**Westfield Communion Service 10.30 am 3rd January 2021**

**Call to worship** Psalm 72:8-11

**Hymn No. M.P. 729 We have come into His house**

We have come into His house,

and gathered in His name to worship Him.

We have come into His house,

and gathered in His name to worship Him.

We have come into His house,

and gathered in His name

to worship Christ the Lord,

worship Him, Christ the Lord.

So forget about yourself

and concentrate on Him and worship Him.

So forget about yourself

and concentrate on Him and worship Him.

So forget about yourself

and concentrate on Him

and worship Christ the Lord,

worship Him, Christ the Lord.

Let us lift up holy hands

and magnify His name and worship Him.

Let us lift up holy hands

and magnify His name and worship Him.

Let us lift up holy hands

and magnify His name

and worship Christ the Lord,

worship Him, Christ the Lord.

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**Prayer and Lord’s Prayer**

Dear God, You were with us all our yesterdays, are with us today and will be with us for all our tomorrows. Thank you for the year that has passed and for the year to come. Help us in 2021 to not take our lives for granted. Help us care more, laugh more, love more.

Love came in the stable in Bethlehem; Jesus came for each one of us. He came to earth so we could know you better and so we could share the love of Jesus with all those we meet. Help us to rejoice in your world, never to take its beauty for granted.

Help us to see your love in every sunrise, in every bird song, in every tale told us by our Christian friends, in every person in need. We praise you for another New Year and for all the opportunities it will bring. We pray for safety, for peace, for light, for hope through 2021 in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Notices, Mission Prayer & Dedication of Offering**

**Hymn No. M.P. 39 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 God, may we

led by You for ever be.

As with joyful steps they sped,

Saviour, to Your lowly bed,

there to bend the knee before

You whom heaven and earth adore,

so may we with one accord,

seek forgiveness from our Lord.

As they offered gifts most rare,

gold and frankincense and myrrh,

so may we, cleansed from our sin,

lives of service now begin,

as in love our 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 country bright

need they no created light;

You its light, its joy, its crown,

You its sun which goes not down.

There for ever may we sing

hallelujahs to our King.

W. C. DIX (1837-98) CCLI 150801

**Reading** Matthew 2:1-12

**Sermon** Joyous offerings from the heart

As we prepared ourselves for Christmas we often say that as the church one of our tasks is to help the community to remember ‘the real meaning of Christmas.’ Wanting everyone to recognise that the birth of Jesus is the coming of God into our world. I doubt if everyone did see Christmas like that and, without the usual various carol and Christmas services, it has been harder to help others to be more aware of what Christmas is really all about.

The prophet Isaiah also had a similar vision only this time we have the Jewish exiles

who have been allowed to return and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple and they are given a glorious vision of hope that all the nations of the world will come to know God. Just as moths are drawn to a light shining in the darkness, so all the peoples of the earth will be drawn to God by the bright shining light of His people who He has wonderfully blessed. The ‘all people’ is reflected first in a picture of the scattered people of Israel being gathered back home, then a picture of caravans of camels bringing their Gentile masters and their wealth to offer themselves and everything they have to God and finally a picture of people telling the good news of God freeing his people and the light of God shining out into all the darkest places of the earth.

This takes us directly into the Matthew passage about the visit from the Magi. For Matthew, himself a Jew, Jesus is the Messiah. He is the one promised by God to save his people. He is the one Matthew and his people have been waiting for for centuries,

and yet the star sent to announce his birth was, as prophesied by Isaiah, first seen by Gentiles, by the star gazing Magi watching the heavens and seeing this sign pointing them to the special event of God’s incarnation. Men of commitment and courage who were determined to follow their instincts, determined to find the one to whom this sign was pointing, determined to take gifts of welcome and pay homage to the one who would be worthy of such an announcement in the heavens. So they set out on a journey of discovery not knowing where they would be led or who they would be led to and allowing themselves to be distracted only when they were near their goal. Only then did they let their worldly thinking allow them to take their eye off the star

and go to the great city of Jerusalem where Herod, the current King of the Jews, lived. Surely the sign pointed to his heir, his successor the one who would take over the reins of power from him? No wonder Herod was afraid and so were the Jewish people because anyone competing with Herod would cause confrontation and possibly war with much bloodshed and suffering. There may not have been war but, ultimately, there was plenty of bloodshed and suffering because Herod’s plan was to get rid of this opposition as soon as possible by using these visitors to help him find the child. However the Magi, having been guided to Bethlehem, did not return to Herod to tell him where to find the child. What did happen in Bethlehem was that they found Mary and Joseph and the young Jesus but there was no palace, no guards, no royal entourage yet despite this lack of anything regal these Gentile travellers trusted their instincts and offered their gifts to the young Jesus perhaps aware of their financial worth but not of the way they pointed to the future for this king.

Gold the gift for a king, Frankincense to be burned when making an offering to God

and Myrrh to be used in the process of embalming a body in preparation for burial.

Yet, offering their gifts was only part of it as they also offered themselves, respectfully kneeling in homage to this future King.

So as we come to the beginning of a new year we should take a new look at what we each have to offer to God. What are the gifts and talents we can offer to be used in his service? We often feel that what we have to offer is of little value and would make little difference but the reality is that the value of the Magi’s offering was not about Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh being costed in monetary terms but was in the giving of themselves there, at that point in time, and not worrying about what would happen in the future. God has led us to be here at this time and in this place and whether the gifts you have to offer would be valued in practical, pastoral or spiritual terms we as a church will be richer the more we all share in it.

So this morning, as we celebrate the beginning of another year, it is an opportunity for us all to reflect on what we have to offer God this year, to re-commit ourselves to him and his mission here at Westfield and his promise is that when we give of ourselves joyfully God will take what we offer and do great things with it. May it be a happy and fulfilling new year for us all.

**Hymn No. M.P. 612 Spirit of the living God**

Spirit of the living God,

all afresh on me;

Spirit of the living God,

fall afresh on me;

break me, melt me, mould me, fill me

Spirit of the living God,

fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God,

move among us all;

make us one in heart and mind

make us one in love;

humble, caring, selfless, sharing

Spirit of the living God,

fill our lives with love!

DANIEL IVERSON (1890- 1972) & MICHAEL BAUGHEN CCLI 150801

**Prayers of Intercession** Kath

Loving God, at the beginning of this new year

we thank you for all we have; our homes, our food,

our clothing, our opportunities for life long learning.

For our national healthcare service, for so much more.

We pray for all those in our communities and in our world

who have no homes, not enough food, for refugees, for those living on the streets, for those in poor housing, for those living not knowing where the next meal is coming from.

We pray for those whose crops have failed due to flooding or lack of rain, for those who work hard for little reward.

We pray for those who have no access to education, no access to health care, no one to turn to for help or support.

Stir us to help where we can, to share when we can, to bring your hope and love into hopeless and loveless situations, to sacrifice a bit so the less fortunate may receive in abundance.

Loving God, help us to be the answer to the prayers of others,. Help us to work for your kingdom through this new Year here in Wyke and wherever else you call us to be as the year unfolds.

For your name’s sake through Christ our Saviour. Amen.

**Shine return to share what they have been doing.**

**Reption of New Members**

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in accordance with the decision of the Church Meeting we are now to receive Annette Womersley and Robin Dance into the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church, and in particular into membership of this congregation.

By Baptism we are welcomed into the family and household of God, and so now Annette and Robin come in response to the call of Christ to make their own profession of faith.

*(Will you please stand.)* Annette and Robin I ask you in the presence of God and before this congregation;

Do you confess your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit taking the Father to be your Father, the Son to be your Saviour and Lord, the Spirit to be your helper and guide?

**I do**

Do you promise, in dependence on God’s grace, to be faithful in private and public worship, to live in the fellowship of the Church and to share in its work; and to give and serve, as God enables you, for the advancement of his kingdom throughout the world?

**I do**

Do you promise, by that same grace, to follow Christ and to seek to do and to bear his will all the days of your life?

**I do**

And, do you trust in his mercy alone to bring you into the fullness of the life of the world to come?

**I do**

Prayer

Gracious God, loving Father, you have called us into the service of your Kingdom

and you equip us for the work we have to do. Give your servants, who have professed their faith in you, the grace of the Holy Spirit that they may be strong in faith and able to keep the promises they have made this day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confirmation & Reception

Annette and Robin maythe God of all grace, who has called you to Christian faith and service, confirm and strengthen you with the Holy Spirit and keep you faithful to Christ all your days. Amen.

Annette and Robin,in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I declare you to be admitted to the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church and in particular to the membership of this congregation. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, welcome. May your joining us be a blessing to you and to all of us, and may our one Lord keep us one with all his people, for ever. Amen.

Prayer

Almighty God we give you thanks that by the guidance of your Spirit and through the life and witness of the Church you bring us to Christ and enable us to confess our faith in him. We give you thanks for your servants who we have welcomed this day, for your grace and truth made known to them and for their commitment to your service. Uphold and strengthen them in their discipleship; Continue to deepen their understanding of the Gospel and of the Christian way of life. Keep them always true to Christ. Let your blessing rest continually on the work and witness of this church, that we who have been called to serve you in this place, re-affirming our own membership vows, may now and always be found faithful; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Re-commitment to God in 2021**

As we welcome Annette and Robin into membership we are on the doorstep of this new year so to symbolise that this morning I am going to ask you to join with me in re-committing ourselves together to God, to working for the unity and fellowship of this church and to seeking to maintain its mission here in Wyke.

***We confess together our faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and promise, in dependence on God’s grace, to be faithful in private and public worship, to live in the fellowship of the Church and to share in its work for the advancement of his kingdom throughout the world?***

***May we grow together in unity and be built into the body of Christ in love to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.***

**Communion**

We come to God’s table because Jesus said “Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He also said “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Anyone who comes to me I will never turn away.” So, we come to God’s table at his invitation. We come not because we must but because we may. We come as individuals but not alone. We come as the people of God open and ready to receive the gifts of God.

Let us hear again the words of Institution of this feast as recorded by the Apostle Paul: *(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)*

For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me.”

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, “This cup is God’s new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me.” This means that every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Therefore , whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup

in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who east and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgement on himself. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and following his example, we take this bread and this cup and give our thanks to God.

**Prayer**

Take a few moments to reflect on how you stand before God….

Loving God, through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. May we know your presence in the sharing of this bread so that we may know your presence in our lives.

Loving God, through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and the work of human hands. May we know your presence in the sharing of this wine so that we may know the refreshing of your Holy Spirit in our lives.

We celebrate the life that Jesus has shared among his community through the centuries, and shares with us now. Made one in Christ and one with each other we offer the bread and the wine and with them we offer ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice. **Amen.**

**The bread** which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

Take, eat, it is the body of Christ given for you. Do this in remembrance of him.

**The cup** of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

Take it and drink , it is the new covenant in the blood of Christ shed for you and for all, for the forgiveness of sin: drink of it.

**Prayer**

Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.

May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we who the Spirit lights give light to the world.

Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us; so that we and all your children may be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Hymn No. M.P. 624 Take my life and let it be**

Take my life, and let it be

consecrated, Lord, to Thee;

take my moments and my days,

let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move

at the impulse of Thy love;

take my feet, and let them be

swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing

always, only, for my King;

take my lips, and let them be

filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,

not a mite would I withhold;

take my intellect, and use

every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;

it shall be no longer mine:

take my heart, it is Thine own;

it shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour

at Thy feet its treasure-store:

take myself, and I will be

ever, only, all for Thee.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL (l836-79) CCLI 150801

**Blessing**