

The word 'present' has a number of definitions in English. Two of these are 'existing or occurring now' and 'a thing given to someone as a gift'. Our present (occurring right now in our lives) has hope because of the very precious present (gift) God gave to us in the form of his son, Jesus. At Christmas we might give presents (gifts). Often, we hope for them too. Between these two versions of the word, what does hope in the present mean to you? Or the present of hope? Or what present do you hope for?

Many of us know the carol,

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie...
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

What might those hopes and fears mean to you this year? What are the hopes and fears for the people you meet every day, colleagues at work, friends at school or university... the most vulnerable in your communities? In what ways can you illuminate Christ's light and help them realise that their hopes and fears are met in Jesus?



7/52 @ RBC

20/27 December 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas



A very happy Christmas to all our readers!

Prayers for Ryde continue every Monday for 15 minutes at 7pm. Join in using the link at **Pray for Ryde – Continuing in Prayer**
This is followed by our own prayer meeting using the usual link

Check out our website at **www.rydebaptist.xyz** for general updates, sermon notes and suggestions for reading and study.

Contacts:
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All Deacons available by ☎ if needed.

Please note! Items for 7/52 should be given to **Sally** by **midnight THURSDAY** on 641305 or email: **ian.pratt5@btopenworld.com**



What's On

Worship with Premier Radio

10 pm tonight Nine lessons and Carols

10 am Sunday Worship at home **5.30 pm** Doorstep Carols

9 pm All Souls in Praise at Christmas

Christmas Eve 4 pm Nine Lessons and Carols in Lockdown

BBC1 11.15 am Sunday worship; Songs of Praise **1.15 pm**



Prayer broadcasts with BU General Secretary Lynn Green have now finished. She reflects on what the year has taught us:

'2020 has certainly been a year like no other! The practice of Church as we knew it has been swept away but God has been calling us back to what is important. His steadfast faithfulness has been a rock and refuge and we have been invited to deepen our trust in the Lord alone. I believe when we look back our desire for prayer will stand out. The Baptists Together Prayer Broadcast has been part of this outpouring of prayer, connecting us across nations, regions and local communities. Our **60 live prayer events between March and December** have been precious, creating space for many gifted and passionate people to offer spiritual leadership. We have experienced the diversity of our Baptist family, embracing different approaches to spirituality. A HUGE thank you for all those who have been willing to pray with us. Prayer has brought us back to the nature of God and the centrality of Jesus Christ. Our vision for God's Kingdom has been expanded as we have held onto the promise of His presence, while being real about challenges and weariness.

The big question is, what next? We are not going to stop praying now! I want to encourage you to keep praying, locally and regionally, making the most of opportunities that virtual prayer brings. The first live prayer event of 2021 for Baptists Together is on **Wednesday 13 January at 7pm.**

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." I Thessalonians 5:16-18

News of Tear Fund working around the world this year at: <https://www.tearfund.org/stories/2020/12/seven-stories-you-may-have-missed-2020/>

Tear Fund CEO, Nigel Harris, writes:

'This has been a year like no other. According to the World Bank, up to 150 million people could be pushed back into extreme poverty through the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdowns. Climate change and conflict continue to cause devastation. But there is hope. Poverty is not God's plan. We long to see all people reach their God-given potential. In the stories above, we see God's church bringing hope, bringing change, bringing good news to those in poverty. We long to see a permanent end to extreme poverty and injustice. For there is light in the darkness. Your Kingdom come, O Lord.'

A reminder of what BMS has been doing this year at <https://www.bmsworldmission.org/news/top-stories-of-2020/>



Please note - there will not be a newsletter next week. The next one will be for **Sunday 3 January.**

*Thank you for your continued financial support of the work of the Church. If you are able to give by standing order, **PLEASE** do so!*

**RBC Barclays current account number 20731102
sort code 20-60-55**

*If you usually give by cash or cheque, contact **Jim** on **810991** to arrange delivery or collection*

**We are currently running at a deficit as follows:
- £13292.56. This is due to the loss of letting fees for the GSC and the continuing need to pay utility bills and repay loans.**