

Isaiah 52: 7 – 10; Hebrews 1: 1 – 4; John 1: 1 – 14

**'Drawn to Jesus'**

**Introduction ...**

**What draws you to church at Christmas?**

There might be almost as many answers to that question as there are people here!

It might be about:

- Thankfulness for the coming of Jesus among us – the Word made Flesh?
- Seeking some hope for ourselves or the world around us?
- Familiar carols giving **us** comfort and joy ...

Perhaps a common thread is a kind of hunger ... for a wholeness that eludes us until we meet in some way with Jesus ... until we experience his light ... until we know we belong in God's family.

This is how one anonymous poem expressed it:

**One simple woman and her child**

**Revealed such glory**

**That the cold, silent darkness**

**Was for ever broken**

**For God had spoken.**

In only a few short lines ... this poem captures the Christian claim that the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus changed the world for ever. A massive claim ... but one which may underlie each of us being here tonight –

perhaps wondering if it can possibly be true ...

perhaps in thankfulness that you've found it to be true ...

perhaps longing for it to be true and for Jesus to make a difference for you ...

For Christmas comes, as Michael Mayne wrote, to **remind us that there is a Man who has lived who was wholly Light ... in whom there was no darkness. A man who demonstrated that God is compassionate, tender-hearted and forgiving. That God is not against us in earthquake, famine, loss or sickness ... but is with us to transform any of our dark times with his presence.**

Many in Whitchurch comment about the lights on the top of the Church Tower ... they make a difference to the dark evenings ... they remind us that Christmas is approaching. Somehow they are a symbol of security, homecoming and of joy. One morning earlier this year, a few weeks ago, the fog was very slow to lift. I was driving into town down Smallbrook Road. I could not see the lights, or indeed the Church Tower itself. I kept thinking that it would appear ... and it didn't ... I needed to be almost next to it.

And yet ...

And yet I never doubted that it would appear ... that both the Tower and the Lights would emerge through the fog. But I needed to be close. Maybe that has some deeper truth for us and for our world for Christmas 2022.

In our joy and in our sorrow – Jesus, the Light of the World shines on ... difficulties ... darkness are real and will continue to be real ... but his Light – his love, his care ... will always be present ... and the closer we are to him – in prayer, in love, in service – the more we will see his Light. A light that came as he was born.

Back to our poem:

**One simple woman and her child**

**Revealed such glory**

**That the cold, silent darkness**

**Was for ever broken**

**For God had spoken.**

God has spoken. And in Jesus Christ – his Word made Flesh ... his Light shines on to transform our darkness.

Amen.