

Readings: Isaiah 9: 6-7; Luke 2: 1-7

For prayer and reflection

*When the world was dark and the city was quiet,
You came.
You crept in beside us.
And no one knew.
Only the few who dared to believe
that God might do something different.*

*Will You do the same this Christmas, Lord?
Will You come into the darkness of today's world?
Not the friendly darkness
as when sleep rescues us from tiredness;
but the fearful darkness,
in which people have stopped believing that war will end, or
that food will come, or that a government will change,
or that the Church cares?*

*Will You come into that darkness
and do something different
to save Your people from death and despair?*

*Will You come into the quietness of this community,
not the friendly quietness as when lovers hold hands,
but the fearful silence when the phone has not rung,
the letter has not come, the friendly voice no longer speaks,
the doctor's face says it all?*

*Will You come into that darkness,
and do something different, not to distract,*

but to embrace Your people?

*And will You come into the dark corners
and the quiet places of our lives?*

*We ask this, not because we are guilt-ridden, or want to be,
but because the fullness our lives long for
depends on us being as open and vulnerable to You
as You were to us,
when You came, wearing no more than nappies,
and trusting human hands to hold their Maker.*

*Will You come into our lives, if we open them to You
and do something different?*

*When the world was dark and the city was quiet,
You came.
You crept in beside us.*

*Do the same this Christmas, Lord.
Do the same this Christmas, Lord.*

(From The Wild Goose Worship Group)

Lord, You long to answer all our prayers, but we have to be willing to be part of the answer. So inspire us this Christmas, that we may open ourselves afresh to the meaning of Your coming, allowing You to transform us into signs of Your Kingdom, into Christ Himself. Awaken us to Your Presence within us that we may become different and go out and be light and peace and love and hope where we live.

In the name of Jesus who spreads love, who makes peace, who sheds light and who instils hope. Amen.