today.

AN EASY PRAYER

Thank you God for this wonderful world you have given us to enjoy.
Thank you for the seasons, for harvest time and how you provide for our needs.
Thank you for sending Jesus on the first Christmas to be our friend and guide us safely through life.
Thank you that he died for our sins on the first easter morning.
Jesus, light of the world, thank you for your love.
Amen

