**Fleet URC & Beacon Hill URC**



 Virtual Worship Sunday 13th December 2020

**Opening music:** Round orange, round orange

Good morning & welcome to this morning’s service. Each day, the sun rises to warm, illuminate, and provide growth on earth. The moon and stars light the night and served as navigators long before our mobile phones. We reach for the light-switch when we enter a dark room, and we depend on our learning & relationships to shed light on our lives. Light permeates into every part of our lives & today we celebrate Jesus as the light of the world in the form of a Christingle service.

**Advent Candle meditation** with the Le Fanu family

**Call to Worship**

Let us prepare to welcome our God!

A distant star glinting in the indigo sky

**Come, Jesus, come**

A blazing beacon lighting up the way:

**Come, Jesus, come**

An energising sun brightening a gloomy day:

**Come , Jesus, come**

**©** Judith Jessop, Broomhill Methodist Church from *Candles & Conifers*: Ruth Burgess

**Reading: Genesis 1: 1 – 5** read by Helen Bailey

1In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

3Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

**Prayers** **of Adoration and Confession**

So this is how it all begins,

God who is mystery and life.

Here in your creative Word

forming being from nothing, life in all its wonder & exuberance;

here in your living Word,

bringing light into every human heart;

here you come among us,

as Word made flesh and blood,

the cry of a child born in the night,

the touch of a hand,

the sparkle of eyes,

the smile of grace,

bread broken, wine poured out,

blood shed, new life given.

We praise you, the God who comes to us in the life of Jesus.

We praise you, the God whose Spirit breathes into us true life.

We praise you, the God who formed the universe from nothing,

releasing light and new life and life for ever more. © Terry Hinks

Lord God,

We praise you for sending light into this world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. We confess that we ignore the Saviour you sent to be among us and to live in us. We’ve kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his coming each moment in our waiting hearts. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus. Prepare us for His return. Help us rejoice in the light, so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. Amen

**Reading: John 1: 1 – 5** read by John Johnstone

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

**Making the Christingle & its meaning:**

Christingle means "Christ light." The tradition of making Christingles comes to us from Moravia, where the first Christingle service was held on Christmas Eve, 1747.

* The orange is round, like the world we live in, and reminds us of the world, which God created and loves.
* The red ribbon speaks of the blood of Jesus which he shed for the sins of the world; just as the ribbon is wrapped around the orange, so Jesus' love reaches all around the world.
* The four toothpicks holding fruit and sweets represent the four seasons of the year during which God provides for all of our needs, of which food is just one.
* The candle is the light of the world who calls us, too, to shine as light in the darkness.

As we look at our Christingles, let us give thanks for all God's goodness to us.

Blessed are you, God of creation.
**For all your gifts we give you thanks and praise.**

**Hymn:** O Little Town of Bethlehem by permission [Christmas Carol Videos - engageworship](https://engageworship.org/ideas/christmas-carol-videos)

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight

O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel

**Prayers of Intercession**

The Christingle reminds us of our world and so let us pray:

for all people in their daily life and work: for our families, friends and neighbours, and for all those who are alone;

may we shine in the dark places of the world.

Jesus, light of the world, **hear our prayer**

for help to care for your world:

for those who do not share the good things we take for granted;

for those who do not know the light of Jesus in their lives.

Jesus, light of the world, **hear our prayer**

for the peace of the world:

for our own needs and for the needs of others;

for those who lead us, teach us, and help us to live together

Jesus, light of the world, **hear our prayer**

for everyone who is sad, in danger, or in trouble;

for all children & young people who have no food, home or clothes;

for those who need God’s help, especially the sick and anxious, the lonely and the afraid;

and for those who look after them.

Jesus, light of the world, **hear our prayer**

We bring all our prayers before God, saying together, as Jesus taught us

**The Lord’s prayer**

**Closing prayer & Blessing**

Father of lights, from whom comes every good and perfect gift;

Keep us in the light of Christ, to shine in your world, that all may believe in you.

May the smile of God warm us,

May the light of Jesus lead us,

May the Holy Spirit blaze in our lives and fill us with love. Amen

**Closing music** The holly and the ivy

Responses led by Jennifer Radford, Beacon Hill URC

Opening & closing music from <https://www.smallchurchmusic.com/>

Hymn: engageworship.org by permission

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