



**Broomhill Hyndland
Parish Church**

"Lighting the Way"

for **Sunday 20 December 2020**

Dear friends, welcome to our Nativity Sunday service and our first streamed service. To participate in the service live you can either go to the website - <http://www.broomhillhyndlandchurch.co.uk/live/> or <https://youtu.be/G6ibQNY-62o>

At the bottom of this introduction you will also find the connections to both the Christmas Eve service and the service on January 3rd - these are the three services agreed by the Kirk Session to stream as a trial, as we develop our technology and, more importantly, try to reach as many people as possible with our worship time, especially through the Christmas season.

Those of you who receive this as a paper copy should also receive the service for the 27th of December - Merry Christmas!! Those on email will have that sent, with the Zoom link, during the week.

Paula Pinda has sent an email thanking all those who supported Crossreach this year and the time given to Heart for Art. She and Maureen send their love and look forward to better days ahead.

Santa wasn't able to give away as many toys as usual at Broomhill Hyndland Church this year. He had lots left over and asked if we would give the spare toys to some other boys and girls in Glasgow. We were happy to donate 25 books and toys to the Evening Times Toy Appeal and hope this takes some pressure off the hard working mums, dads and guardians who are facing an uncertain Festive period due to the Covid-19 crisis. The Bank On Us Toy Appeal works with toy banks and children's charities to ensure that every child in Glasgow wakes up to a gift on Christmas Day. Thanks for your help in this.

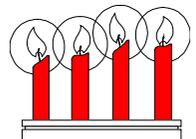
As promised, here are the links to the streamed Christmas Eve/ Watchnight Service and the first service of the New Year.

Watchnight Service - Dec 24, 7pm - <https://youtu.be/foGjeDe3WRQ>

Sunday Service - Jan 3, 10:30am - <https://youtu.be/coiBFND0r90>

Broadcast of each should begin shortly before the service gets underway. The streams can be watched via smartphone, tablet, PC or devices that have the YouTube App. It will also be available via the church website at <http://www.broomhillhyndlandchurch.co.uk/live/> Each service can be watched live as it happens or will be available to watch again at any time via the same links. This will enable the Watchnight service to be watched at 7pm, 11.30pm or whatever time you choose.

My thanks to Gary McQueen and the Communications Team for setting this up and the Heathers who are working the cameras.



The Manse family are now, out of isolation and we wish you all the experience of Jesus Christ being born in you once more.

Every Blessing,
George

*For booking places at the Christmas services –
Monday 21st December for Christmas Eve 7.00pm
Tuesday 22nd December for the 27th 10.30am
Tuesday 29th December for the 3rd January 2021 10.30am
Normal time of phoning – 10am to 3pm. **07851 591 503***

Sunday 20 December - Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year B)

For those who like to follow all the lectionary readings for the Sunday, the readings for this Sunday are: 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16; Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26 or the Magnificat; Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38

Our Sunday reflection will be based on our Nativity but please read and ponder the suggested Scripture and see how it connects and what it says to you.

Rest in His arms read, reflect, rejoice...

CALL

Dreams and angels, prophecies,
mystery and magi, choirs and shepherds,
we make our way to the star-blessed stable,
to the light shining miraculously in human misery and darkness.
We are almost there.

OUR ADVENT CANDLE

Take this light, let it shine:
call of God, love divine,
summons old Abram's line,
hope for all the nations,
gift of God's salvation.

*Shine, O candles, shine,
burn with love divine,
to the night,
comes the light
of the Father's glory.*

Take this flame, let it burn:
prophets called: "From sin turn,
come to God, evil spurn:
God will love and pardon,
bear away your burden."

Take this wick, let it glow
for the one come to show:
way of God, Christ to know:
baptise in the river,
new life to deliver.

Take this spark, let it blaze,
Mary's called: girl amazed,
now says yes, God be praised.
In the womb of woman,
God's Word now is human.

(Now light your candle)



HY 290 The race that long in darkness pined

PRAYER

Lord, why a stable? Why a stable with its dirt and poverty and smell?
The need to step carefully in the straw.

Your crying, perhaps unheard amongst the braying animals?

Your crying unnoticed as the world was having a fair outside.

We could have understood a palace, a mansion fit for a king,
for aren't we told that God's house is a mansion with many rooms?

Or at least a detached home, with upstairs and downstairs,
an expanding hallway, conservatory and a garden that looked like Eden.

And of course, the right neighbourhood, the right values,
the right school with solid opinions,

the sort that makes leaders, politicians and the like.

But not for you. In your home there are blisters through hard manual effort,
and dirt under the fingernails displaying good honest work.

And yet we will celebrate your coming through a burst of star-streaming love,
God to man, God levelling the playing field and the differences.

When we greet you, child, when we look at you God, it's not upwards.

You are not out of reach, too far to stretch on our spiritual tiptoes,
we simply kneel to you, born in a stable, ready to unsteady the world.

Why a stable, we ask?

And we know the answer...

outside the busyness and bustle you come,

to spend your life outside with the muck and the manure, earthed,
as we have been earthed, we praise you this day

God-soon-to-be-Incarnate.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts

as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory, for ever, AMEN

PLEASE COME WITH ME TO BETHLEHEM

Please, come with me to Bethlehem to see what we can find.

The news is out that God is there, close-by to human-kind.

"Emmanuel!" we've heard it said, God's gift to me and you.

Please, come with me to Bethlehem to see if it is true.

For I have been to Bethlehem and found an open door,

and there I sank onto my knees down on a stable floor.

A child lay there! Could this be real? Was this what God had planned?

Though I have been to Bethlehem, I still don't understand.

Then for a while in Bethlehem, I watched the shepherds come
to bow before this fragile child in worship, one by one.

"The angel choir gave us the news; they told us what to do."

And waiting there in Bethlehem, I soon believed it too.

So, come with me to Bethlehem, for I've got news to share:
Though I don't fully understand what God was doing there,
and how the human and divine got all mixed up in one.
But I've been changed in Bethlehem by all that od has done.

Please, come again to Bethlehem; don't wander or delay!
You'll find the Incarnation brings another Christmas day.
You may not fully grasp it all, or know what you should do,
But hurry down to Bethlehem, where God's love comes to you.

HY 312 Away in the manger

Let us turn to God's Word, found in Luke 1: 26-38
'This is the Word of God. Thanks be to Him.'



OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES – THE CHRISTMAS NEWS!

(if you are present in church or on-line our Nativity continues.)

HY 301 Hark! the herald angels sing

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Change our lives. Shatter our complacency. Make your Word our life's purpose.
Take away the quietness of a clear conscience. Press us uncomfortably. For only
thus, that other peace is made, your peace. AMEN

REFLECTION

'Out of the mouths of babes, comes forth wisdom.'

We've just watched some of our children from Junior Church giving us the Nativity story through the medium of a news item. Can I say first, a word of thanks to the children and the staff for being able to produce anything in this, the strangest of years.

In years gone by it would have been a packed church watching our Christmas story being acted out and Eeyore, that daft and depressive donkey from Winnie the Pooh would have been dragged round the church. We know what we would have been looking for, the numerous gaffes, disasters and mistakes that every Christmas Nativity brings. We all can remember children going in the huff, forgetting their lines, refusing to take part and Pam and I still remember, fondly, a boy in a previous charge, rugby kicking the sheep into the congregation.

One of my colleagues, through Advent, sent me a Play with Mary and an Angel almost having fisty- cuffs because she wouldn't put the baby Jesus down!

We wait for these moments – not as mistakes,

we wait understanding the humanity of it all,

we wait because some of us were these children,

and we wait because it is the unexpected moments that jolt us to a deeper understanding of this most famous story.

'Out of the mouth of babes', is not just what Jesus will cry but what our children will show and perform and share in that glorious message today: the Inn-keeper, who says 'Yes'; the angel who is anything but; the half dressed king who wants to keep the gift of frankincense to himself.

It is the unexpected that we remember, the unexpected that marks out the story as different in some way and anchors it in our memories. It's the unexpected that leaves us with a smile.

Think of those heading for a census. In their own nation's history they knew of the story of slavery in Egypt and the Israelites making bricks out of straw. They must have thought that their slavery would last forever. They didn't know that God had sent a baby, who was lying in a basket in the river Nile and that baby would grow up to lead them all out of slavery to the promised land.

That was unexpected, 'out of the mouth of a baby' soon became a great leader who would challenge the Pharaoh and ask him to let his people go. Likewise, in the call for registration in their own cities, as a nation waited for a Messiah, a child would be born and catch everyone by surprise, born in an unexpected way in a filthy stable and laid in a feeding trough.

We should realise that Christmas is not really about children, and those characters acted out are, we should realise, adults. The children in the Christmas story are marked in a horrendous story of the Slaughter of the Innocents, as Herod searches for the Christ child – so no, Christmas is not about children but about one significant and special one, who will grow up to do things differently. One who will preach and teach in ways that will astound both listeners and followers, and the expectations of both in his life and death will be turned upside down, leading those disciples into new and unexpected ways.

So, I thank our children for their interpretation of the story and even how they managed it at all in a year that we never expected!!

In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God, world without end.

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY PRAYER

Gracious and Generous God:

we offer our gifts to you,
knowing full well

we have devoted so much more energy into finding the gifts for our families
and much less on the gifts we offer to you.

You gave Mary, an unmarried girl,
a Son so the world might have a Saviour.

Her response was so simple:

"Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be according to your word."

May her affirmation of faith

and obedience be the gift we offer this day. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

'Real life',

suggests abrasive human relationships, sparking off each other.

Despite the lengthy social distancing, sometimes, even our loved ones,
are too close for comfort.

'Real life'

is the recognition of our humanity and our imperfections
and the fact that sometimes we can be anything but holy,
even in this Festive time.

By contrast, Lord,
your Christmas story belongs to the world of dreams –
at least in the sense that there were characters in the story
who were messaged in a dream.

In the 'real world'

Herod dreams of dynasty and Israel's priests, dreaming of a God-centred state,
reject you as the Messiah.

There is no tension between these stories, ours and yours.

We live in a harsh world of tabloid headlines and sometimes gutter press,
looking, but not far, for the scoop and the sensation.

And the glorious truth – incarnation,

You, God, with us, in this harshness.

It isn't soft lights and carols or struggles and sadness but both;

not pain and suffering or joy and deliverance but both;

not heavenly dreams or earthly reality but both.

This is the real life that you entered, where in our reality and real deal
we know that there is nothing which may not be touched and transformed
by the hope and the reality of Christ, born in a manger.

Light, the Light of the World comes in our darkness

and darkness has never put it out. AMEN

HY 310 See him lying on a bed of straw

BENEDICTION

We have heard the words of prophets.

May we recognise God's truth.

We have heard the words of angels.

May we recognise God's joy.

We have heard the words of promise.

May we recognise God's love.

Mystery of creation, Child in the manger, Holy Spirit of glory,

may we welcome and walk in the promises of God.

Go, in Peace...

and may the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

Broomhill Hyndland Church of Scotland

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