

# **Morning Service**

**The big Christmas clearout  
John 1:29-37  
Rev Jerry Middleton**

**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,’ said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind;  
‘Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and all mankind.’**

**'To you, in David's town, this day,  
is born, of David's line,  
the Saviour who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:  
The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling-bands,  
and in a manger laid.'**

**Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels, praising God, and thus  
addressed their joyful song:  
'All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace;  
goodwill is shown by heaven to men,  
and never more shall cease.'**

**Nahum Tate, 1652-1715**

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# Prayer

## John 1:29-37

**<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**

**<sup>30</sup> This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’**

## John 1:29-37

**31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” 32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.**

## John 1:29-37

**<sup>33</sup> I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' <sup>34</sup> And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."**

## John 1:29-37

**<sup>35</sup> The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.**

# Children's Talk

**Child in a manger born  
lies in a cattle stall.  
Safely He's sleeping,  
Mary is keeping  
close beside her baby so small.**

**Angels watch over Him,  
softly their praises sing,  
voices ascending,  
joy never ending,  
glory be to Jesus the King.**

**And God in the heavens above  
looks down with a heart full of love.**

**Leaving their flocks behind,  
shepherds have come to find  
Jesus the Saviour  
Lord of the Ages,  
here within the stable tonight.  
And God in the heavens above  
looks down with a heart full of love.**

**Wise men from far and wide  
kneel at the baby's side,  
gazing in wonder,  
praising the Son who  
came to earth to lay down His life.  
And God in the heavens above  
looks down with a heart full of love.**

**Child in a manger born,  
I want to know You more,  
know You are near me,  
love You more dearly,  
Jesus, my Lord.**

**Mark and Helen Johnston**

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**Prayer**

**Cradled in a manger, meantly  
laid the Son of Man His head;  
sleeping His first earthly slumber  
where the oxen had been fed.  
Happy were those shepherds listening  
to the holy angel's word;  
happy they within that stable,  
worshipping their infant Lord.**

**Happy all who hear the message  
of His coming from above;  
happier still who hail His coming,  
and with praises greet His love.  
Blessed Saviour, Christ most holy,  
in a manger Thou didst rest;  
canst Thou stoop again, yet lower  
and abide within my breast?**

**Evil things are there before Thee;  
in the heart, where they have fed,  
wilt Thou pitifully enter,  
Son of Man, and lay Thy head?  
Enter, then, O Christ most holy;  
make a Christmas in my heart;  
make a heaven on my manger;  
it is heaven where Thou art.**

**And to those who never listened  
to the message of Thy birth,  
who have winter, but no Christmas  
bringing them Thy peace on earth,  
send to these the joyful tidings;  
by all people, in each home,  
be there heard the Christmas anthem;  
praise to God, the Christ has come!**

**George Stringer Rowe, 1830-1913**

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The big  
Christmas  
clearout

**Prayer**

**As with gladness men of old  
did the guiding star behold,  
as with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright,  
so, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led to Thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped,  
Saviour, to Thy lowly bed,  
there to bend the knee before  
Thee, whom heaven and earth adore,  
so may we with willing feet  
ever seek Thy mercy-seat.**

**As they offered gifts most rare  
at Thy cradle rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure, and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.**

**Holy Jesus, every day  
keep us in the narrow way;  
and, when earthly things are past,  
bring our ransomed souls at last  
where they need no star to guide,  
where no clouds Thy glory hide.**

**In the heavenly country bright  
need they no created light;  
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
Thou its sun which goes not down;  
there for ever may we sing  
hallelujahs to our King.**

**William Chatterton Dix, 1837-98**

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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**

**Discovering joy**  
**John 16:16-24**  
**Rev Jerry Middleton**

**Joy to the world, the Lord has come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare Him room  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing!**

**Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns!**

**Your sweetest songs employ**

**while fields and streams**

**and hills and plains**

**repeat the sounding joy,**

**repeat the sounding joy,**

**repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow  
nor thorns infest the ground:  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
where Eden's curse is found,  
where Eden's curse is found,  
wherever Eden's curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of His righteousness,  
the wonders of His love,  
the wonders of His love,  
the wonders, the wonders of His love.**

**Isaac Watts, 1674-1748**

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# Prayer

**Angel voices, richly blending,  
shepherds to the manger sending,  
sing of peace from heav'n descending!  
Shepherds, greet your Shepherd-King!**

**Lo! a star is brightly glowing!  
Eastern kings their gifts are showing  
to the King whose gifts pass knowing!  
Gentiles greet the Gentiles' King!**

**To the manger come adoring,  
hearts in thankfulness outpouring  
to the child, true peace restoring,  
Mary's Son, our God and King!**

**German, 14th Century; tr. James Quinn**

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## John 16:16-24

**16 “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.”**

## John 16:16-24

**17 So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?”**

## John 16:16-24

**<sup>18</sup> So they were saying,  
“What does he mean by ‘a  
little while’? We do not  
know what he is talking  
about.”**

## John 16:16-24

**19 Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’?”**

## John 16:16-24

**<sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.**

## John 16:16-24

**21 When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.**

## John 16:16-24

**<sup>22</sup> So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup> In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.**

## John 16:16-24

**24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**

**Who is this, so weak and helpless,  
child of lowly Hebrew maid,  
rudely in a stable sheltered,  
coldly in a manger laid?  
'Tis the Lord of all creation,  
who this wondrous path hath trod;  
He is God from everlasting,  
and to everlasting God.**

**Who is this, a Man of Sorrows,  
walking sadly life's hard way,  
homeless, weary, sighing, weeping  
over sin and Satan's sway?  
'Tis our God, our glorious Saviour,  
who above the starry sky  
now for us a place prepareth,  
where no tear can dim the eye.**

**Who is this? Behold Him shedding  
drops of blood upon the ground!**


**Who is this, despised, rejected,  
mocked, insulted, beaten, bound?**

**'Tis our God, who gifts and graces  
poureth on His Church below,  
now, in royal might victorious,  
triumphing o'er every foe.**

**Who is this that hangeth dying  
while the rude world scoffs and scorns,  
numbered with the malefactors,  
pierced with nails, and crowned with thorns?  
'Tis the God who ever liveth  
'mid the shining ones on high,  
in the glorious golden city  
reigning everlastingly.**

**William Walsham How, 1823-97**

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Discovering  
joy

# 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!**

**Graham Kendrick © 1988 Make Way Music**

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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.**