

# 19.12.21 am Family Service

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Date: 19 December 2021

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning. Good morning. We're welcome to the service this morning. It's good to have some visitors with us today. The service to you are especially welcome.

It's good to have Mihaela's parents from Romania with us today. Especially welcome. It's nice to have Anthony back after a long period of a few weeks of recovery.

It's good to have you back as well. And some of the students that we see returning. Those who are visiting and those who are not. It's good for us all to come together and to worship God. And good to have all the boys and girls here today.

Are you in good voice? Yes. Pardon? Yes. Good stuff. So you're going to speak to me? Yes. Yes. You're going to speak to me?

Yes. Excellent. Good stuff. Well, let's just have the intimations. If you notice this before we begin this time of worship. The first thing to say is that the evening service is at six.

[ 1 : 02 ] Hopefully I'll take that myself. The ladies fellowship, they meet in the church tomorrow night. Is that right? Are you having a meeting tomorrow night? No. So that's a, you can strike that intimation off the record for first.

A lot of fishes on Tuesday. Wednesday is happening. So, and so is Road to Covery on Tuesday night. So please note that. Prayer meeting will be on Wednesday in person.

And also a Zoom option for the prayer meeting there as well. And on Christmas Eve, there are services as well. They're not going to be live streamed.

So morning to those who are on the live stream. We won't have the services on Christmas Eve live streamed. They'll just be in-person services. One at 5pm.

And it's a children's carol service. We have a lot of children coming through the church every Friday afternoon. And so those from the Jam and the Connect and I think maybe one or two from Rooted as well are going to, they're going to tell us the Christmas story.

[ 2 : 07 ] So I'm going to kind of take a step back in that service and I'll prepare for it. But the children will talk us through the Christmas story and there'll be the Christmas story and carols and a little bit of application on that as well.

So that's five o'clock. Be about 45 minutes, I would say, that service. That's a nice Christmas-y ringtone, whoever's got that one. I think it's Angus Alec.

I didn't actually think it was Angus Alec. Okay, let's compose ourselves.

Christmas carol service at five and that's the young ones are going to lead that service. And then we'll have a late-night service as we have done in past years, quarter past 11 on Christmas Eve.

And all are welcome to these services. And the service is next Sunday. I'll take the morning one myself and the evening service is Gaelic. And that will be the Reverend Dolan at MacDonald.

[ 3 : 15 ] So these, I think, are all the notices. So there is tea and coffee. And there's tea and coffee after the service for those who are comfortable staying behind.

Nobody has to. But those who are comfortable to stay behind, please do so. Okay, let's begin this time of worship now.

And we'll sing to God's praise. Mission Praise 211. And the words will be on the screen in just a moment. Mission Praise 211. Hark, the herald angels sing.

Glory to the newborn King.

Peace on earth and mercy mine. God and sinners reconcile. Joy for all ye nations rise.

[ 4 : 25 ] Join the triumph of the skies. With the telling words proclaim. Christ is born in Bethany heaven.

Hark, the herald angels sing. Glory to the newborn King. Christ by high and turn the door.

Christ the everlasting Lord. Let him try and behold him come. Offspring of a virgin's moon.

Hark, the herald angels sing. Hark, the herald angels sing.

Please, the herald angels sing. Jesus, how many of you are in Bethany. Hark, the herald angels sing.

[ 5 : 34 ] Glory to the newborn King. Hail, the herald angels sing. Hail, the herald angels sing.

Hail, the herald angels sing. Hail, the son of righteousness. Light and light to all He brings. Father is filled with me in His wings.

But he lays his glory high, For that man no more may die, Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.

Hark the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

Well, let's pray. It's good to have all the boys and girls with us.

[ 6 : 40 ] And it's a family service this morning, for those who might not know. And the boys and girls will be in for the whole service. So let's pray. And maybe just before I pray, I'll ask the young ones, Christmas is a great time, isn't it?

Very happy time. But we know that there are some people who struggle at Christmas. So are there any kind of, not names, but kind of people that we should be praying for that you might be thinking about this time of year?

People that don't have anyone to live with and who might feel lonely, yeah. That's a good one.

Katie? People who don't have enough money to buy presents, yeah. And you might be stressed about that. Yeah. Anyone else that we can think of?

Henry? People in hospital. That's good. We'll do that. People who have family who died and they miss them at Christmas time.

[ 7 : 42 ] Yeah? Can we find them in the middle? Yep. Yep. Okay. Okay. Let's pray. Let's close our eyes and let's speak to God and let's pray.

Okay. Our Father in heaven, we thank you that you are our Father. We thank you that you are God. We thank you that you love us.

And we thank you that we know that you love us so much because we see, Father, that you sent your Son, Jesus, into this world to be our Savior. We thank you that this is the time of year that we remember that Jesus was born into this world.

And we thank you that he came on that special mission to save us from sin and to give us everlasting life, to give us hope that never ends.

And so we thank you, Lord, for all that we've sung of in that carol and all that we'll sing of in all the carols and all that we'll think of today. We thank you that Jesus is the light of the world.

[ 8 : 47 ] We thank you that he came to overcome the darkness. And we pray that you would help us to keep our eyes on Jesus through this Christmas season. There's so much going on.

We can be so busy. We can be looking everywhere at Christmas time. Sometimes we might take our eyes off Jesus. We pray that we wouldn't do that, but we would keep our eyes on Jesus every day and remember that he is the reason for all that we're doing.

We pray, Lord, for those who haven't heard of Jesus. We're thankful that we have mums and dads or maybe Sunday school teachers or YF leaders who've told us the good news about Jesus.

We thank you that we know of your love for us. We know the message of Christmas. But we pray for countries where they haven't yet heard. We pray for people even in our own country who've never had anyone tell them that God loves them.

We've never had anyone tell them that Jesus came into the world to save them and give them hope. We pray that you would help us and help people all across the land and every land to lift up the name of Jesus so that people would look to him and be saved.

[ 10 : 03 ] And we ask, Lord, that you would be with those who struggle at this time of year. We think of those who feel lonely, who live on their own and who might feel all alone on Christmas Day and over the other days when other people have family coming.

We ask, Lord, that those who live alone wouldn't feel alone but that they would know that you are with them. We thank you that we remember the name of Jesus as Emmanuel which means God with us.

We pray for those who are sad, who remember loved ones who have gone on from this world and to eternity and who miss them.

And we ask that you would give comfort to those whose hearts are sad at this time. We pray for those who might be worried not having enough money to buy presents or maybe buying presents

that they can't really afford.

And we ask that you look after them and help them. We pray for people who are in hospital and who feel sick and who are struggling. We pray for anybody who might even be sick just now in their home or in hospital.

[ 11 : 11 ] And we ask that you would take care of them, that they would know that you are close to them and that you would lay your hands of healing upon them. And we pray, Lord, for those who struggle at this time because they feel that there's temptations that they can't bear.

Those who might struggle not to drink, we ask that you would help them to be strong in the strength that you give. We pray for those who don't have homes and who live in cardboard boxes and streets in the cities of this nation.

And we ask that at this Christmas time they might hear about the God who loves them and who calls them to a heavenly home. So hear our prayers for those who are not as fortunate as we are. We are thankful for the homes that we have and for the food that we have, for the water that we have, for the warmth that we have in this church building as well. But we remember those who don't have any of these things and we ask that you would help them.

So hear our prayers and be close to us as we look to Jesus this morning and we ask all these things in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Okay, boys and girls, you're going to speak to me.

[ 12 : 27 ] Yeah? Okay, have you got your thinking caps on? I want you to imagine, first of all, this morning, I want you to imagine that you'd been asleep for maybe weeks, maybe months, just glancing over there to make sure no one's asleep yet in the service.

And imagine you'd been asleep, you know how long hedgehogs go to sleep for? Do you know how long they go into sleep for? Henry? Not years. What do you think?

A long time. A long time. Yes? Ailey? A month. Not one month. Do you know? It's actually almost six months.

It can be from October through to March and that's even longer than teenagers sleep for. Now imagine you were a hedgehog and you were waking up this morning in Tarbert and rubbing your little eyes and you didn't know what day it was, you didn't know what month it was, you didn't know what time of year it was and you took a wanderer around Tarbert.

Do you think you would know it's Christmas time? I don't know. Do you think you would? I think you would, yeah. Why would you? Give me some of the things that would give it clues that it's Christmas time.

[ 13 : 51 ] What shows you it's Christmas time? Shout out a few for me. Christmas lights. What else? Miriam? Pardon?

Snow. Well, there's no snow yet but I'm told it's coming. Emily? There's Christmas trees. Christmas trees. There's Christmas lights. There's people wearing Christmas ties.

There's some Christmas jumpers. There are people walking around eating mince pies. Ailey? People wearing hats and scarves.

Christmas music coming out of the shops. All around Tarbert there's actually lots of little clues that it's Christmas time but the main thing, I think, is the lights.

Because there's lights everywhere. Isn't there? If you go to school at night time and in the morning when you're going when it's quite dark it's full of lights. If you go down to where the story is there's lots of lights.

[ 14 : 56 ] If you walk around the village there's lights. I was going to show you here. Lights. Wow!

Lights off! There you go. Lights. Lights off. Lights off. Yay! But there's lights everywhere just now and tell me who do you think the lights that we're seeing are supposed to remind us of at Christmas time?

I don't know. Who do you think? There's lights in the Christmas tree. So who do all the lights point us to? Callum?

To God. And to God's son? Jesus. And he said of himself he said I'm the light of the world.

And so all these lights that we see fairy lights around different places lights at the school lights around the village lights in the window lights in your houses at Christmas time they're all supposed to remind us of Jesus.

[ 16 : 04 ] Now I know you've been thinking a lot about light and I think it's connect maybe jam as well this term and I want to tell you four things today about the light because Christmas is full of light and the first thing is point number one I think it will be on the screen in a second it might not be the

light was promised wasn't it?

the light was promised now how do you know if light shines? How do you know if light's shining? Tell me Henry No that's how that's what it gets power from but how do you know light's shining? Is it always easy to see light shining? Not always easy you're right look at this it's a head torch but if I put on this head torch just now is that very bright?

No and it's bright is that very bright? Yes and it's bright it's not very bright it's not very bright no it's not very bright because it's light in here and if I hold it next to the light's over this way it hardly shines at all but see at night time when I go out walking with Shores if I put this thing in my head and I go up the car with the light on you can see it for miles and all these cars are zooming up the car like they do and when they see you they're zooming out to the side to try and avoid you because because in the darkness it's very easy to see the light in the light like this it's not so easy but when everything's dark the light shines bright we're going to read about the Bible just now and in this bit of the Bible there's a man called Isaiah does anybody know anything about Isaiah? probably not too much well Isaiah was a man who was given a job by God he was given a message have you ever been given a message to pass on to someone?

[18:15] well Isaiah was given a message from God to pass to the world and it was a message about light the light that was promised see when God created the world it was good wasn't it?

it was perfect and it was full of light but something went wrong with the world didn't it? what went wrong with the world? what was the thing that went wrong with the world?

Emily? sin that's right the very beginning in the garden of Eden in Genesis the very beginning of Genesis at first the world is perfect and full of light and then sin came into the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and things started to get dark and bad things started to happen brothers started to fall out with each other they started to fight and people started to suffer and it was as if the world that God made that was so full of light started to get dark and God saw that light and he made a promise that light was going to come so Miriam I think is going to read for us the reading from Isaiah chapter 9 verses 2 6 and 7 so Miriam if you come out here and I'll stand to the side and you can read this this reading big light voice

Amen thank you very much Miriam for reading that so did you hear that into a dark world God looked and he saw the mess that all the people he loved were making and he said I'm going to make them a promise that my light is going to come into this world God made a promise that he would send light into the darkness and that promise came true on the first Christmas when Jesus was born when the son of God was given do you know how long the people in Isaiah's day had to wait for that promise that Miriam read to be to come true any guesses guess Lois 400 years it's actually more than that Henry it was almost about 600 years so from the time that promise was made it was about 600 years before Jesus came before that promise came true but the good news today boys and girls is that we don't have to wait for that promise to come true because Jesus the light he came into the world didn't he it's what we remember at Christmas and where is he just now well in a way he's with us right now

[22:03] Jesus said where two or three of my people gather I'll be with them so he's with us and sometimes when we go through difficult times sometimes when life gets a bit dark for us or when life gets a bit dark for people that we love you know the great thing what can we do yeah we can pray when we're going through darkness and we're struggling or when we see somebody that we love and life has got dark for them we can carry them to God in prayer and we can say Jesus will you bring your light into their life and he's promised that he'll be near to us he'll be near to the people that we pray for when we ask him so we're going to sing another carol now it's away in a manger and the words are on the screen away in the manger and the last verse

I think remember the line in the last verse be near me Lord Jesus that's what we can ask we can ask that Jesus will be near us and near the people that we love who struggle sometimes in the darkness so we'll stand to sing away in a manger no grip for a bed the little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet hand the stars in the bright sky look down where he lay the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay the cattle are lowing the baby awaits but little

Lord Jesus no crying he may I love you Lord Jesus look down from the sky I'll stay by my side until morning is nigh be near me Lord Jesus I ask you to stay close by me forever come love me I pray rest on the dear children in your tender care and with us forever to live with me there so boys and girls

Christmas is full of light and when the world got dark because of sin God made a promise didn't he that he was going to send light into the world and that light came in when Jesus was born so the light was promised that was the first point and the second point about light is the light was prepared for now tell me this what kind of things are you doing to prepare for Christmas yep what kind of things are you doing to prepare for Christmas yep so you're preparing presents for under the tree yeah a light so yeah you're getting lights organised what other things are you doing to prepare for Christmas who else hasn't answered me yet

Lily what are you doing to get ready for Christmas have you put your tree up good job dad good stuff so we get the tree up we have lights in the house what other things Cameron what things are we doing to prepare for Christmas make presents good stuff making presents your mummy makes presents as well good job what other things are we doing to get ready for Christmas to get prepared Ailey you're opening the doors to the calendar is it good job yeah who else hasn't answered Michael your dad's getting the camera down so you can have a Christmas video excellent can we use that for a children's talk in future weeks that would be good and other things we're getting ready for Christmas there's lots of preparations to do

[ 27 : 38 ] Henry decorations you got Christmas decorations up Jono Christmas cake you're making a Christmas cake are you your help mum your Christmas cake excellent and there'll be Christmas menus getting organised there's lots of things we do to prepare for Christmas and I want to tell you now about a man called John and John had he was called John the Baptist and John the Baptist he was given a special job and his job was to prepare people for the first Christmas his job was to prepare the people who were walking in darkness like the reading that Miriam did and he was to prepare them for the light that was coming into the world so we're going to have two people coming to read out from John chapter one so it's Ailey and Lois I think are coming out to read

John chapter one verses one to verse twelve so out you come and let's hear about John whose job it was to prepare the people for the first Christmas in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God he was in the beginning with God all things were made through him and without him was not anything made made that was made in him was life and the life was the light of men the light shines in the darkness and the darkness was not overcome it there was a man sent from God whose name was John he came as a witness to bear witness about the light that all might believe through him who is not the light but came to bear witness about the light the true light which gives light to everyone was coming into the world he was in the world and the world was made through him yet the world did not know him he came to his own and his own people did not receive him but to all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God thank you girls for reading that passage from John chapter 1 so John had that job to do his job was to prepare people for the first

Christmas his job was to tell people about Jesus you know that sometimes you can you know sometimes you can get people and they're always saying oh look at me look at me look at me everybody watch me watch me you know sometimes people can be like that sometimes they want all the attention for themselves well John the Baptist never said look at me but he always said look at Jesus if John the Baptist had a phone he wouldn't be taking selfies like that and then putting it online and saying to everybody look at me here's me here and here's me there and here's me in the next place like me look at me look at me John the Baptist if he had a phone he wouldn't be taking pictures of himself he'd be taking pictures of Jesus and saying everyone look at Jesus and John the Baptist wouldn't be posting a million things online about himself and what he liked and where he went and all that stuff he would always be telling people about

Jesus John the Baptist said one day Jesus must get bigger so everyone can see him and I must get smaller and John's job was to prepare people to see and hear Jesus who was the light and you know that's our job too whether we're very young or whether we're older we need to tell people about Jesus we need to tell people who are in a dark world that the light has come you know you put on the news on the television there's a lot of good news stories we never hear them do we there's always bad news about this and bad news about that we've been given good news that Jesus the light has come into the world to overcome the darkness and he's overcome sin he takes it away when we trust him he's overcome the devil who tries to attack us

Jesus went to the cross and he beat him and Jesus he's overcome death because he rose from the dead and he said everyone who believes in him will also rise and have everlasting life so John's job was to prepare people for the light your job and my job is to prepare people to point people to Jesus

and I have to say boys and girls quite a few of you are better at this job than anyone else I know some of you guys are brilliant at telling other people about Jesus and saying to your friends come to jam come to connect hear about Jesus so well done on the job that you're doing and let's all of us try to remember that at Christmas time we're to point people to Christ point people to the light of the world this dark world needs to hear about him this place where there's so much bad news needs to hear the good news about Jesus so the light was prepared for the light was promised and we're going to sing now about telling people about the light of Jesus go tell it on the mountain the words are on the screen and we'll stand to sing to

[ 34 : 16 ] God's praise God tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere God tell it on the mountain and Jesus Christ is born Christ is born the shepherd's beard and gentle when low above the end rang out the angels called us that hailed our saviour's land go tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere go tell it on the mountain that Jesus

Christ is born in the lonely the humble Christ was born and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas born God tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere God tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born so the light boys and girls was promised this dark world was given a promise from God that light was coming and then the light was prepared for by John the Baptist who said don't look at me look at Jesus and the third thing is the light came into the world and that's what we're really remembering at Christmas that the light that Jesus he came into the world now boys and girls tell me were any of you down at the distillery a couple of weeks ago when the Christmas lights went on put your hand up if you were down there and tell us what happened that night what was happening who hasn't answered me so far what happened that night okay John are you being quiet some carols were sung yeah someone had a foghorn and they put the lights on that's kind of the that's the quick version of it all yeah we all gathered down and it was all dark wasn't it and it was freezing that night and then there was some carols that were sung and then there was a countdown wasn't there which didn't go quite to plan but nevertheless there was a countdown and then a foghorn went off and the lights on the Christmas tree went on and do you remember what happened to the sky yeah Miriam fireworks lit up the sky so they did the countdown and then when it got to the right time or just round about then the whole of the sky seemed to be lit up with fireworks and then the lights on the

Christmas tree and you know in a much bigger way on the first Christmas that's what happened when Jesus came into the world there were shepherds out in the fields remember that and they were just minding their own business they were looking after the sheep like any other night and then all of a sudden the skies were bright and the glory of God shone down to the place where they were and then the angels came and the angels told them that the light Jesus had come into the world and then there was wise men magi and they saw a star in the sky that was brighter than any other star they saw a light in the sky that was brighter than any other light and when they followed it who did it lead them to it was Jesus so

I think what we'll do now is we'll read these two stories these two true stories of what happened when the light came into the world we'll read about the shepherds and we'll read about the wise men and for the first reading we've got a reading from Luke chapter 2 and Katie and then Bethany are going to come out and read to us about the shepherds who were in the field Katie and Bethany and there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby keeping watch over their flocks at night and the angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified but the angel said to them do not be afraid I bring good news of great joy that will be for all people today in the town of

[ 40 : 20 ] David a saviour has been born to you he is Christ the Lord this will be a sign to you you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel praising God and saying God the highest on earth peace to men on who his favour rests when the angels left them and gone into heaven the shepherds said to one another let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has told us about so they hurried off and found Mary Joseph and the baby who was lying in a manger when they had seen him they spread the word about the child who all heard were amazed at what the shepherds had told them thank you very much girls for reading so well so the light actually came into the world the light was promised the light was prepared for and then

Jesus was born and the light of the world came into the world and all these amazing things happened to show that God's promises had come true and that the saviour had arrived and you're

going to sing now boys and girls a carol that helps us to remember all that happened on that day when Jesus came into the world so boys and girls if you want to come to the front I think are you and we're going to hear this carol which was written by a friend of ours actually and the boys and girls are going to sing for us this morning poetry and are womenball they I don't know if we've got a video so I think it's going to have to be acapella is it?

do you know the words boys and girls do you think? do you think you know it? do you think you know it? yes? no how does it start? let's just wait one little minute and we'll get some of the words organised so okay I think it starts with a long time ago on a far away land so a long time ago a long time ago in a far away land an angel told Mary that she'd have a son his name would be Jesus he'd tell the good news that he came from heaven to save me and you hear the angels sing

Jesus is born see the shepherds come from fields afar hear the angels sing Jesus is born see the wise men follow the star as we think of this baby boy who came from heaven to bring us joy we give our presence remembering him Jesus our saviour our friend and our king hear the angels sing Jesus is born see the shepherds come from fields afar hear the angels sing Jesus is born see the wise men follow the star hear the angels sing Jesus is born see the shepherds come from fields afar hear the angels sing

Jesus is born see the wise men follow the star hear the angels sing good or pleasant remember in him Jesus our saviour our land and our king applause good job boys and girls thank you very much for singing that to carol for us I think Farrakhar's got competition there we're going to sing now and we're going to sing about the shepherds who saw that light in the fields long ago when Jesus was born 764 mission prays the words on the screen and we sing there while shepherds watch their flocks by night all seated on the ground an angel of the Lord came down and glory light shone around so we'll stand to sing this praise while shepherds watched their flocks by night all seated on the ground the angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around fear not fear not fear not fear not said he for mighty dead have ceased their troubled mind the tidings of great joy

[ 47 : 06 ] I bring to you and all mankind to you in David's town this day is born of David's life a savior who is Christ the Lord and this shall be the sight the heavenly baby you there shall find to you the view this day or in the mucked swaddling man stand in a manger lay the spakeless angel and forthwith appeared a shining throng of angels praising God who thus addressed their joyful song

O glory be to God on high and on the earth be peace who will export on hand to men again and ever cease peace okay last point boys and girls you've listened very well so remember the world was dark because of sin and a light was do you remember the first thing a light was a light was promised God made a promise remember the reading that Miriam did that the people walking in darkness would have a great light come in and then the light was prepared for and who was given the job to say look at Jesus look at

Jesus remember John the Baptist that's right and then the third thing is the light came into the world the promise that God made came true God's promises always come true and Jesus came into this world to be the light Jesus came into this world to give us his light and to save us and the final thing is the light comes into our hearts the light comes into our hearts if we trust Jesus you know the song that you sang a second ago it began with these words a long time ago in a far away land and you know all these stories that we've been reading about they happened a long time ago didn't they how many years has it been since the shepherds and all that it's been yeah not millions but about 2,000 years been about 2,000 years since all these things happened and how far away is it from

Tarbert to Bethlehem any ideas somebody said oh as if they knew any ideas no really pardon no no how far how far away is it miles Henry 200 miles no higher Michael 16,000 no that's a rocket ship mileage it's not 600 it's about 3,500 miles from here to Bethlehem so all these things we've been reading about and singing about they happened a long time ago in a far away land and so we might wonder today what's this got to do with me you might be thinking well what's all this got to do with me I mean it's good that Jesus the light was promised we might be saying and it's good that Jesus the light was prepared for and it's good that Jesus that the light of the world came into the world but I don't understand what this has got to do with my life that's maybe what some people are thinking what's God saying to me through this Christmas story and the thing that God is saying to you whether you're a boy or a girl or a mom or a dad or a granny or a shenna or whatever God is saying to us through the Christmas story I want to bring my light into your heart that's what he's saying see it's it's not just the world that got dark when sin came into the world my heart got dark

and so did yours because of sin our hearts are dark and we know that because there are things that we do and there are things that we say and there are things especially that we think we wouldn't want anyone else to see them so we cannot hide them away in the darkness but God can see everything he can see right into the darkest places in the world and he can see right into the darkest corners of our heart but he still loves us it's the amazing thing and he wants to fill our lives our hearts with his light he wants us to know that our sins that we feel heavy on us they can be thrown away because Jesus came and he lived and he died to take our sin away and God wants to give us his grace wants to give us his love and his goodness and his forgiveness and his peace and his joy and his light so how can we how can we get the light of God into our hearts well any ideas really by reading the Bible and who does the

[ 53 : 55 ] Bible talk to us about Emily about Jesus everything that God wanted to give to us of his light he did through Jesus we sang about that didn't we a long time ago in a far away land an angel told Mary that she'd have a son his name would be Jesus he'd tell the good news that he came from heaven for me and for you so how can we get God's light into our hearts boys and girls what do we have to do can we buy it no we can't do we have to earn it no we don't so how do we get God's light into our hearts well listen to this it's a gift and I think is it Michael you're going to come and read for us one of the most important verses in all of the

Bible that tells us that God's light and his love and his saving of us is a gift through Jesus so out you come Michael he doesn't even need the bit of paper he knows it off his off by heart so do you want to chapter for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have an everlasting life John 3 16 excellent give us to us again so important let's have it again nice and loud for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life and one more time just half of it for God so loved the world that he gave didn't he so the salvation the light of God that we need in our hearts we don't buy it do we we don't earn it do we

God gives it so how do we get it reading the Bible and praying to you we just ask it we just take it don't we it's a bit like if I say Michael I've got a present for you I'm offering it to you you take it and God says to you I'm going to be in the dark tonight God says to us he says to us everything of my love and my light I want to give to you but we just have to say Lord Jesus please come into my life we take it don't we okay you can go and sit down there Michael thank you at Christmas time we give gifts and we receive gifts but the best gift ever was the gift that Michael just told us about and that is the gift that the father gave to us of his son Jesus who takes away our sin who chases away the darkness and who gives us everlasting light and life if we believe in him so boys and girls and mums and dads and everybody else the message is the same message almost every week believe in

Jesus is that what we want to say to the older ones believe in Jesus he is the light and he offers to bring his light into our hearts if we trust him so I'm going to ask Gordon to come and now say a short prayer and then we'll have our final carol let us pray our gracious and ever blessed Lord we thank you for the truth of that promise that you have given to us that you loved us so much that you sent your son Jesus that if we come and as we believe in him we have that promise of eternal life so we pray heavenly father that as we have heard the Christmas story again as we have heard the promise that was given that our hearts would indeed be prepared to receive that gift the gift heavenly father that can only come from you that gift of light that when we feel so much in darkness that your light can shine in us and we pray heavenly father that our hearts would be ready to receive that as each one of us make preparation this year for Christmas as we make preparation and the buying of gifts and the putting up of decorations that heavenly father that we would think of the greatest gift that has been given your son and that we would prepare our hearts to receive it that heavenly father that not one of us gathered here would think that this is just a season for the children but heavenly father that we would recognize that the whole purpose of Christmas is to celebrate that you sent your son into the world that heavenly father you gave us your son that if we come and we believe in him we will know what it is to have everlasting life everlasting life heavenly father that can only be had through Jesus so as we come and we thank you for Jesus we pray that our hearts would indeed receive him that heavenly father each one of us would know him dearly and that as the children have already sung here that they would know what it is to be near to Jesus be near me Lord Jesus I ask you that each one of us would say that prayer this day and that we would not leave this place without knowing Jesus as our Lord and as our

saviour we thank you that you came and you told the shepherds that you told the wise men and that we can read of it but heavenly father it is not just a story to read it it is a story that is there for each one of us to live if we come and we call upon you as Lord and a saviour so may this

[60:13] Christmas be a special Christmas for each one of us that heavenly father that we come and we see that light and we receive that light into our lives that we may go forth and no longer walk in darkness but walk in the light of your son Jesus and we thank you for him in Jesus precious name we come and we pray before you amen John I still got reading to do you John are you coming to your reading sorry I get things mixed up it's because I'm getting old okay John let's hear the reading after they had heard the king they went on their way and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until they stopped over the place where the child was when they saw the star they were over they were overjoyed on coming to the house they saw the child with his mother Mary and they bowed down and worshipped him then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold of frankincense and of myrrh and having been warned in a dream not to go back to herod they returned to their country by another route thank you

John thank you John so the light of Jesus was promised was prepared for it came the shepherds saw it the wise men saw it and I hope that each of us today we see the light of Christ in the Christmas story and we do what the shepherds did and what the wise men did and we come to see Jesus and we put our faith in him we give him our hearts as the carol says so let's sing that carol to finish in the bleak midwinter 337 the words are on the screen we're encouraged that that carol comes to an end to give the Lord Jesus our hearts so that his light will shine in our hearts water hi ya knows yah air hail viene o'r

The End The End The Dark God Almighty

Jesus Christ Angels and dark angels May I gather there Cherubim and seraphim Thrown the air But his mother lonely In her maiden place Worship the beloved With a kiss Lord God I give them Who loves my heart If I were a shepherd I would bring a love

If I were a wise man I would do my part Yet all I can I give him Give my heart And now may the grace Of our Lord Jesus Christ And the love of God the Father And the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit Be with us all Now and forevermore Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen