**Morning Praise @ Home 1 December 2024**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Readings Isaiah 60:1 – 3 John 1:1 – 5

### Reflection *A reflection for the start of Advent*

### *God Came Near* It all happened in a moment, a most remarkable moment. As moments go, that one appeared no different than any other. It came and it went. It was one of the countless moments that have marked time since eternity became measurable. But in reality, that particular moment was like none other. For through that segment of time a spectacular thing occurred. God became a man. While the creatures of earth walked unaware, Divinity arrived. Heaven opened herself and placed her most precious one in a human womb. The omnipotent, in one instant, made himself breakable. He who had been spirit became pierceable. He who was larger than the universe became an embryo. And he who sustains the world with a word chose to be dependent upon the nourishment of a young girl. God as a foetus. Holiness sleeping in a womb. The Creator of life being created. God was given eyebrows, elbows, two kidneys, and a spleen. He stretched against the walls and floated in the amniotic fluid of his mother. *God came near.*

### He came, not as a flash of light or as an unapproachable conqueror, but as one whose first cries were heard by a peasant girl and a sleepy carpenter. The hands that first held him were unmanicured, calloused, and dirty. No silk. No ivory. No hype. No party. No hoopla. Were it not for the shepherds, there would have been no reception. And were it not for a group of stargazers, there would have been no gifts. One thing’s for sure: he was, while completely divine, completely human. For thirty-three years he would feel everything you and I have ever felt. He felt weak. He grew weary. He was afraid of failure. His feelings got hurt. And his head and his heart ached. To think of Jesus in such a light seems almost irreverent, doesn’t it? It’s uncomfortable. It is much easier to keep the humanity out of the incarnation. There is something about keeping him divine that keeps him distant, packaged, predictable. But don’t do it. Let him be as human as he intended to be. Let him into the mire and muck of our world. For only if we let him in can he pull us out. It all happened in one moment . . a most remarkable moment. The Word became flesh. *God came near.*

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### There will be another. The world will see another instantaneous transformation. You see, in becoming man, God made it possible for man to see God. When Jesus went home he left the back door open. As a result, “we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:51–52 NIV). The first moment of transformation went unnoticed by the world. But you can bet that the second won’t. The next time you use the phrase “just a moment,” remember that’s all the time it will take to change this world. *God Came Near.* Max Lucado

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**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession from The Children’s Society**

Lord Jesus, bringer of hope to the world,

we pray that your hope would live in us and that as a community we may find hope and light.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Lord Jesus, bringer of hope to the vulnerable,

we pray for those in need of your care and compassion.

Bring hope to those who feel they are living in darkness.

May we bring strength to the weary, joy to the downhearted and peace to those who are restless.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Lord Jesus, bringer of hope to children and young people,

we pray for young people who are in dark situations.

Shine your light on those who feel afraid and without hope, that they may have a brighter future.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Lord Jesus, bringer of hope to the helpers,

we pray that you would be with those who support young people.

Strengthen and enlighten teachers and carers in our community: may they know your blessing upon them. We pray for the work of The Children’s Society, and all those who support their work with young people.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come,******Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be, that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**