



Advent 2017 – Epiphany 2018



North East Region: Darlington & Newcastle-upon-Tyne Districts

Daily Readings – Week Four

What are you pondering in your heart this Christmas?

Sunday 24 th	Luke 2: 1-5
Christmas Day	Luke 2: 6-7
Tuesday 26 th	John 1: 14
Weds 27 th	Luke 2: 8-14
Thursday 28 th	Luke 2: 15-18
Friday 29 th	Luke 2: 19-20
Saturday 30 th	Luke 2: 21
Sunday 31st	John 1: 9-10

Have you received unexpected visitors this week?

He came down to earth from heaven God and Lord of all

Lord you risked so much when you were born at Bethlehem, in Judea.

You left behind your power and might, your place at the right hand of God the Father.

Instead you stepped down into our world, down into the humdrum life of a small town.

You came as a tiny baby, small and helpless as so many people are in the world today.

So this Advent and Christmas help us to walk in your footsteps,

Help us to make ourselves vulnerable, treating others with love and kindness,

So they too may learn to follow you.

Amen

Revd Pat Brooks, Newcastle West Circuit

“...there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night”

The sky shone bright with blazing light.

Angels calmed the shepherds' fright.

“Good news for all.” “From God”, they said.

A baby then; the man broke bread.

Advent hymn

(Tune: *As with gladness men of old.*)

A verse for **Christmas Day** and beyond:

Christmas is a time of praise
 So to you our songs we raise
 What Good news we have to tell
 Born with us, Immanuel
 Christmas praise to you we sing
 May we know your Son as King.

Gill Welsh, Superintendent, Lindisfarne Circuit.

As fragile as a snowflake, you come Christ child

Delicately human, uniquely divine

Drifted by the same winds of change and chance as we are

Dancing amongst myriad others
to the rhythm of a heart-beat

Formed for a moment before melting away
Could such a one as you tip the balance of history?

Could so much be changed by one brief life-span?

One snowflake alone cannot change much
But drawing others in

That, which singly could hardly be weighed,
Has the power to break down and build up.

Rebecca Catford

Darlington District Administrator & Stokesley Circuit Administrator

This Christmas listen for the song of angels.

Search for God in an unexpected place.

*Ponder in your heart the wonder of Emmanuel:
God came as a baby, for you.*



Discipleship & Ministries Learning Network

North East

Preparation

turns to

Celebration



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Thank you for sharing in the journey of prayer.

Dear God,

In a world where worry, not peace, prevails, stir up that good news again. This Christmas, make it real in our hearts. Never have we needed Your joy and peace more than now.

Thank You for the gift of Jesus, our Immanuel, the Word made flesh.

Forgive us for forgetting, that Your love never changes, never fades, and that You never abandon the purpose for which You came: to save us from our sinful condition, and to give us life eternal, the joy of relationship with a holy God.

In Jesus Your birth and Your death sealed Your promise to us forever. Amen'

Michael Pryke, Methodist Youth President

Expectation

Oh the bliss of a bit of shelter,
some straw to lie down on
after that interminable journey;
somewhere to rest between pains.
I thought we'd never make it
at one stage – the checkpoint
as we entered Bethlehem.

Thank God for a compassionate soldier,
and the kindly innkeeper –
she obviously understood
what I was going through.

Here in the quiet, away from the crowds,
surrounded by the warmth of animals
and the solicitous strength of Joseph,
I can get on with things.

I never imagined when I agreed
to Gabriel's request from God
that it was going to be like this.
I didn't expect a palace
but hoped for a home and maybe
my mother and the local midwife
to help out, or even cousin Elisabeth –
she's been through it recently.

The trouble is, when you say 'Yes' to God,
you never know what to expect!

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Pausing to remember those for whom this Christmas will be a difficult time.

- The bereaved.
- Those who [feel alone](#).
- Victims of the Washington rail accident, and Melbourne crash.
- Families living in [poverty](#).
- War zones, refugees.
- Those without homes. ([Including 128000 homeless children in Britain today.](#))
- Those in the shadow of Grenfell Tower.
- Broken families.

Lord Jesus, you came to earth for all and not for an elite few. As we celebrate we hold before you those for whom this is a time of fear, regret, sadness, memories and pain. May we all know the deep peace and hope of your love for each and every one.

Amen

Stories of Hope

The family of a premature boy born in 2016 are sharing gifts with babies in hospital this Christmas. Given a 50% chance of surviving little [Arlo](#) had his first birthday this month. **Thank you, God.**

Did you miss any of the Advent- Epiphany resources?

Weeks 1-3 are on the [posting](#) dated 1st December on the regional news page www.methodist.org.uk/ne

Our webpage is back online. Work to update the Methodist Church web pages will continue in the new year.