

Sunday December 26th 2021: First Sunday of Christmas

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or other suitable time.



Hymn StF 190 H&P 92

Angels, from the realms of glory / wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you who sang creation's story / now proclaim Messiah's birth:
*Come and worship / Christ the new-born King,
Come and worship / worship Christ, the new-born King.*

Saints before the altar bending / watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord descending / in his temple shall appear:

Though an infant now we view him / he shall fill his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him / every knee shall then bow down:

James Montgomery (1771 – 1854)

Prayer

Give thanks for all God's blessings over the past 2 or 3 days.

Use this prayer of confession from the Methodist Worship Book:

Loving God, you have searched us and known us,
our blindness, our frailties, our fears and our selfishness.
in sorrow we confess that we have sinned against you
and disobeyed your command to love.

Forgive us, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who became like us that we might become like him. Amen.

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Epistle Reading set for today: Colossians 3 v 12 – 17

To think about

How does this passage from Colossians relate to the message of Christmas?

Gospel Reading set for today: Luke 2 v 41 – 52

Message from a Circuit friend

It seems strange looking at the story of Jesus as a 12 year old the day after Christmas Day – but this is just how the lectionary falls this year. I think we can look at the story with our 'Christmas' eyes on, however! It seems to me that there are at least 3 comparisons between this story and the story of the nativity earlier in the chapter. Firstly, there is the fact that the parents do not understand why Jesus has prioritised his time in the Temple over them: "Son, why have you treated us like this?" Mary and Joseph didn't fully understand what was happening when Jesus was born either but, of course, they were not disturbed at that point – the disturbance and distress came later. Secondly, there is the fact that Mary "treasured up these things in her heart" just as she did when her new-born baby was visited by overwhelmed shepherds. Mary must have had a lot of treasures, and ponderings, in her heart by the time Jesus reached adulthood! Thirdly, there is the good outcome in both cases: after Jesus' birth we read, "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him" and, after the Temple incident, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour". We too find it difficult to understand sometimes – when life treats us or others in surprising and, sometimes, painful ways – we too might keep a record of God's blessings and unexpected involvement in our lives, and we too can trust in the God who can bring about good outcomes (even despite very difficult circumstances). Praise God the day after Christmas Day as on each day of our lives.

Jacqui Horton (Superintendent Minister of the Central Norfolk Circuit)

H&P 146

Jesus, friend of little children / be a friend to me;
take my hand and ever keep me / close to thee.

Teach me how to grow in goodness / daily as I grow;
Thou hast been a child and surely / thou does know.

Never leave me, nor forsake me / ever be my friend;
for I need Thee from life's dawning / to its end.

Walter John Mathams (1853 – 1931)

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for all who are lonely, or feeling hopeless, or despairing this Boxing Day. We think of those on the streets, those without enough to eat, those who live in fear of domestic violence or abuse, those who have had to leave their homes and their families.

We pray for 12 year olds, for parents who cannot understand their children – and children who cannot understand their parents. We pray for new parents, for new adoptive parents, for would-be parents, for worried parents, for bereaved parents.

We pray for our families and our friends, our communities, our country and our world.

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

Christmas Collect

Ever-living God,
whose glory was revealed in the Word made flesh,
may we, who have seen such splendour in the coming of your Son,
be true witnesses to your self-giving love in the world;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Hymn StF 202 H&P 106

Hark! The herald-angels sing / glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild / God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise / join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim: 'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
Hark! The herald-angels sing / glory to the new-born King.

Christ, by highest heaven adored / Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come / offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with men to dwell / Jesus, our Immanuel:

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings / risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by / born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth / born to give them second birth:

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)



May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.

WITH LOVE AND PRAYERS TO EVERYONE IN THE CENTRAL NORFOLK CIRCUIT THIS BOXING DAY

PLEASE NOTE: This service is being led on zoom at 11.15 am by Rev Jacqui – contact Mandy, Jacqui, or your minister for the link.