



Christmas 2020 - Church at Home

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14



This is miracle.

This is mystery.

This is true.

*God lies wrapped as a baby
in a mother's arms.*

Amazing love!

Here are some suggested Bible readings for today

Isaiah 9:2-7 – The Prophet foretells the birth of a baby who will change everything

Psalms 96 – The Psalmist sings of the new and wonderful things that God has done

Titus 3:4-7 – The Apostle describes Jesus's coming as 'the appearing of God's goodness and loving kindness', and goes on to declare how his coming can change us from within

John 1:1-14 – The Evangelist unpacks the mystery of Christmas: the Word who was there in the beginning; the light that will overcome the darkness; and the glory that lived among us

Suggested hymns:

[Joy to the world](#)

[In the bleak midwinter](#)

[Away in a manger](#)

[Come all ye faithful](#)



Pause for a moment to reflect on the miracle of Christmas.....the glorious impossible of 'God with us' in Jesus Christ..... who was 'born a saviour' to forgive us for all we have done wrong. He came to mend our brokenness, to heal us of our selfishness and to help us put right the damage we have done to each other and to God's world. Open your heart to receive hope, peace, joy and love from God, remembering the good things that God has done for you.

Here is the shorter **Collect for Christmas:**

*Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.*

A reflection on Christmas at such a time as this:

The Virgin and the man
were summoned,
by forces beyond their control.
Commanded to travel,
and caught in the crowds;
they weren't with their family that Christmas.

The Virgin and the child
were corralled,
in the place where the animals slept.
Enveloped in fear,
and exhausted with pain;
they were far from being safe at Christmas

The Virgin and her visitors
were startled,
by talk of angels and peace.
A child had arrived,
asleep on the hay;
the gift of a new normal from Christmas

The Church and its people
are gathered,
in person, on line and at home.
Rehearsing the story,
remembering the hope
of our God who is with us this Christmas



This nativity scene is a 14th century fresco painted by Giotto in the Scrovegni Chapel, in Padua

[Here](#) is the Christmas story from Luke 2 with wooden figures and wondering questions for the whole family

Visual for a focus table: place your nativity set in a prominent place today at the heart of your celebrations. If you haven't got one, then perhaps you can improvise a nativity scene with objects from around the home? If you have children, maybe you can make something from Lego™, or playdoh?

An all-age activity: try these Christmas [table talk conversation starters together](#) as a family

Prayers and thoughts for further reflection

Today...
God's mystery is revealed;
God's miracle is accomplished;
and God's marvel is unwrapped;
for the glorious impossible is here!
God with us!
Forever and for always.
Hallelujah!

Thanks be to you, O Lord, for...
the unbounded
the underserved,
the unimaginably wonderful,
gift of Jesus.

Christmas is....

The Father *coming* among us
The Spirit *coming* upon us
The Son *coming* beside us

Christmas is the *coming* together
of heaven and earth
of eternity and time
of the divine and the human

Christmas is the *coming*
of 'God with us'
and of 'us with God'

Christmas is the end of our old being
and the beginning of our new *becoming*,
now and for the time to *come*.

O Most High God,
thank you that you became
the most low god,
to bring us home to you.

Lord, on this great day,
we sing with the angels,
we kneel with the shepherds,
we worship with the magi
we wonder with Mary,
rejoicing in your overflowing love and grace
wrapped in the Christ child for us.

For our prayers, let us remember:

- Christmas services in person or on line where the Christmas story will be told today
- Hospital staff treating patients suffering from COVID 19 and relatives waiting anxiously for news
- The roll out of the vaccine programme
- Those in Care Homes this Christmas and some who may be able to visit
- Today's news headlines
- Those known to us who are ill, in hospital, anxious or who have been bereaved

Add any other particular people and situations that The Holy Spirit brings to your mind as you have been praying and then say our family prayer, **The Lord's Prayer**.

End this time of church-at-home by saying out loud the words of **The Grace**, reaching out your hands to include in your imagination all those you know and love, who live here in the village and beyond



The nativity at night by Geertgen tot Sint Jans

Today we remember how...
the shepherds left their sheep to find the
Saviour of the world;
the good Shepherd left his sheep to rescue
the lost;
the Lamb upon the throne left heaven to
come to earth for each one of us.
God with us in the stable; God for us on the
cross.

Joseph has his young fiancée in his arms.
The shepherds had a song in their ears.
The magi had a star in their eyes.
Mary had a baby in her hands.
God had you and me on his heart.