**‘White Christmas’**

*A reflective service*

 *for anyone experiencing the pain and loss of bereavement.*



**22nd December 2024**

**3.00pm**

**The Hub - Gold Hill Baptist Church**

Service led by

Rev Stephen Walker-Williams

**Order of Service**

**Welcome & Opening Prayer**

**O come, all ye faithful,**

joyful and triumphant;

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

come and behold him, born the king of angels!

*O come, let us adore him,*

*O come, let us adore him,*

*O come, let us adore him,*

*Christ the Lord!*

God from God,

Light from light –

lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb!

Very God, begotten, not created.

Sing, choirs of angels,

sing in exultation!

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above,

'Glory to God in the highest!'

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,

born for our salvation;

Jesus, to thee be glory given!

Word of the Father now in flesh appearing.

**Poem: God So Loved the World**

*By Helen Steiner Rice*

Read by Sally Parkin

**Song: Be Still My Soul**

**Be still, my soul, the Lord is on thy side**;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to thy God to order and provide;
in every change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul, thy best, thy heavenly friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul, thy God doth undertake
to guide the future as he has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul, the waves and winds still know
his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

Be still, my soul, when dearest friends depart,
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shalt thou better know his love, his heart,
who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears.
Be still, my soul, thy Jesus can repay,
from his own fullness, all he takes away.

Be still, my soul, the hour is hastening on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul, when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessèd we shall meet at last.

**Scripture** **Reading**

**Luke 2. 1-20**

Read by Pastor James Simmons

**It came upon the midnight clear,**That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King" –
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its [Babel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_of_Babel)-sounds
The blessed angels sing.

But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring; –
Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing; –
Oh, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

**Message**

By Stephen Walker-Williams

**Placing candles on the trees**

**O holy night; the stars are brightly shining,**
it is the night of the dear Saviour’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope- the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!

 Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
with glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
here came the wise men from Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
in all our trials born to be our Friend.
He knows our need— to our weakness is no stranger.
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!

 Truly He taught us to love one another;
his law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,
and in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we:
let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!
His power and glory evermore proclaim!
His power and glory evermore proclaim!

**Prayer of Blessing**

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*Please do stay for refreshments that will be served after the service*

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