

Christmas
BEGINS
with Christ



Green Lane
BAPTIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2020 Newsletter

Hello friends. It seems very strange that we are already in December and that 2020 is drawing to a close. In some ways, this year has absolutely flown by. I reflect back on things that happened and think, 'how can that already be a year ago?' (or more!) We will each have had significant things happen, good or bad, that seem like yesterday, though actually they are months ago or more than a year has passed. In other ways, though, the year has really dragged by and each day or week has felt like forever. It's nine months since we had a gathered service in the church building, but to me it feels like I've been recording the services for a much longer time. Stress alters our perception of time and the constant changes of what we can and can't do have all been very stressful, as has the knowledge that there is an invisible killer on the loose.

The chorus 'How great is our God' includes the line 'age to age he stands, and time is in His hands, beginning and the end, beginning and the end.' Whether time feels like it is passing too quickly, too slowly, or somehow both at the same time, we know that our times are in His hands and we can trust Him to be faithful whatever happens.

One of the most amazing things about God coming incarnate (in flesh) to be with us, is that He limited himself to experience time in the same way we do. Time is within what God created. He is not inside time as we are. This is how He knows the beginning from the end – He can experience it all at once! Yet Jesus gave up those divine aspects and emptied Himself to become a human being. He was born as a baby, just as we all were.

He went through the 'terrible twos', just as we did. He experienced all the hormonal upheaval of adolescence and puberty, just as we have or will. He grew to be a man, influenced by His parents, as well as His heavenly Father. He probably had days that dragged or days that passed too quickly, too. So, He does understand when we pray prayers of longing and of frustration. He understands our impatience, yet still calls us to wait expectantly.

In the carol 'O little Town of Bethlehem' there is a line about the hopes and fears of *all* the years coming to their fulfilment at the birth of Jesus. God coming incarnate was a 'once-for-all-time' event, though we look forward, in Advent, to His coming again in glory! So, whether your 2020 has felt full of hope or full of fear, hold onto the God who sees and understands it all, who came to put things right and will one day return to see His plans finally, fully, realised.

Happy Christmas! Sarah

Q: Why did the shepherd throw his veggies on the floor?

A: He thought the angel said 'peas on earth'!

Q: Why did the wise men take so long to get to Bethlehem?

A: Because their camels had the hump!

Key Advent words...

