

Christmas Day Transcript 2021

Video: Christmas Day

Welcome and Birthday Box

Advent Candles

Advent Candles Prayer

Father, as we come together today, we remember you Son Jesus came to bring us light and life. As we celebrate this fact, may Your Spirit reveal to each of us more of the wonder of Your love for us in giving your Son, Jesus to us.

We ask this in His name.

Amen.

Video Song: Angels from the realms of glory

Reading: Luke 2:1-15

Carol: While shepherds watched their flocks by night

Talk 1

GIFTS

Does anyone have a present to show?

Christmas is characterised by the giving and receiving of gifts.

WHAT IS THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT YOU HAVE EVER RECEIVED?

I'm sure that most of us may struggle to come up with a single gift that outshines all the others.

RED BUS

When I was a little boy, my first treasured gift looked something like this when it was new. It was a plastic red London bus. In fact, it was the first gift I opened and wasn't interested in anything else. I treasured it for years and you could tell I did, because over the years it slowly got tattier and tattier from overuse!

DESIRED GIFTS: XBOX OR BIKE?

Of course at Christmas children desire certain gifts. In the end, what may be desired is not quite the same as what they may get! However, there are some sorts of things children (or adults) may want at Christmas which they can't have under any circumstances. Here's the story of Rafif, a girl from northern Iraq.

VIDEO: OPEN DOORS

Rafif's desire to have her father home at Christmas is impossible. Her father had died tragically. In many parts of the world Christians are still being persecuted and there are empty seats at many Christmas tables this year because of the jailing or murder of Christians in places like Iraq, North Korea, India, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia and other places where Christians are routinely persecuted. We will pray for them later. It remains us that we are in a world where there is little peace for many.

WHAT'S THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT?

I avoided talking about the greatest gift there has ever been. MANGER AND CROSS No prize for this one; as we are here and it's Christmas, we remember that "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." God gave us that which was most precious to Him. And now He offers us the gift of forgiveness, of hope, of life right now. He wants each of us to be part of His family.

God gave; that's why we give and receive gifts on the day we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

LOS REYES

I've said this before but in Spain they don't have Father Christmas, but they do give gifts at Christmas, not on Christmas Day, but on Epiphany on 6th January which they call El Dia De Los Reyes – the day of the Kings, when they remember the coming of the Magi bearing gifts. We are going to sing about that now and then remind ourselves of the story again.

Carol: The first nowell

Reading: Matt 2:1-11

Prayer:

Lord Jesus,
You entered this world as a baby to die for us. You rose again and you are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We lift up our troubled world before you. We bring before you the Philippines. We pray for those who have lost family, been injured and lost their homes. Be close to them in their loss. We pray that the help that people need will swiftly be brought to those in need. We also pray for the country of Afghanistan at this time of famine when there is little government and few organisations to help. Be with international agencies who are on the ground there, to get the resources that are now being donated to those who most need it on the ground.

Lord Jesus, into this situation,
Bring Your peace.

We pray for our land at this time as our Government tries to tackle the Omicron Variant of Covid-19. Please give those who make decisions clarity as they deal with the uncertainties of the variant. Be with those who are suffering from all variants of Covid at the moment, particularly the hospitalised, and those who have suffered loss. We pray that vaccines will be fairly distributed worldwide.

Lord Jesus, into this situation,
Bring Your peace.

We pray to for the persecuted church, particularly in "hotspots" like Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, North Korea and Somalia. May Your Spirit fill your peoples with hope in these lands this Christmas time as they remember the coming into this world of Your beloved Son. Please comfort them that they have a hope that goes beyond life and comfort those families who have lost loved ones to murder or who have loved ones in prison for their faith.

Lord Jesus, into this situation,
Bring Your peace.

FAMILY SLIDE

Finally Lord, we lift up families we know that have lost loved ones this year or in recent years who will be sorely missed in family gatherings over this Christmas period. Comfort them and help them to remember the hope that comes through following Jesus.

We will take a few moments to pray silently for those we know that need a touch from God.

CHANGE SLIDE

Lord Jesus, into these situations,

Bring Your peace.

In Jesus' name

Amen

Talk: THE GIFT AND THE GIVER

MANGER AND CROSS

We give because God gave us His Son. He died on cross for you and for me. The Magi brought gifts to Jesus. What gift do you think he wants from us this Christmas?

Ever had a present that was less than what you expected? Rather than a nice shiny new gift, you receive something from a charity shop that's clearly been used and shall we say, a little knocked around? What! Who would think that someone's cast-off was good enough to give me.

Here's the story of a tatty teddy in a charity shop near Christmas. Who would want to buy him? Who would want to love him. He's just one-eyed and a bit torn.

VIDEO: TATTY TEDDY

If you have never trusted Jesus, the gift that God most wants this Christmas is you. But does God really want me? Yes, God loves us and when we offer our lives to Him as a gift, He accepts us. Me? Really? Why would He want me?

When we accept Jesus into our lives, God is like the thrilled little boy who loved his tatty teddy and fixed it up to be what he wanted it to be. And God is thrilled when anyone comes to Him and asked Him for forgiveness, to be His friend, to be part of His family, to accept Jesus into their lives. Jesus once said that there was more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who comes to Him than 99 righteous people who don't need to. Do you know Jesus? No? Today, God wants to give you a new life, He wants you to be part of His family. It doesn't matter who you are and the state of your life. He just wants you because He loves you. Will you receive Him? If you want to do that, then do pray this prayer with me now.

PRAYER:

Thank you Father that you love each one of us so much that you sent Your Son, Jesus to die for us on the cross so that you may offer forgiveness, life and hope. We thank you that you offer each of us the opportunity to be part of Your family. Father, I offer myself to you as Your Christmas gift today today. I know that I'm not perfect, battered by life and my own sins and failings. Thank you that you are willing to accept me joyfully. Please change me by Your Holy Spirit that I may grow into the person you want me to be.

In Jesus' name

Amen

Song: Come Thou long expected Jesus

Blessing:

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, remain
with you and among you
This Christmas time.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.