

The Benefice of Malpas & Threapwood & Bickerton New Year 2021



The Light of Christ for all the world

The Collect

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose years never fail and whose mercies are new each returning day, let the radiance of our spirit renew our lives, warming our hearts and giving light to our minds, through Him who is the source of all our being, even Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 46

God is our hope and strength *
a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved *
and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea.

Though the waters thereof rage and swell *
and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.

The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God *

the holy place of the tabernacle of the most Highest.

God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed *

God shall help her, and that right early.

The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved *
but God hath shewed his voice, and the earth shall melt away.

The Lord of hosts is with us *

the God of Jacob is our refuge.

O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord *

what destruction he hath brought upon the earth.

He maketh wars to cease in all the world *

he breaketh the bow, and knappeth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariots
in the fire.

Be still then, and know that I am God *

I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth.

The Lord of hosts is with us *

the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Isaiah 40 v 28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Luke 2 v 15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Reflection from The Rector.

I write this at the start of another New Year and with a sense of great hope for the future and my prayer is that it will be the year in which we move out of the pandemic that has engulfed the whole world. Again and again I go to the words of the Psalmist that have been at the heart of my thinking and trusting in God all of these months since coronavirus took hold and that is from Psalm 46 " God is our strength and refuge, a very present help in trouble" He is with us and starts the New Year with us. If we had been holding services today we would have been in St Oswald's and celebrating the Feast of The Naming of Jesus along with asking His blessing on us all as we enter 2021. I will still do that on my own and in my prayer ask His strength and guidance, courage and love in the months ahead. I also give thanks for all the wonderful people who have given us all strength and courage in this last year and are working so hard on all our behalf now and will in the months to come. Our wonderful NHS, Care Home staff and all Key Workers and the vast number who by their acts of kindness and care lighten the burden and worry of another. Let us give thanks too for all those who have been working so hard and produced the much needed vaccine and pray for those who are distributing it. The light of Jesus Christ shines very brightly in so many lives and we are all enriched and encouraged. Let us also remember those in Government and Parliament in all their decision making which is so difficult.

The words that His Late Majesty King George the VI can be ours as we enter 2021 and as we trust in His ,the Lords love for us

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year give me a light that I may tread

safely into the unknown. And he replied Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be better than light and safer than a known way”.

All this is my reason for wishing you all a Very Happy New Year. Ian.



With greetings and Good Wishes for 2021 to you all from The Rector and Revd Helen and from The Church Wardens Angela, Beverley and Colin.

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, material from which is included here, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000 and published by Church House Publishing. Bible readings are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.