



Gilcomston Church

Sunday 31 December

*... ask where the good way is, and
walk in it...*

Jeremiah 6:16

Morning Service

**At the crossroads
Matthew 1:18-25
Rev Jerry Middleton**

**Let earth and heaven combine,
angels and men agree,
to praise in songs divine,
the incarnate Deity,
our God contracted to a span,
incomprehensibly made man.**

**He laid His glory by,
He wrapped Him in our clay;
unmarked by human eye,
the latent Godhead lay;
infant of days He here became,
and bore the mild Immanuel's Name.**

**Unsearchable the love
that hath the Saviour brought;
the grace is far above
or man or angel's thought:
suffice for us that God, we know,
our God, is manifest below.**

**He deigns in flesh to appear,
widest extremes to join;
to bring our vileness near,
and make us all divine:
and we the life of God shall know,
for God is manifest below.**

**Made perfect by His love,
and sanctified by grace,
we shall from earth remove,
and see His glorious face:
then shall His love be fully showed,
and man shall then be lost in God.**

Charles Wesley, 1707-88

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Prayer

Matthew 1.18-25

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Matthew 1.18-25

²⁰ 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. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Matthew 1.18-25

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Matthew 1.18-25

²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Children's Talk

He is born, our Lord and Saviour:

**He is born, our heav'nly King:
give Him honour, give Him glory,
earth rejoice and heaven sing!**

**Born to be our sanctuary,
born to bring us light and peace;
for our sins to bring forgiveness,
from our guilt to bring release.**

**He who is from everlasting
now becomes th'incarnate Word;
He whose name endures for ever
now is born the Son of God:
born to bear our griefs and sorrows,
born to banish hate and strife;
born to bear the sin of many,
born to give eternal life!**

**Hail, the Holy One of Israel,
chosen heir to David's throne;
hail the brightness of His rising -
to His light the Gentiles come:
plunderer of Satan's kingdom,
downfall of his evil pow'r;
rescuer of all His people,
conqueror in death's dark hour!**

**He shall rule with righteous judgement,
and His godly rule extend;
governor among the nations,
His great kingdom has no end:
He shall reign, the King of glory,
higher than the kings of earth -
alleluia, alleluia!**

Praise we now His holy birth!

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Prayer

**Lord, for the years
Your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us,
cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us,
pardoned and provided,
Lord of the years,
we bring our thanks today.**

**Lord, for that word,
the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts
and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains,
rebukes us and inspires us;
Lord of the word,
receive Your people's praise.**

**Lord, for our land in this our generation,
spirits oppressed
by pleasure, wealth and care;
for young and old,
for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land,
be pleased to hear our prayer.**

**Lord, for our world,
when we disown and doubt Him,
loveless in strength,
and comfortless in pain;
hungry and helpless,
lost indeed without Him;
Lord of the world,
we pray that Christ may reign.**

**Lord, for ourselves,
in living power remake us -
self on the cross
and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us,
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.**

Timothy Dudley Smith

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At The Crossroads
Matthew 1:18-25

Prayer

**O what a mystery I see,
what marvellous design,
that God should come as one of us,
a Son in David's line.**

**Flesh of our flesh, of woman born,
our humanness He owns;
and for a world of wickedness
His guiltless blood atones.**

**This perfect Man, incarnate God,
by selfless sacrifice
destroys our sinful history,
all fallen Adam's curse.**

**In Him the curse to blessing turns,
my barren spirit flowers,
as over the shattered power of sin
the cross of Jesus towers.**

women

**By faith a child of His I stand,
an heir in David's line,
royal descendant by His blood
destined by love's design.**

men

Fathers of faith, my fathers now!

because in Christ I am,

all

and all God's promises in Him

to me are "Yes, Amen"!

**No more then as a child of earth
must I my lifetime spend –
His history, His destiny
are mine to apprehend.
Oh what a Saviour, what a Lord,
my Master, Brother, Friend!
What miracle has joined me to
this life that never ends!**

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**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen.**

Evening Service

The Zechariah Phenomenon

Luke 2:22-38

Rev Jerry Middleton

**Thou didst leave Thy throne
and Thy kingly crown
when Thou camest to earth for me,
but in Bethlehem's home
was there found no room
for Thy holy nativity;
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;
there is room in my heart for Thee.**

**Heaven's arches rang
when the angels sang,
proclaiming Thy royal decree;
but of lowly birth
cam'st Thou, Lord, on earth,
and in great humility:
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;
there is room in my heart for Thee.**

**The foxes found rest,
and the bird its nest,
in the shade of the forest tree;
but Thy couch was the sod,
O Thou Son of God,
in the deserts of Galilee:
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;
there is room in my heart for Thee.**

**Thou camest, O Lord,
with the living word
that should set Thy people free;
but, with mocking scorn,
and with crown of thorn,
they bore Thee to Calvary:
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus;
Thy Cross is my only plea.**

**When heaven's arches ring,
and her choirs shall sing,
at Thy coming to victory,
let Thy voice call me home,
saying, 'Yet there is room,
there is room at My side for thee!'
and my heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus,
when Thou comest and callest for me.**

Emily Elizabeth Steele Elliott, 1836-97

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Prayer

Luke 2. 22-38

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.”

Luke 2. 22-38

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.

Luke 2. 22-38

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.

Luke 2. 22-38

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 marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother:

Luke 2. 22-38

“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.

Luke 2. 22-38

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.

**Be Thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart;
nought be all else to me,
save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought
in the day and the night,
waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light.**

**Be Thou my wisdom,
be Thou my true word;
I ever with Thee
and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father
and I Thy true heir:
Thou in me dwelling
and I in Thy care.**

**Be Thou my breastplate,
my sword for the fight;
be Thou my armour
and be Thou my might:
Thou my soul's shelter
and Thou my high tower;
raise Thou me heav'nward,
O Power of my power.**

**Riches I heed not,
nor all the world's praise;
Thou mine inheritance
through all my days;
Thou, and Thou only,
the first in my heart,
High King of heaven,
my treasure Thou art!**

**High King of heaven,
when battle is done,
grant heaven's joys to me,
O bright heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart,
whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.**

Ancient Irish, tr. Mary Byrne

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The Zechariah Phenomenon

Luke 2:22-38

**Who is He, in yonder stall,
at whose feet the shepherds fall?
*'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At His feet we humbly fall;
crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.***

**Who is He, in deep distress,
fasting in the wilderness?
*'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At His feet we humbly fall;
crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.***

**Who is He that stands and weeps
at the grave where Lazarus sleeps?**

'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!

'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!

At His feet we humbly fall;

crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.

**Who is He, in Calvary's throes,
asks for blessings on His foes?
'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At His feet we humbly fall;
crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.**

**Who is He that from the grave
comes to heal and help and save?**

'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!

'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!

At His feet we humbly fall;

crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.

**Who is He that from His throne
rules the world of light alone?
'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At His feet we humbly fall;
crown Him, crown Him Lord of all.**

Benjamin Russell Hanby, 1833-67

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**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen.**

Church Calendar

You'll find dates for your diary on our
website:

<http://www.gilcomston.org/calendar>