



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on December 31st 2023 at 10:45, meeting at Bethesda Chapel.

Whilst some are able to meet in person, others we know are still at home. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our New Years Eve service today is being led by Alec.

Welcome and opening prayer:

Opening hymn "As with gladness men of old"

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright:
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore your splendour see.

As with joyful steps they sped, Saviour, to your lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before you, whom heaven and earth adore:
so with ever-quickening pace may we seek your throne of grace.

As they offered gifts most rare at your cradle plain and bare,
so may we with holy joy pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly king.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way,
and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last:
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glory hide.

In the heavenly city bright none shall need created light
you, its light, its joy, its crown, you its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing alleluias to our king.

Authors: William C Dix, Conrad Kocher, CCLI SONG # 4772707 Copyrights, words and music Public Domain. CCL No 5664

Notices shared by Tony F: We will be holding a Covenant renewal Communion service next Sunday morning, the following week we will have a Church Members meeting following the service (bring your own lunch if needed!) and Sunday Jan 21st sees the visit of Tim Daggart, which will be followed by a Church Family Lunch.

Prayers were led by Carol.

Hymn "We three kings of Orient are"

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

**O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

O star of wonder, star of light...

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising, worship him, God most high.

O star of wonder, star of light...

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

O star of wonder, star of light...

Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:
Heaven sings Alleluia, Alleluia, the earth replies.

star of wonder, star of light...

Author: John Henry Hopkins Jr. CCLI SONG # 38002 Copyright: words and music Public Domain, CCL No 5664

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The Bible reading, 1 Samuel 7:2-13a was read by Brenda:

"The ark remained at Kiriath Jearim a long time - twenty years in all.

Samuel subdues the Philistines at Mizpah

Then all the people of Israel turned back to the Lord. So Samuel said to all the Israelites, 'If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.' So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only.

Then Samuel said, 'Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, and I will intercede with the Lord for you.' When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, 'We have sinned against the Lord.' Now Samuel was serving as leader of Israel at Mizpah.

When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. When the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. They said to Samuel, 'Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines.' Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him.

While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Kar.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, 'Thus far the Lord has helped us.'

So the Philistines were subdued and they stopped invading Israel's territory. "

Hymn "See amid the winter's snow"

See amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
see the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

**Hail, thou ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.**

Lo, within a manger lies He who built the starry skies;
He, who throned in height sublime sits amid the cherubim.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!

Say, ye holy shepherds, say what your joyful news today;
wherefore have ye left your sheep on the lonely mountain steep?
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!

"As we watched at dead of night, lo, we saw a wondrous light;
Angels singing peace on earth told us of the Saviour's birth".
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,
thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!

Teach, O teach us, Holy Child, by Thy Face so meek and mild,
teach us to resemble Thee, in Thy Sweet humility!
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!

Authors: E Caswall, J Goss, CCLI SONG # 260784, Copyrights Words and Music Public Domain, CCL No 5664

Message was shared by Alec

Closing (offering) hymn "Immortal, invisible, God only wise"

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
to all life Thou livest, the True Life of all;
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory; pure Father of light;
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
all praise we would render: O help us to see
'tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

Author: Walter Chalmers Smith CCLI SONG # 124466 Copyrights words and music Public Domain, Ccl No 5664

Closing prayers

Five minutes prayer