

Welcome and Introduction

Hello! We are the Moises' family and today we're holding our church service here at our new lovely home, which we're all so thankful for! You can access the video on YouTube by clicking on the link https://youtu.be/GB_AFdUIbWA or copying and pasting to your browser. Now would you please join me through the reading of Psalms 100; which is a warm and joyful invitation to praise God with a heart full of gladness and thanksgiving! **“Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.” Psalms 100:3-5** During this past week the members of our church were encouraged to share in a little video some of the things they are thankful for as well as their expectations and hopes for Christmas. Now let's all see what they have said to us.

Song 1 – Here I Am to Worship by Chris Tomlin

<https://youtu.be/wfJSOpCDqUw> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Light of the world You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes, let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore You
Hope of a life spent with You*

***Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down,
Here I am to say that You're my God
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me***

*King of all days, oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came to the earth You created
All for love's sake became poor*

*I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross*

Song 2 – O Come All Ye Faithful by John Francis Wade 1743

<https://youtu.be/Q8dql4-bVPU> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*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!**

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing*

Preaching and Teaching

What gifts did they bring to Jesus? And which gifts Jesus would like to receive from us today?

Reading from Matthew 2:1-11

*2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." 3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: 6 "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." 7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 **On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.***

Introduction

ADVENT – in the English dictionary means - the coming or arrival of a notable person or thing. Advent is a season in the church calendar that anticipates and prepares to celebrate Christmas. In the west we celebrate Christmas day on the 25th of December, but in the East: the Coptic Church in Egypt, The Armenian Apostolic Church and the Greek Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas day on the 7th of January. In the Middle Ages this time was a period of discipline and fasting, a period of watching, praying and self examination in expectation of his second coming of Jesus in glory, to judge the living and the dead. Unfortunately, nowadays there isn't such emphasis anymore. This is our first advent Christmas service and I would like to encourage you to be praying and to be expectant, so that may God fill your heart with Christ's hope, joy, love and peace. Some churches would light a candle every

Sunday as a tradition. There were many prophecies about the first coming of the Messiah. When he came, however, not many people were ready to receive him. They were expecting a king who would lead them in a fight against the oppressive Roman Empire. Jesus came to save us and give eternal life to all who believe in Him. ¹¹ **He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.** ¹² **Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—** ¹³ **children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:11-13.**

We don't know much about these Magi (traditionally called the wise men), apart from the scripture we've just read. The Bible doesn't tell us where exactly they came from and how many they were. Tradition says they were men of high position from Persia, near the site of the Ancient Babylon. How did they know the star would lead them to the Messiah? 1 - They could have been Jews who remained in Babylon after the exile and they knew about the prophecies of the Old Testament, which predicted the coming of the Messiah; 2 - They may have been eastern astrologers who studied ancient manuscript from around the world. Because of the Jewish exile centuries earlier, they would have had copies of the Old Testament available for them to study; 3 - They may have had a special message delivered direct from God or the angels directing them to Bethlehem. 4 - Some Bible scholars say these Magi were each from a different land, representing the entire world, bowing before Jesus. These men from faraway lands recognize Jesus as the Messiah whereas most of God's chosen people in Israel did not. The book of Matthew pictures Jesus as King over the whole world, not only the King of the Jews. The Magi travelled thousands of miles to see the king of the Jews. When they finally found Him they responded with joy, worship and gifts. This is so different from the approach people often take today. We expect God to come, looking for us, to explain himself, prove who he is, and give us gifts. But those who are wise still seek and worship Jesus today, not for what they can get, but for who He is. What gifts did they bring to Jesus? And which gifts Jesus would like to receive from us today? **"On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."** **Matthew 2:11** The Magi gave Jesus these expensive gifts because they were presents for a future king. Bible scholars have seen in these gifts symbols of Christ identity and what he would accomplish. They gave Him **Gold** - which was a gift for a King; **Incense** - which was gift for a deity; **Myrrh** - which was a spice, used someone who was going to die. These gifts may have provided the financial resources for the round trip to Egypt. These were the gifts they brought to Jesus and which gifts would He like to receive from us this Christmas.

I - That We May Accept His Invitation

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28 - Christmas tell us the story of the birth of the Saviour of the world. Do you know that He also came to save you personally? He came to save you because He loves you. He is here today and He is inviting you to come to His rest. This invitation is for you and it is for me. It is available for all who are weary and burdened. How are you doing as we approach this Christmas season? We are living in a difficult time and right now there are so many uncertainties in this world, but the hope we have in Jesus is certain. **"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. Hebrews 6:19a** Are you expectant? Do you have your hope

secured in Jesus? Jesus is coming again in all His glory and power. Jesus told us the parable of the 10 virgins. He said that 5 of them were wise and 5 were foolish, they had no oil in their lamps. ***“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” Matthew 25:13*** - Jesus is the hope of the nations. He is our only hope! Are you weary and burdened? A few days after Christmas, the year 2020 is going to stay behind and a new year is coming! Why to wait until next year if you could be set free and enjoy a relationship with the Father today? God wants to reveal himself to you through Jesus. There is no better gift you could bring this Christmas to Jesus than to accept His invitation and surrender your entire life to Him.

II – That We May Follow Him

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” Matthew 11:29-30 - Jesus is inviting us to learn from Him and to know Him. In the Bible to know someone means much more than only knowledge. It implies an intimate relationship with that person. Jesus wants us to have a personal and intimate relationship with Him. And if you know him you also know the Father and you obey His commandments. As disciples of Jesus we can rest assured in His salvation. We have this inexplicable joy and this secured hope in our hearts. We can find rest in a troubled and broken world. This is one of the gifts we could give Jesus this Christmas. He was born to die for us! Through His blood he shared for us we can now have access to the Father and enjoy an intimate relationship with Him.

III – That We May Hear His Voice

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” Revelation 3:20 Would you like to give your life to Jesus? Would you be willing to open your heart to Him today? Confessing and declaring Him as your King (Lord and saviour of your life). Do you believe that He is the Messiah and that He came to die and save you from your sins? Let this be the best Christmas ever for you. If you hearing His voice today don't harden your heart...

Conclusion

These are the gifts that we can bring to Jesus in this advent Christmas season. He is inviting you to give your life to Him and to become His follower. He is speaking to you and he wants you to listen. May Jesus finds room in your house today. May you be able to hear and open your heart for Him this Christmas.

Response Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the invitation to come to your rest, which is only possible because of Jesus. Thank you for sending your son to this world to die at the cross for us. We accept and receive your invitation and we want to rest in your salvation. Jesus we thank you for your love and for reconciling us with the Father. We want to know you more and to have an intimate relationship with you. We invite you to be our king, the Lord and Saviour of our lives. Help us to follow, obey and being expectant of your return. Jesus we don't want to be foolish, so please fill our lamps with the oil of your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

Communion

Paul writing to the church in Corinth he said that when participating on the Lord's table each one of us should examine ourselves first and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. ***“Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. I Corinthians 11:28*** – Versus 23-26 on the same chapter he says: ***“23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.*** Let's eat the bread, which represents His body that was sacrificed in our place and let's drink the wine, which symbolizes his blood, which he poured out on the cross for the forgiveness of each one of our sins.

Let us pray: Dear God, thank you because we can participate in the Lord's Table and have communion today in the presence of your Holy Spirit. These two elements before us, the bread and the wine, they help us to remember the price you paid for each one of us in that cross and we thank you for the forgiveness of our sins and for the gift of eternal life because your death and your resurrection of your beloved son Jesus Christ. Thank you for great salvation and the assured hope we have in you! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Let us all eat the bread and drink from the cup together.

Song 3 – Worthy is the Lamb by Hillsong Worship

<https://youtu.be/2RLqM9Ptgnw> - Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Thank you for the cross, Lord
Thank you for the price You paid
Bearing all my sin and shame
In love You came and gave amazing grace*

*Thank you for this love, Lord
Thank you for the nail pierced hands
Washed me in Your cleansing flow
Now all I know your forgiveness and embrace*

***Worthy is the Lamb, seated on the throne
We crown You now with many crowns, You reign victorious
High and lifted up, Jesus Son of God
The Darling of Heaven crucified
Worthy is the Lamb, Worthy is the Lamb***

Final Words and Apostolic Blessings

We are coming to the end of our service today and we hope you enjoyed it. Next week we are going to be back in the church building. There will be the same restrictions in place, but we are glad we can meet again and we are looking forward to see you all next week. Please invite your friends and family as we are going to continue with our Christmas Advent services and there will be carols and another message related to the season. Joan Cherry reminded us that next Sunday is also the Toy Sunday and she is asking us to bring toys. They need to be new and not used batteries. We will collect all the toys and donate to a Leicester based charity to bring some joy to some children whose family can't afford to provide them with toys. Let me finish now by praying an apostolic blessing over all you. Let's us pray: May the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the mercy and love of God, the father and the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more.

Have a blessed week and see you all next Sunday at church!