

Christmas Day Service Transcript

Opening Slide

Chris Tomlin – Christmas Day

Helen Steiner Rice sketch > Mark Greene poem

Hello, a Merry Christmas to you and welcome to the MRBC Christmas Service for 2020! Here's a modern take upon a traditional carol.

Tommy Walker – What child is this

As we have joined together to worship Jesus, the King who was born and who is our Lord, we celebrate in this hopeful call to worship together. I do the white words, we all do the yellow.

We are here because we have heard a promise of peace

and we have faith its day will come

we have heard a rumour of justice

and we have faith its day will come

we have heard a whisper of hope

and we have faith its day will come

we have heard a hint of love

and we have faith its day will come

we have heard of the birth of the Christ-child

and we have faith his day is here.

Welcome to Christmas!

Welcome to worship!

Written by Cheryl Lawrie, on her blog [hold this space] <http://holdthisspace.org.au/>

Our Father, as have come Christmas season that looks very different from normal, we thank you, that whether or not we can be with our loved ones in person, we know that You are always with them. Where there is weariness, would you bring Your rest; where there is hopelessness, would you bring fresh encouragement; where there is despair, would you bring hope. Thank you that we have been able to declare it this morning. May it characterise our day and our Christmas.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Advent Candles

We are now going to celebrate the end of Advent and the arrival of Christmas by lighting all our advent candles.

We light the fifth candle on this Christmas Day; in worship we lift up our hands. God with us, here in this place, in every home and every land. Jesus, you came and will come again,

You've come, you've come, Emmanuel!

The waiting is over, we celebrate.

You've come, you've come, Emmanuel!

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Joy to the World

Christmas Intercessions

We are going to bring our Christmas intercessions before God. I am going to pray short prayers followed by a silence. Please use it respond and lift those you know before the Lord, and as before, we all say the words in yellow.

At Christmas, the song of the angels rings throughout the world. As we rejoice in their song may we always acknowledge that Christ brings peace for us all. Grant Lord, that our Church here in Maidstone Road will be illuminated by His light and shine forth in the world. May the devotion of the shepherds, the adoration of the angels, and the love shown to us by you Lord, inspire us in our worship this day and through the coming year:

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your mercy: ***Hear our Prayer***

Son of God, you entered creation that all might be made new. Look in mercy on our broken world and speak to all people that they may hear the message of peace.

We especially pray for peace for the people of Bethlehem and that of Jerusalem.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your mercy: ***Hear our Prayer***

Lord God as the shepherds of Bethlehem bowed in reverence before the Jesus, we pray that you would bring to all families, the joys experienced by Mary and Joseph. We pray particularly for those who have experienced tragedy and difficulties in their families this past year. that they may know your presence and comfort.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: ***Hear our Prayer***

Magi brought their gifts for the new-born King. May we bring the gift ourselves to the Christ Child, at this time as we thank him for all that he is to us.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: ***Hear our Prayer***

Lord God, the gift of your son brought light into our darkness and healing through his touch.

Hear our prayers for those who are suffering, for all people without a home at this time, families separated because of coronavirus restrictions, families struggling with debt and uncertainty, those who are ill, and those who have been bereaved. We pray particularly for those close to our hearts who we now name.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Emmanuel, God with us, you understood what it is to be human. Hear our prayers and use them, and us, to bring peace, joy, love and hope into the lives of those for whom we have prayed.

Merciful Father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

Silent Night

The Big Christmas Quiz

Each Christmas Day, we have a quiz and today is no exception. For it, you'll each need to have a small piece of paper and a pen or pencil. If you didn't read the text on the programme page, you'll need to press pause to get them.

Right, nice to see you again. No that's not right. It's nice for you to see me again. This quiz is called True Or Trump. I will give you five Christmas related statements that are either true or false. You'll need to answer True or Trump. I'll only give you a few seconds to answer before going on to the next so it's quickfire. This is a just for fun quiz so there's no need to cheat by looking them up. Afterwards, I'll give you the answers with any explanation that goes with it. Why not pit yourselves with others in your family?

So here we go then. True or Trump.

- 1 King Herod the Great's first wife was called Ada.
- 2 Jesus was born in the first century BC.
- 3 Mary rode a donkey as she and Joseph made the trip from Nazareth.
- 4 Jesus commanded that his birthday be celebrated each year.
- 5 Elizabeth was 78 years when she gave birth to John the Baptist.
- 6 Zechariah had to confirm John's name in writing when he was born.
- 7 Jesus was born in a manger.
- 8 Joseph and Mary were refugees in Egypt.
- 9 John the Baptist was about 6 months older than Jesus.
- 10 The prophetess Anna wasn't a Jew.

Answers

- 1 Don't be silly. Herod's first wife wasn't Ada, she was called Doris. That's bit's not in the bible incidentally; we know it from historical study.
- 2 True. He was born between 4 and 8BC. Herod the Great died in 4BC. The makers of our calendars got the date of his birth wrong.
- 3 Definitely not. It is very unwise for a highly pregnant woman to ride any animal. She would have walked or used a cart.
- 4 Jesus never commanded that Christmas be observed. Or Easter for that matter. He only said that his death should be marked through communion and that should be often and anytime.
- 5 Fake news. We don't know how old she was other than she was beyond childbearing age.
- 6 Yes, because he had been struck dumb for 9 months until John's circumcision.
- 7 No. It's not physically possible, Mary gave birth to Jesus, presumably on a flat surface of some kind and he was then laid in a manger.
- 8 True
- 9 Yes at least 6. Gabriel visited Mary in the 6th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.
- 10 Tuue. She was of the tribe of Asher, which was rare enough for Luke to have referred to it. That said, Israelites of any tribe were called Jews in the first century, because descendants of Judah were the majority tribe by a mile.

Our next song is *As with gladness men of old*. Can you spot the non-deliberate mistake.

As with gladness

You probably easily found the non-deliberate mistake. Matthew records the Magi visiting Jesus in a house and meeting a child, not a baby. GOLD FRANKINCENSE & MYRRH That said, they brought gifts to them that were certainly not bought in their equivalent of Poundland; gold, frankincense and myrrh – none of them cheap. They were gifts fit for a king.

We give and receive gifts at Christmas because God gave His own Son to rescue us and in turn he gave his life to do that, because he loved us so much. He now also offers to give us the gift of eternal life if only we would accept it. The Magi gave Jesus expensive gifts worthy of his kingly status as a mark of worship and honour.

We give gifts at Christmas to those we love, or those we want to show friendship to. I hope we have received many great gifts this year. Or have you received some useless tat, perhaps an unwanted gift that has been doing the rounds for a few years?

We can't do our normal show and tell, so I'll let you have a look at some possible presents for our younger generation this year.

ICE BLOCKS I'm told that Frozen is very popular this year again, so how about giving your youngsters this packet of ice? That's frozen. I'm told my that grandchildren will not like this gift, but it would keep them in cold drinks for ages. BBQ Neither will they like this Barbie, although I'd love to have one; although I'm not sure I'd want to cook perfectly good asparagus on the BBQ.

PACK OF LARDONS And if you truly want to make the little ones look baffled you could try this Peppa Pig construction kit! There will be hours of fun fruitlessly trying to work out what it will build into; like a meal.

Actually this bacon has a back story to it, which is appropriate for where this product came from. These are Waitrose Lardons, marked as “essentials”. I wonder what pretentious home they had in mind that regards lardons as essential? I don’t think most people know what they are. They’re diced fatty bacon if you don’t.

GIFTS

To come back to gifts, what loving, caring, parent or grandparent buys rubbish gifts for their children or grandchildren? We always try to get what they need (not necessarily want) and I’m sure there are many of you watching this morning and enjoying a gift that has been thoughtfully chosen for you.

It reminds me of a passage in the Bible about how God gives good things to us. It’s from Luke 11 and Rhiannon is going to read it to us

⁹ “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

*¹¹ “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
Luke 11:9-13*

God loves us. He never wants us to have bad stuff. He wants us to have the very best for our lives and will always make sure that we have available to us what’s the most important thing we need. And what we need is him. And God’s greatest gift to the whole world was his own Jesus who came into this world as the baby whose birth we celebrate today. Of course we know what happened to him. He died on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven and that we could walk with Him in our lives and be with him eternally. Better still, when we trust in Jesus and follow Him, God gives us His own presence in your lives: his Holy Spirit.

OFFERING A GIFT

And He offers us all this as a free gift this morning. No catches. All we have to do is accept it and becomes ours. Many of you watching have already done that. What about you? Make your Christmas in 2020 a really different one, by going to the heart of what it’s about and accept the gift of God into your life right now.

If you want to do that, or recommit yourself to Him, then why not pray this prayer with me now.

Lord Jesus, thank you that you were willing to come to this earth as a baby to rescue me. Thank you that you died on the cross, thank you that you rose from the dead in order to give me new life, life to the full, life that’s eternal. Thank you that you died to save me from my sins, please forgive me and accept me into your family; I want to follow you, I want to serve you. Fill me with your Spirit and walk with me each day I pray.

I ask this in Your name. Amen

If you prayed that prayer and want to know more about being a Christian, please do get in touch with us; details are on the website. May God bless you.

O come all ye faithful

We have come to the end of our service this morning. Let's speak this blessing to the Lord Jesus and to one another.

*O Lord Jesus Christ,
by your incarnation you united
things earthly and heavenly.
Fill us with the sweetness
of inward peace and goodwill,
that we may join the heavenly host
in singing praises to your glory;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.*

Source: Gregorian Rite, 6th Century

That's it, but as I go there follows a message from Sunday's speaker J John. Do tune in on Sunday for our Christmas Extra service. Like this but with extra. Have a great day, a great Christmas but don't forget to stay safe!