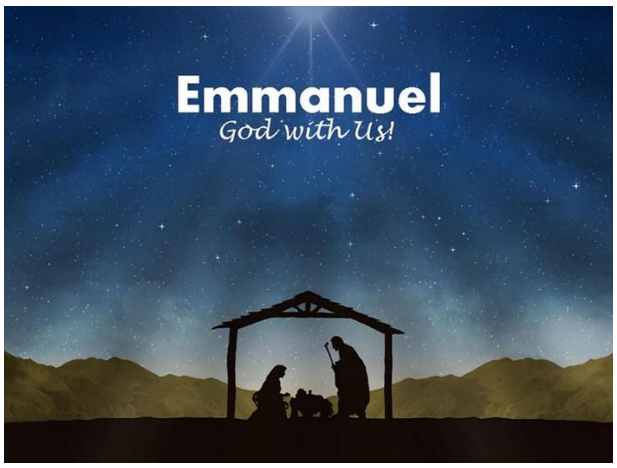
Worship at Home with Jenny Brooks for Sunday 28th December 2025



Emmanuel, God is with us! **The Lord is King! Let earth rejoice!**

The God-given gift of Jesus, the gift of love, joy, peace and hope in a fragile babe, laid with care in a manger of hay, Nurtured and protected by Mary and Joseph. Emmanuel, God is with us!

The Lord is King! Let earth rejoice!

We do not walk the world alone; we tread in the footsteps of others. Others do not walk the world alone; they tread in our footsteps. Together and not alone we are God's people walking with God. Emmanuel, God is with us!

The Lord is King! Let earth rejoice

The world is not always an easy place in which to live, O God, it is rough and it is tough and it is hard. Let us handle with care and protection, love, joy, peace and hope all who we meet. Emmanuel, God is with us!

The Lord is King! Let earth rejoice!

StF 180 O come, O come

O come, O come, Immanuel, and ransome captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear:

Chorus*: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O come, O Lord of might who to your tribes, on Sinai's height, in ancient times did give the law in cloud and majesty and awe:

Chorus

O come, O Rod of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny; from depths of hell your people save, and give them victory o'er the grave:

Chorus

O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery:

Chorus

O come, O Day-Spring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight:

Chorus

Prayers of Praise and confession

Loving God, we praise you that you give us not only happiness, but joy; a sense of celebration for life in relationship with you. We thank you that even when life is hard, there are reasons to rejoice. Help us to communicate your love to others, so that all may feel able to celebrate your blessings.

Lord Jesus touch our lives with your healing forgiveness, put a right spirit within us, helping us to better know you, feel confident in your mercy and faithfully serve you. Amen

The Lord's prayer

Readings

Psalm 148

Matthew Chapter 2 v 13-23

Reflection

Psalm 148 is one of the final five psalms that conclude the book – a sweeping hymn of praise that calls all creation to glorify God. Verses 1–6 focus on the heavens. The psalmist calls upon angels, the sun and moon, shining stars, and even the waters above the skies to praise the Lord. These cosmic beings and forces, created and sustained by God's command, declare God's glory simply by being what they are.
Verses 7–14 shift the attention to the earth. Praise now comes from sea monsters and wild weather – images that, throughout Scripture, often represent chaos or opposition to God.

Yet even these untamed forces are called into the chorus of praise, revealing that nothing lies beyond God's reach or purpose. The psalm gathers all parts of creation – animals, trees, rulers, young and old – and places them in harmony, united in worship. God's name alone is exalted, and God's people are invited to join this great, universal song.

Matthew 2:13–23 This is a harrowing passage, marked by violence and grief, and stands in stark contrast to the joyful visit of the Magi that comes just before. The beauty of epiphany light is suddenly shadowed by human cruelty and fear. This text introduces a major theme in Matthew's Gospel: Jesus as the new Moses, sent to deliver God's people. Just as Moses narrowly escaped death as an infant (Exodus 2), so too does Jesus, rescued from Herod's rage by divine intervention. Both are threatened by powerful rulers, both make a dramatic escape, and both find temporary refuge in Egypt – the very place that once represented slavery. This theme continues in later chapters as Jesus passes through water (his baptism), enters the wilderness, and ascends a mountain to teach, all echoes of the Exodus narrative. If children are indeed a gift from God, they are gifts in their most fragile form. This passage reminds us not only of the vulnerability of infants, but of the fundamental truth that all human beings are fragile – if not physically, then emotionally, spiritually, or socially. Recognising our shared vulnerability invites us to live with compassion and care for one another. We are called to handle each other gently, honouring the sacredness of every life – especially in a world where too often, power is used to harm rather than protect

StF 218 – Unto us a boy is born!

Unto us a boy is born! King of all creation came he to a world forlorn the King of every nation.

Cradled in a stall was he with sleepy cows and asses; but the very beasts could see that he all folk surpasses.

Herod then with fear was filled: "A prince" he said " in Jewry!" All the little boys he killed at Bethlem in his fury.

Now may Mary's son, who came so long ago to love us, lead us all with hearts aflame unto the joys above us.

Omega and Alpha he! Let the organ thunder, while the choir with peals of glee now rends the air asunder.

Prayers for others

“In your hands, imagine someone vulnerable — a child, an elderly neighbour, someone lonely, or grieving. Ask God to help you hold them with care, in prayer and in action. Leave a moment of stillness, then pray “God of gentleness, show us how to hold others with tenderness. May our care be your care.” Amen

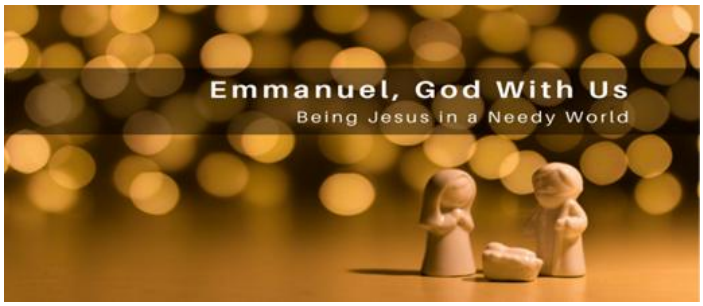
Global prayers

Loving and faithful God, In the midst of Haiti’s fragility, lift up the Methodist Church and all who serve within it. Strengthen your people with courage wisdom and hope. May your Spirit bring peace where there is unrest, provision where there is need and healing where there is pain. Let your Church be a beacon of light, rooted in your love and resilient in faith. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen

Blessing

May the love of God be with us, surround us and sustain us always.

Amen



Much of the material in this worship is taken from the Methodist Church in Britains’ Advent and Christmas worship resources.