



Virtual Service 26 December 2021

Introduction

(Larry Robbins)

“Welcome to this service today. It is Boxing Day today; the term ‘Boxing Day’ originating in Britain, where it was a custom for tradesmen to collect “Christmas boxes” or gifts of money or presents on the first weekday after Christmas as thanks for good service throughout the year. Indeed, I can recall my parents leaving small ‘Christmas boxes’ (usually a small amount of money), out for the milkman and the rubbish collectors. This custom is linked to an older British tradition where the servants of the wealthy were allowed the next day to visit their families since they would have had to serve their masters on Christmas Day. The employers would give each servant a box to take home containing gifts, bonuses, and sometimes leftover food.

At Christmas we celebrate and commemorate God’s great love for us in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to atone for our sins. A tremendous and precious gift indeed. Amongst the hubbub and celebrations, let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas.”

Call to Worship [Psalm 96:1–3; 7–10]

(Brian Lima)

“Let us with the psalmist, lift up our hearts to the Lord. Allow the Spirit of God to lift your heart to your Heavenly Father through His Son. Allow the Spirit to make the words of the psalmist match your own.”

¹ *Sing to the Lord a new song;*

sing to the Lord, all the earth.

² *Sing to the Lord, praise his name;*

proclaim his salvation day after day.

³ *Declare his glory among the nations,*

his marvellous deeds among all peoples.

⁷ *Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,*

ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

⁸ *Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;*

bring an offering and come into his courts.

⁹ *Worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness;*

tremble before him, all the earth.

¹⁰ *Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns.”*

The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;

he will judge the peoples with equity.

Carol: O Come All Ye Faithful

(Brian Lima)

O come let us adore him; Christ the Lord. Worship Jesus through the beautiful carol, 'O Come All Ye Faithful.'"

[O Come All Ye Faithful](#)

Carol: Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

(Brian Lima)

"May the words directed toward God of this next carol be our own. 'Joyful, joyful we adore thee.'"

[Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee](#)

Prayer

(Eileen Barclay)

"O Lord, our Loving Heavenly Father we do thank You that we can meet together today. We thank You for Your amazing love – for the wonderful Christmas gift of Your Son who was willing to die to save us – and that He is with us today – Emmanuel.

We thank You for all you given us – the flowers and trees – sparkling rivers and the vast ocean – birds and butterflies – sunshine and rain and refreshing breezes. We thank you for our families and the joy they give. We thank You for all You have endowed us with and as we bring a small part of all you have blessed us with as our offering, we ask that it will be used wisely in the furtherance of Your Kingdom.

Father God we marvel that You the Creator of the Universe, who knows the end from the beginning should send Your Son to save us. We thank You that we are a redeemed people, bought at what a price, and that You draw us together in all our diversity in the bonds of Your great love. Help us daily to grow more like You – to allow You to shape our lives and direct our actions, that we will be sensitive and obedient to Your leading. We thank You that we have Your Word to guide us and that You speak to us through it even though we are so unworthy. Forgive us Father for the times we fail you, for wanting to go our own way, for not being still to listen to You. We thank You for the intercession that is made for us before the Throne and thank You that we can also make intercessions for others and the situations they and we face.

We pray for our Church Family here at Milford, that we may accomplish Your purposes – that we may have all the parts of the body to function effectively. We think of those who are not well or are struggling, remembering particularly Des, Robert and Barbara, Pat, Tom, the two Maurices, Nelli, Frank, Jim, Anita, Don and Steve, Melva, Lynne and Bill, and ask that You will uphold them and they may know Your peace and presence with them. We would ask this too for those who are now on their own and that they may know your comfort. We pray too for the Cottle family and ask that those looking after Karen will make the right decisions and that Your healing hand will be on her.

We pray for this lovely land we live in – that our leaders will govern in accordance with Your will – that there will be a turning back to You – especially among today's young people and that You will raise up leaders for them.

We pray for those who have taken the message of Your love to foreign parts, that they will be effective, and that You will uphold and strengthen them. We pray that this time with their daughter in Canada will be a time of blessing and refreshing for the Meyers. We remember Lizzie, Joel and their little family, Dacha and Peter, Frances and Ginny and Tsao serving you in Asia. We ask that you will facilitate Visa and NGO

applications and that good relationships will be developed with new personnel. We pray for the Tripura Theological College that they may be able to extend their campus and hire much needed staff, that more folk will be equipped to spread Your Word and shepherd the flock in that area.

O Lord, there are many troubles in our world today. We ask that the spread of Covid might be curtailed. We think of those affected by flooding, fires and tornadoes and storms, both here and overseas and pray that they will get the help and comfort they need. O Lord we sense that the end is drawing closer and we ask that You will bless us with a joy that is infectious, removing the barriers that Covid has erected, mending relationships that have been strained and most of all bringing the light of our Saviour into the darkness. Bless this nation Lord with the greatest of all joys, the joy that is found in knowing, loving and following You. Thank You again for the gift of Your Son and our salvation.

We ask these things in His name,

Amen.”

Carol: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

(Brian Lima)

“We worship even as we wait for Emmanuel, Jesus, to return and fully ransom us to full union with him and his coming kingdom.”

[O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#)

Scripture Reading Luke 2:22–40

²² *When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”*

²⁵ *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:*

²⁹ *“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.*

³⁰ *For my eyes have seen your salvation,*

³¹ *which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:*

³² *a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”*

³³ *The child’s father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”*

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

Sermon

(Brian Lima)

[Watch the Sermon](#)

[Read the Sermon](#)

Carol: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

(Brian Lima)

“For our last carol, we sing ‘Come, thou long expected Jesus.’ May the Spirit awaken this in our hearts as we worship.”

[Come Thou Long Expected Jesus](#)

Benediction

(Brian Lima)

*May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the **coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

1 Thessalonians 5:23