

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Crusader Carol Service Sunday 20th Dec at 11 am

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Welcome Sorry there is a legal requirement to wear face masks

MP 211 Hark the Herald Angels sing (3)

1st Reading Luke 2:8-18 read by _____

someone to love, something to do, something to hope for, my hope

Advent candles Light, Love, Life, Land

Poem (the Helpless babe) read by _____

Prayer of thanksgiving

MP 47 Away in a manger

2nd Reading John 1:1-18 read by _____

✚ Christmas Video – with love from God to you (2019 vid)

Poem (A part of Christ’s story) read by _____

MP 589 See him lying on a bed of straw (4)

3rd Reading Isaiah 8:19-9:7 read by _____

4th Reading Matthew 4:12-17 FCFW

The Lord's prayer (Back of bulletin)

Sketchboard Special

Mp 83 Come and join the celebration

Prayer

Notices - refer to Bulletin

1. No refreshments sorry to say, please join us again on Christmas morning for a shorter more informal service at 10:30 (and of course come and listen to Christ’s word’s every Sunday at our normal time of 10am.)
2. If you have come prepared to make an offering – the box is on the stairs

MP 393 Joy to the World (3)

Remain standing for prayer

End

Sketch-board / sermon See Vis_119.cdr

Christmas - We are here because it is Christmas. But... **Why** Christmas?!!

It is always good to ask the question why? Are you a 'why' person?

Just why did Jesus enter this world?

✚ It could be God saying "I'm here" or God saying "I care"

To answer this question, we have to go back to the beginning

- A crack appeared on a tower block – go into the basement to find the problem

Hold up a picture of the garden of Eden - **World**

All was good - Adam and Eve enjoyed God and shared his wonderful life. They were free, happy and at peace, they knew who they were and why they were there, everything was right. Etc. etc.

They could have everything there was - but not from that one tree x2

They were being tested, they represent you and I, they were tested in our place. They had received God's love – would they love him back?

When they were told by the devil that they were better off without God, "why not be in charge and chose your own way".... Those words made them think, maybe I can do better, they chose not to believe God was good but instead they believed the lie, "I know better" they thought.

✚ These thoughts and attitudes that reverberate through the centuries

They **Disobeyed** God. The moment they did so something terrible happened, something had broken - They became frightened and hid from God. God seemed far away.

The consequence of this is that something dreadful had happened not only in them – but in all their descendants yes you and I – and in the whole world. The world became dark **Plastic overlay**, there is an overlay everywhere the shadow of sin

It became a **Dark** world, it is now a dark world

As if the lights have gone out,

- When I was at school there was a national miners strike and all of a sudden the lights would go out

That is how the Bible describes living in God's world – but without God

2a

Despite all the bright lights it is a dark and scary world.

- My mother used to live in a village, at night it was so dark I couldn't see where I was going – I remember stumbling and losing the edge of the path.

It is easy to lose your way at night - a friend of mine lost his way and ended up in the mud.

Can you imagine someone all covered in mud? (large picture on the front page of a newspaper last week), A bit like falling into a pit full of mud. Adam and Eve didn't fall in - they jumped in! how stupid!

This made them **Dirty**

Man and woman fell from their high place - to a low place, a very low place. We are not to be compared with animals, we are worse, much worse. Men and women are cruel, hateful, devious, perverted, dishonest, proud, greedy and self-seeking. – isn't that a true fair assessment?

What kind of relationship can you have when two people are looking out for themselves first? What sort of family is that? What kind of society do we end up with?

People look everywhere to find answers I know I did, all the wrong places

- Many are hooked on cheap TV and films, to gambling, drinking, starting new families, shopping therapy. What is it for you?

It won't fix things - but make it worse, the bible says that makes us slaves

Life becomes **Difficult**

It is hard, very hard when so much is against you, from outside but even inside. I know what I should do – but I can't do it – it's too hard.

Even **Dangerous**

- Like the council road sweepers in life we pick up so much rubbish, degrading, poisonous, dangerous,

With life there's no 'undo' button, no 'reset' button, life can't be stopped paused or played again

Distressing

The result is distress, 'misery' would be another word. Some today prefer to use the word 'mental health', but let's remember abuse, break-up, hurt and hate are all the result of someone's selfishness and sin. Taking the

2b

law into my one hands not only offends God but hurt you and hurts others. God's good law - like the law of the Land is there to protect you!

- The Police have three P's to protect people, property and the peace.

Disobeying God's law has consequences as we read in that passage – despite all their efforts - things went wrong, their plans failed.

21 Distressed and hungry they will roam through the land, They looked around, search far and wide.

I used to love to travel, always looking for something - how many people are there travelling and travelling but never arriving

when they are famished, (with an empty heart) they will become enraged looking upward, They looked up – but what will they do? They will curse their king and their God. In other words blame him “you're the problem” Well they looked down - **22 Then they will look towards the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness.**

Don't look down, don't look to the world, don't look inside you, don't look to the supernatural world, don't look to the mystical world.

“19 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people enquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?”

That road promises life - but it leads to death. So life is **Disappointing**. We hope for so much but are disappointed, that light at the end is a trick, many enter this world without God and without hope - and leave this world without God and without hope.

Death

Death will come to all. What is worse Jesus says death is not the end. There is the Judgement to come. Everyone who has ever lived in this world will have to give account for everything done while in the body and every word said. Death came into this world the moment Adam and Eve sinned against God. Death we are told is the wages of sin. But worse is eternal death with weeping and gnashing of teeth in Hell - the dreadful end for all who have broken God's Holy law.

Yes, how dreadful. – I am painting a gloomy picture –but it's' the real picture. – It's' how things are.

but there is hope **Nevertheless**, Nevertheless, there will be **no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land** – Yes God does humble me to make me realise my need of him.

Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan— That is those living in a poor and pagan and godless part of the country. But now - The passage we had read from Isaiah 9 is famous, every Christmas you hear it. And rightly so. 700 years before Christ came it is written that God would send his Son into the world.

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.

In Chap 7 we read that he will be called Emmanuel = God with us.

The passage is a passage of hope, now there is help, now there is a way, now things can change. Here comes the one who is the answer.

We have been lighting these candles to remind us of Christ who is the light of the world. The first way God revealed his glory is through light. Genesis 1 **“Let there be light”**

Light

Have your Christmas lights up? Some pretty impressive displays...

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

Love God is love and love came down at Christmas. You and I were made for God's love. Nothing else will do. No-one else will do.

Life and we are told: **In him was life, and that life was the light of men.** Joh 1:4 Jesus brings life into this dead world. **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.** 1Jo 5:12

Land

I have put 'land' because it fits with the other 'L's but the future place is real, it is a land, no clouds but real. And Christ can and will take me there.

My mother sometimes asks me “if you had a choice which country would you live in” –I have to think, difficult choice. What would be your choice? - Beach in OZ- Heaven country

That's the problem isn't it we want to be on the right side of the board but there is a **Barrier** –

There is a barrier that cannot be crossed, try as you might.

But that is what **Christ** came to do. Christ the Holy, Pure Son of God.....

Cross & Crossbar

Crucified in a most terrible way by the hands of men. That is how men treated the one who give life and breath, and strength to all and is showed love without measure to those who were against him.

The cross is a place of victory for Christ paid for my sin and rose again to bring in victory over death for many people

On this mountain – on this cross - he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; Isa 25:7

4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, (the reference here is to a very dramatic victory over and oppressive enemy) **you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.** Freedom from the darkness and gloom and oppression before

The question now is how can I, you and I **Crossover?**

✚ **What was once impossible is now made possible through Christ who makes it possible.**

Look

Well those we read of earlier looked everywhere, and found nothing good, up, down and around. Where are you looking? Are you despairing?

✚ **The simple answer is: Look to Christ x2 Jesus says “come to me”**

One preacher said: "Look to Christ sweating great drops of blood. Look to Me; I am hanging' on the cross. Look to Me, I am dead and buried. Look to Me; I rise again. Look to Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look to Me; I am sitting at the Father's right hand. O poor sinner, look to Me! look to Me!"

Charles Spurgeon who was listening said the preacher fixed his eyes on him, “as if he knew all my heart, he said, "Young man, you look very miserable." Well, I did, but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, "And you will always be miserable—miserable in life and miserable in death—if you don't obey my text; - but if you do obey - now, this moment, you will be saved." Then lifting up his hands, he shouted, "Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothing to do but look and live!"

Spurgeon said: “I saw at once the way of salvation. I was so possessed with that one thought . . . I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, "Look!" what a charming word it seemed to me. Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away.

There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. Oh, that somebody had told me this before, "Trust Christ, and you shall be saved." ... now I can say—

"Ever since by faith I saw the stream, thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme, And shall be till I die. . ."

He said: “That happy day when I found the Saviour, and learned to cling to His dear feet, was a day never to be forgotten by me . . . I listened to the Word of God and that precious text led me to the cross of Christ. I can testify that the joy of that day was utterly indescribable. I could have leaped, I could have danced; there was no expression, however fanatical, which would have been out of keeping with the joy of that hour.

He said: “I thought I could have sprung from my seat and called out . "I am forgiven! I am forgiven! A monument of grace! A sinner saved by blood!"

My spirit saw its chains broken to pieces, I felt that I was a freed soul, an heir of heaven, a forgiven one, accepted in Jesus Christ, plucked out of the miry clay and out of the horrible pit, with my feet set upon a rock and my goings established . . .

The simple question is have you? Why not? Will you now? Look to Christ Look to him, change direction and look to Him alone.

■ **One man gave a stirring account of finding Christ at his baptism. 'Under new management'**

✚ **He had a new direction, a new master, a new Lord.**

What we read earlier was true of him - as it is of me - and many others - 3 ... **they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder.**

Christ is the King who sits on the throne in heaven. - Does he have his rightful place enthroned in your heart today?

Christ **reigns over a kingdom of righteousness from that time on and for ever.** Will you be part of it? Are you in it? Let this Christmas – with all its problems - be the time when everything changes for you.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. Peace now and peace later without end. _____END