



Like the Shepherds

*This Christmas, dear Lord,
like the shepherds, I would bow in awed wonder
before the majesty of heaven
revealed in the form of a baby.
Fill me afresh with love as I contemplate the mystery.
Reveal yourself to me so that
like the shepherds and the angels
my heart may be filled with joy.
And transform me so that
I may become more and more like
this Christ-child I worship:
ready to do your will in everything
even at cost to myself.*


Joyce Huggett

Coffee Cup news.

Our Coffee Cup Collections in SJB this month will be sent to the **Community Christmas Lunch** in St Mary's church in Aylesbury. It offers a free Christmas Day meal and entertainment to those who are in need.

Café News


There will be **no Café** in the Park on Tuesdays 26th December and 2nd January. Thankyou to all the helpers, bakers, and organisers for the tremendous job you have done this year. We start again on **SATURDAY 6th January** and **TUESDAY 9th January**.



Network Name:
SJB Congregation

Password:
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online donations.
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**THE PEWSHEET TEAM WISH YOU ALL
A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS!**

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE



Parish of Stone, Dinton and Hartwell



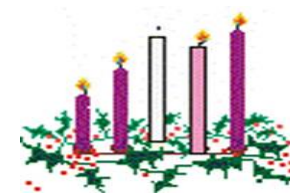
Churches of: St. John Baptist, STONE; Ss Peter & Paul, DINTON; Assumption of St. Mary the Virgin, HARTWELL

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St. John the Baptist STONE Sunday 24th December

Fourth Sunday in Advent

CHRISTMAS EVE



- 10:30am** **SERVICE OF QUIET PRAYER & REFLECTION**
led by Raymond Medhurst
- 4:00pm** **CRIB SERVICE FOR ALL THE FAMILY**
led by Revd Phil Groves
- 11:30pm** **MIDNIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE**
led by Revd Phil Groves

CHRISTMAS DAY

- 10:00am** **FAMILY COMMUNION SERVICE**
in DINTON church

NEW YEAR'S EVE

- 10:30am** **SERVICE OF QUIET PRAYER & REFLECTION**
led by Raymond Medhurst

BELONG - BELIEVE - BUILD - WITH CHRIST AS THE CORNERSTONE

John 1:1-14

The Word became flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.



*Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending us a saviour
to bring light and hope to the world.*

*We pray that you would bring peace
to the world this Christmas.*

Amen

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Ecumenical Christmas Letter

The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
(John 1.5)

As we approach the end of a year which has seen terrible suffering in the very land on which Our Saviour walked, and with such seemingly slender prospects of peace there and elsewhere in the world, it would be very easy to be downcast and to feel hopeless in what ought to be – and is! – this great joyous season of the Incarnation. The light seems to have been extinguished in Israel and Palestine these last three months. Sometimes it seems as if our senses reel, numbed by the horrific, daily, mounting toll of injury and death.

My own visit to the Holy Land in October, hurriedly organised in the wake of the devastation at the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza, brought me face to face with some of those who had suffered so greatly. I was honoured to stand alongside my brother Archbishop Hosam Naoum, the Anglican Metropolitan of Jerusalem, and to be able to express my heartfelt support for his ministry and to pray with him for all those caught up in these terrible events. But it has been a year in which I have seen or encountered, once again, the pain of God's people in a number of different places and contexts, including amongst the Roma communities suffering discrimination and poverty in Romania, and in Armenia amongst the displaced people of Karabakh.

What is to be done? I hold on to the distinction between optimism and hope. The way forward in these situations of extreme suffering often seems very unclear. The light is hidden. But that does not mean there is no hope. When Christians pray for peace, as I do every day, that is an expression of hope. When Christians join together, worship and pray together, despite their differences, despite their tangled histories, that is a sign of hope. When Christians raise their voices in concern, and call for the pursuit of peace and justice, that is the making plain of hope.

What else should we say at Christmas, but that Christ's coming into the world is the greatest statement of hope ever made! God reveals himself in Christ, the Word made flesh, the Son of God and Son of Man, and the light of truth is made present amongst us in Christ. Let us, brothers and sisters in Christ, hold on to that, celebrate that, pray and praise as ever we should that presence of Christ amongst us, as God's great gift to the world. The light shines in the darkness.

And so, once again, I bring you my joyful Christmas greetings, and pray that the New Year will bring fresh blessings to you and your people.