

Christmas Family Service 2015

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Date: 20 December 2015

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 0 0] okay good morning everyone morning boys and girls good morning and welcome to the service the family service this morning i don't think there's any visitors with us this morning that i've spotted so far but it's good to see some of the students because they've been a little while back with us and you're particularly welcome tea and coffee at the end of the service as usual evening service will be at six and will be conducted by myself god willing and there's the community carol service here in the community center at 8 p.m this evening in the course of the week various things as usual uh ladies bible study i've got a note that's on i'm looking for a nod it is on and there will be a prayer meeting uh on wednesday evening as usual until the cruises at half past seven first booth fellowship is not on anymore for uh the next few weeks road to recovery meeting am i uh yeah that's on tuesday at 8 p.m and uh the watch night service the christmas eve service will be the late service and that's on christmas eve the 24th at half past 11th thursday and services next sunday will be at 11 and 6 in the morning duncan mcferson will take the service and at 6 p.m it's the garrot service and that will be led by donald john morrison i'm away in newist next weekend all the ministers and the press would be had to agree to take one service over in newist so that's the service that i've agreed to take that's next large day and duncan and donald john will be covering and there's a new year's praise service in the community center at 12 noon as has been in tradition over the years so these i think are all the intimations and we're going to begin now by singing to god's praise people have a new organist this morning with us and we sing from mission phase 491 and this verses 1 to 3 and these verses will be on the speed will come all you faithful let's unite their hearts and pray our heavenly father we thank you for this day and we thank you for these words that we've been singing we thank you that we are called to come and to come in worship to remember to rejoice to give thanks for the most wonderful gift ever given to the world we thank you father for such great love that you would give to us your son who would come to this world leaving him humbling himself and come in order that he would live sinlessly and then die on a cross for us so that we might be forgiven so that it might be possible for us sinners as we are to lose our sin and to enter into friendship with relationship with the living god and father we pray that would be our experience and our testimony this morning we pray that we would come with joy that we would come with expectation in our hearts knowing that you will receive us and that you will bless us and that you will speak to us we thank you that we have your word and your word will be read we pray that you would unblock our ears that we would hear your voice that

you would be speaking to us we pray that you would stir our hearts we pray that you would clear our minds of all that would distract us and enable us this day to see Jesus and to see him afresh and lord if we have never yet trusted him we pray that whether we are very young today or whether we are older that we would put our faith in Christ as our savior and as our lord so lead us in worship this morning we ask we thank you that we are here and that we are safe and that we are warm and that we are dry we think of many people in the world who aren't many of your followers Lord Jesus who meet in places that are dangerous not knowing whether they will get to the end of the service without a disturbance we pray for them Lord and we ask that you would be with them and that you would bless them and lord we thank you that we are here and thank you thank you that we are here and we have sense that we are here and that we have that sense of safety and freedom to be able to worship so meet with us we pray for those who are not here this morning people who are sick some people who are sad some people who struggle at this time of year and we ask that you would be especially close to them and Lord that you would help them and that you would meet them in their need and that you would give to them that grace of Jesus that is sufficient that it's enough for all of us we pray now Lord that you would go before us and that you would bless us and that you would lead us and all we pray is in Jesus name Amen well boys and girls i'm going to do less

speaking today and you're going to do more speaking you're going to tell us the Christmas story you're going to be reading some of the sections of the bible and you're going to be answering my questions as well aren't you that was a bad start you're going to be answering my questions as well aren't you yes you are tell me who's excited about Christmas all excited about Christmas how many sleeps now is it till Christmas there's no doubt over that one round of applause there at the end yet yes Alistair you've got something to tell us six off to the maths class is it i don't know i'm not even john will tell us what's in your mind 10 we're not in an option here we've got a few sleeps till Christmas and we're excited why are you excited

John Roddy what do you like about Christmas boys and girls tell me just a few things you like about Christmas Bethany we remember God being born that's right grace getting presents sanctified the sinful Caitlin opening presents presents are not bad we just have to remember Jesus first of all yeah opening presents what else do we like about Christmas do you think they like anything about Christmas they're shaking their heads what do you like about Christmas you like that too okay that will do for just now

Christmas is a very exciting and there's lots of things that we remember and there's lots of things that we love about Christmas I love eating turkey and stuffing and sausages and the bacon and onion rings and nice gravy and the chocolate you'll love at the end of it I love Christmas dinner and there's presents and there's tinsel and there's cheese and there's parties lots of things that we love about Christmas there's lots of things that are special that we think about at Christmas but the real meaning of Christmas is what Bethany's oh sorry what's the real meaning of Christmas Jesus Jesus being born and we're going to hear now about Jesus being born we're going to read from Luke chapter 2 from verses 1 to verse 7 and it's going to be Rana who's going to read this section for us in those days in those days

Caesar Augustus issued a decree that census should be taken of the entire Roman world this is the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria and everyone went to his own town to register so Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea to Bethlehem to the town of David because he belonged to the house of Lion and David he went there to register with Mary who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child while they were there the time came for the baby to be born and she gave birth to her firstborn son she wrapped him in clothes and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn thank you for the night Amen and may God bless that reading of his word to us we're going to think a wee bit about that one now as we listen to you sing and you're going to sing two songs for us two hymns for us Born in the night is one of them and Little Donkey is another of the carols that we're going to hear so boys and girls uh if you can come out the front and get yourselves organized are you going to sing live for us yes which verse is at least going to do a solo one so when you're ready you will start to sing which one has been sung first Gertie

[10 : 43] Little Donkey is the first carol that's going to be sung and then you'll go straight on to the second one is that right okay i'll go and sit down but views the new bed to the room over there Not again He came to be And there are the cups and chairs in the warm K equip And a ■■ To give up my mental donkey, every day to sing songs.

We have both best to act, every day, every day. All of this time so bright, every day, every day. Mental donkey, mental donkey, every day. Mental donkey, can't you give us in the other way? Mental donkey, mental donkey, mental star again. Mental donkey, mental donkey, can't you give us on the other way?

Mental donkey, mental donkey, can't you give us in the other way? Mental donkey, Duke chocolate. Mental donkey, emotional do not be in the other way? Mental donkey, mental donkey, mental donkey, mental donkey.

[12 : 40] The sun is so bright, every day, every day. Little donkey, little donkey, as an heavy day.

Little donkey, can you give me, save me all your way? Little donkey, little donkey, as an average.

Little donkey, as an average. Lord be angels, the gold Michaels, your ocean.

Lord be angels, the Lord be your holy wets.

Here I'm shining my baby's child, your face lights all over there. I am the one baby's child, the heart of the day.

[14 : 06] The truth of my baby's child, your turn of souls on me.

The truth of my baby's child, your beautiful soul blue.

The truth of my baby's child, your heart of the day. Here I'm shining my baby's child, your face lights all over there.

Well thank you very much boys and girls for singing and for helping us to remember and think about the Christmas story and the coming of Jesus into the world.

We're going to sing another carol now and we sing from the hymnary number 195. And I think as we sing the wee ones, the very wee ones are going to go out but the older ones will be staying in.

[15:29] It's that very well known carol, that was a new one that last one to me. This is a very well known carol, number 195 in the hymnary and the words are on the screen. And we stand and sing away in a manger, no crib or a bed.

Okay, we've got them now. The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.

The stars in the bright sky look down where he lay. The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Cattle are lowing the baby a raise. But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.

I love thee, Lord Jesus. Look down from the sky. And stay by my side.

[17:08] Till morning is nigh. Be near me, Lord Jesus. I ask thee to stay.

Close by thee forever. And love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children, if thy tender care.

And bid us forever to live with thee there. boys and girls put your hand up just now if you feel a little bit frightened about being here.

probably only me I feel frightened every Sunday when I stand up here but probably none of you boys and girls and the more mature boys and girls feel very frightened we're here today aren't we it's pouring rain outside and yet we're nice and dry we've got a roof we've got these walls we've got light it's dry it's warm safe to be here isn't it you know in some parts of the world we were praying just a moment ago in some parts of the world today it's really not safe to meet and to worship Jesus and people will try and stop Christians meeting it would be against the law to meet like we're meeting today and yet Christians still do it and when they meet they're scared because they're wondering is somebody going to knock out the door is there going to be trouble anyway I want to start today with a story and it's a story about a sweet maker does everyone know what sweets are? everyone know what sweets are? yep good this is a story about a sweet maker and he lived in the 18th century which is quite a long time ago and he lived in a place where it was against the law to be a Christian and it was against the law to meet as Christians it was really dangerous to be a Christian in this place no one could talk about Jesus freely like we talk about Jesus no one could sing about Jesus and how great he is but see this sweet maker he trusted Jesus he was a Christian and he wanted people to know about Jesus if you want to know if you're a Christian by the way it's for the young and for the old you want to know if you're a Christian and if you're really saved one of the ways that we know that we're really saved is that we're desperate to tell other people about the good news that we have and this sweet maker he worshipped Jesus in his heart but he wanted other people to know he wanted people to know about Jesus but he knew it was against the law and it was dangerous and he was going to have to be wise and so he prayed and he asked that God would give him wisdom and then he got an idea he came up with a plan so the story goes he was going to make a sweetie because he was a sweetie maker and he was going to think about a sweet that could be given out especially at Christmas time and it could go on Christmas trees and it could be given to the boys and girls as a present the boys and girls of his time and do you know what the sweetie was a what say it louder it was a candy cane and so this sweetie maker so the story goes he designed and he made this candy cane and this candy cane helps us to remember and to get to know the story of Christmas and today we're going to think about three questions the first one will be the longest so don't get too worried about it the first question about Christmas as we have this candy cane is what happened at Christmas what actually happened that we need to remember at Christmas and this thing helps us to remember different parts of the Christmas story if I hold the candy cane like this what does it look like give you a clue let's have the first picture on the screen let's take a few guesses while we're waiting for the picture oh does that look like anything that you can see on the screen

[22:31] Bethany it looks like a shepherd's stick a shepherd's staff and so the candy cane helps us to remember shepherds had something to do with Christmas didn't they do you remember anything about shepherds well we need to find out Luke chapter 2 and verses 8 to 20 and Anna I think is going to come out and read these verses once so let's listen to what shepherds have to do with the Christmas story Luke chapter 2 Luke chapter 2 and verses 8 to verse 20 and there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby keeping watch over their flocks at night an 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 you good news of the great joy that will be for all of the people today in the town of 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 heavenly hosts appeared with the angel praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of whom his favour rests when the angels had left them and gone to 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 and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger when they had seen them they spread their word concerning what had been told them about this child and all who heard it were amazed what the shepherds said to them but Mary treasured up all these things and pondered through her heart the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen which were just as they had been told thank you man just sit down so the candy cane when we look at the candy cane and it's held up like that we think about the shepherds don't we we remember the shepherds we remember how the shepherds were out one night and all of a sudden the last thing they expected happened and they were given this amazing good news of great joy about the saviour who was going to come to the world to show us the love of God so when we see the candy cane we think about the shepherds should also remind us of somebody who said

I am the good shepherd who was that who said I am the good shepherd come on boys and girls give me a bit of volume here John Roddy Jesus well done so we remember the shepherds the second thing that we remember when we look at actually not so much when we look at but if we smell the candy cane who wants to come out and be a volunteer John Roddy okay you've got can you do the smell test that's a beautiful bow tie by the way absolute it's a bit squint though let me just straighten it that's it perfect let's do the smell test of the candy cane can you smell it what does it smell like me smells like me me smells like mint doesn't it smells in our house okay you can go and sit down now thank you in our house whenever a mint sweet gets tasted people say oh it smells spicy and mint it smells quite spicy doesn't it and that should remind us not of the shepherds but of the wise men remember the wise men in the Christmas story there was wise men that we remember

I think we might have a picture of a wise man on the screen that looks like three wise men but oh that's another wise man last Saturday we had a Christmas fun day at the church and one of the wise men of the Christmas story was telling the Christmas story from his perspective so if you ever wondered what the wise men looked like back in the day now you know that they wear Nike Air Max and diesel jeans underneath their authentic clothes so I think Adiba and Rachel's face says it all so that's a wise man let's go on after that one not that easy to see him that's better that's better but we think about the wise men don't we go back to the two before please the more authentic wise men so we think about the wise men when we think about the Christmas story and we're going to hear something about that now from Matthew chapter 2 and verses 1 to 11 and

Ruth is going to come and read these verses for us after Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked where is the one who has been born King of the Jews we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him when King Herod heard this he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him when he had called together all the pupils chief priests and teachers of the law he asked them where the cast was to be born in Bethlehem and Judea they replied for this is what the prophet has written but you Bethlehem in the land of Judea are by no means least among the rulers of Judea for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel the king had called the magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared he sent the time to

[29 : 21] Bethlehem and said go and make a careful search for the child as soon as you find him report to me so I too may go and worship him 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 it stopped over the place where the child was when they saw the star they were overjoyed on coming to the house they saw the child of mother Mary and they bowed down and worshipped him they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh thank you very much Ruthie for reading that section to us so when we think about the christmas story what do we remember we remember the shepherds who were out in the field that's the first thing that we remember the second thing that we

and the first couple of words of that sound we sang about the rock of our salvation we're to make a joyful noise not a tuneful noise so that means everybody should sing not just the people who can hold a tune anybody that can make a noise joyful noise we make to the rock of our salvation here's a question who's the rock of our salvation who's the rock that saves us i can put it an easier way right come on let's have a few other people we've got two very willing lads here but they've been overworked here

Natalie who's the rock that saves us jesus and yet that psalm was written hundreds and hundreds of years before jesus but the psalm was like a signpost that pointed us forward to one who was going to come and he was going to be like a rock who would save us who would save his people from their sin and when jesus came Mary when she had jesus in her womb she wasn't sitting down with a book like you see mothers doing today with a book of baby knives scratching her head saying i wonder what we'll call the baby mary was told by an angel when he comes i'll tell you what his name will be and mary was given a message as to what the name of the baby would be and what this baby would do and we get our message in matthew chapter 1 18 to 21 i think nathalie's going to read these verses for us this is how the birth of jesus christ came about his mother mary was pledged to be married to joseph but before they came together she was found to be with child through the holy spirit because joseph's husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to the public disgrace he had in mind to divorce her quietly but after he had considered this an angel of the lord appeared to him in a dream and said joseph son of david do not be afraid to take mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the holy spirit she will give birth to his son and you are to give him the name jesus because he will save his people from their sins thank you nathalie for reading that so clearly so that was the message that mary was given or joseph was getting from the angel you are to give him the baby the name jesus because he will save his people from their sins how would he save us that's the question well you actually told us that in the song that we sang just a few minutes ago this little baby would grow up and he would be sinless and he would live that steady innocent sinless life perfect life the life of none of us could ever live and then this little baby would go when he got older to a cross to take away our sin and do you notice the colors of the candy cane it's hard like a rock reminds us that jesus is the rock of our salvation what colors do you see in the candy cane they're very carefully chosen to have somebody who's not answered bella what colors well done bella i just asked you what colors but she came to the sermon too bella said red for the blood and that's exactly what i was going to say the colors of the candy cane were very carefully chosen by the sweet maker he wanted colors to mean something and they did and they do mean

something the red reminds us as we look at the candy cane of jesus blood when he went to the cross and the white speaks to the white and the white speaks to the white speaks to us about jesus himself because he was the only one who ever had that perfectly white pure sinless heart and the bible tells us if we trust in jesus because of what he did in going to that cross and shedding his blood if we trust in him he will wash our hearts and make them as white as snow there's a verse in the bible that says even though our sin is it's red like crimson it's so stained and it's so dark it can be white as snow and so when we look at the red and the white colors on the candy cane we remember why jesus came we remember that he came to be our savior we remember that he came to to save us from our sin he was going to be the rock of our salvation and somebody's going to come and read isaiah chapter 53 and verse 5 just one verse listen to this verse again was written hundreds of years before jesus came and it speaks to us about jesus he was wounded for our transgressions he was crushed by our iniquities upon him was the chastain that brought us peace and with his strips we are healed thank you isaiah 53 and verse 5 he was wounded for our transgressions our transgressions our sin he was crushed by our transgressions he was crushed by our iniquities all the things that we do that we shouldn't and the things that we don't do that we should upon him was the chastisement the punishment that brought us peace and with his stripes you notice that it's not straight across the candy cane the red and the white stripes with his stripes we are healed and so the candy cane not only helps us to remember what happened it helps us to remember why everything that happened happened helps us to remember jesus is the rock who saves us through his blood why did he do it boys and girls do you ever ask that why did he do it why did god leave the wonder and the beauty and the perfection of heaven and come to a world that was so broken and so messed up knowing that he was coming not to have an easy life but knowing that he was coming to go on a cross why would he do it did he have to do it he didn't have to do it he's god he doesn't have to do anything so why did he do it john ronnie to save us for our sins and

why did he want to save us from our sin why did he want to take the punishment away that we were to do it why did he want to save us from him and take us into heaven why do you think because he loves us remember that boys and girls young and old jesus loves us he loves us he loves us we're going to sing now about that we're going to sing a mission phrase 71 and the words are on the screen as we think about this child in the manger 71 and mission praise child

in the manger infant of mary outcast and stranger lord of all child who inherits all our transgressions all our demerits on your fall that's a complicated way of saying all our sin and all our stains and all our dirtiness jesus took upon himself so that we could be washed clean once the most holy child of salvation salvation so let's sing these words together we'll stand to sing this one boys and girls you have listened very well and i'm just about to finish but just before i do i want to think about the last question and the last question is what do we need to do we thought about what happened shepherds wise men long journey all point us to jesus we thought about why everything that happened happened that jesus came to be the rock who saves us because he loves us he went to the cross to shed his blood so that we could be made clean so what do we need to do because this all seems like it's very far away and long ago and what do we have to do well again this wee candy cane helps us to understand what do we do with these things yeah grace we eat them but before we eat them we have to give them you can't eat one until i give it to you and candy canes are something that we we give to people as presents just like lots of other things at christmas time it's good to give presents and this candy cane very often it's a gift and we give gifts to the people that we love and if we give gifts to the people that we love we expect them to take them don't we just imagine uh just imagine imagine you got given this on christmas morning and uh it came from your auntie or your uncle and they were there working and they gave you this present on christmas and they say i'll be thinking long and hard and i've decided that the best thing for you is a bone apple with spider-man in front so out you come allister and imagine he said and this present is just for you and you are to say i don't want that you can take your present and take your home to you to tell them i don't want it not very happy would they because if you can sit down now if you love somebody and you give them a present to tell them how much you love them you expect that they'll receive that present that they'll take it from you and they'll say thank you a spider-man going at all is what i always wanted i can shoot my dad with this as he probably often does you know jesus is the best gift ever jesus is god's gift to us god the father so loved the world that says in john 3 that he gave his son so that we could be his friends forever so what are we to do with the gift that god gave us well we're to receive him we're to take him into our lives into our hearts we're going to sing in just a minute how silently how silently the wondrous gift is given where meek

[55 : 04] souls will receive him still jesus still the dear christ enters in boys and girls men and women the question i want to give to you just now is have you accepted jesus into your heart yet he came because he loves us he came to save us he knocks at the door of our hearts because he wants to come in the question for the very young and for those who are a bit older is have we opened the door of our hearts and our lives to jesus what are we to do we are to receive him and the final we think is we're to share you know on christmas day there'll be gifts given and things that mums and dads and aunties and uncles will say on christmas day quite often is it's good to share your presents don't fight share your presents candy cane it's candy cane it's a gift it is good it's very tasty want to try a bit come on in austria you were first to nod your head i'll share it with you there you go you take it share it don't eat it all yourself you know when we receive jesus into our lives and our hearts the psalmist tells us i should have thought about that before i ate it the psalmist tells us that we taste and we see that god is good and when we taste and see that god is good that should make us want to share him with all the people that we love who are around us and we share jesus with other people as we tell them about jesus and as we tell them about the real message of christmas so boys and girls in all the fun in all the games in all the parties in all the parties in all the business please remember the real meaning of christmas is in jesus when you see maybe a candy cane on your christmas tree remember jesus that he came why he came and remember he knocks at the door of our lives in our hearts and he wants to come out and when he comes in he wants us to share with other people will we pray let's pray lord god we thank you for today and we thank you for all that we remember we thank you that christmas is something that we look back and we remember we remember the shepherds and the angels we remember the wise men we remember that long journey we remember the coming of jesus into the world that amazing thing that god himself would come into this world and be born and lord we thank you that he came so that we could be saved we thank you that he went all the way to a cross so that we could be saved and lord

today we thank you that he offers to wash our hearts clean with his blood he offers to come in and to never leave and to never leave and we thank you that when we know jesus we have everything and so we pray that you would give us that faith that we would believe that we would receive jesus and when we go out the door that we would share and that we would tell of all that he has done for us that that could be for other people too so hear our prayers and continue with us in jesus name amen we sing a final hymn together mission praise 503 and the words are on the screen again 503 and mission praise oh little town of bethlehem i still we see you lying look at verse 3 how silently how silently the wondrous gift is given so god imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven no year might here is coming but in this world of sin where meek souls will receive him still the dear christ enters in holy child of bethlehem descend to us we pray cast out our sin and enter in be born in us today we sing the whole hymn to god's praise and i may the grace of our lord jesus christ and the love of god the father and the fellowship of the holy spirit be with us all both now and forever more amen amen