

# The Watford Word

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## What's on

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**Sunday** 24 December - 10:30AM. Church service

**Sunday** 31 December - 10:30AM. Church service

**Sunday** 07 January - 10:30AM. Osagie speaking

**Sunday** 14 January - 10:30AM. Malcolm speaking

*We will have mince pies and hot drinks including mulled wine at the service on the 24th of December. Please feel free to bring and share your own seasonal favourite edibles (finger food).*

*Note: The services on 24 and 31 December will be one hour long. The children will be in the entire service.*

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## Probably Not a Silent Night

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I am a fan of the creativity and music of Caroline Arends. The material for today's communion is taken from one of her advent reflections called, 'Probably Not a Silent Night'. Her song on the same topic can be found here: <https://youtu.be/I2zuPpohiaA>

I think he cried the way that babies do  
I think his mama might have cried a little too  
I bet you Joseph didn't have a clue  
What to do—he was new at fatherhood  
So I don't think it was a silent night  
I kinda doubt that all was calm that night

But there were those who heard about a light  
They saw the sight and they understood:  
It was a holy, it was a holy, it was holy night

Perhaps you have participated with your children in holding a lit candle at a church service while singing "Silent Night." We did this many times at my Father's church during their carol service. When our children were young we tried to keep them quiet during the song. We did not want to disturb the peace.

Arends writes:

"And yet, while "Silent Night" is a beautiful carol with a wonderful history, a crying baby is probably much truer to the original Christmas story. Jesus was a real human baby, born to young and no doubt soon-to-be-sleep-deprived parents. He came to a real world, rife with politics and scarcity and disease and conflict.

That means there's no need to follow an idealised script this Advent. Jesus is close to us in candlelit tranquility, no doubt. (And I heartily recommend candlelit contemplation whenever it's available to you!) But rest assured that Jesus is not the slightest bit afraid of bad lighting and noisy spaces. He has a long track record of coming to be with us in the nitty-gritty."

O, when the herald angels sang  
I bet they thought it odd  
That such a poor and broken place  
Should be a home for God  
And did they gasp to see him shiver  
Cold and hungry in our skin?  
Did they tremble, did they wonder  
How we deserved a gift like Him?

Oh, but just the same  
The baby came ...

Consider this Scripture as worthy of meditation  
this Advent:

*"Though he was in the form of God, [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." Philippians 2:6-8*

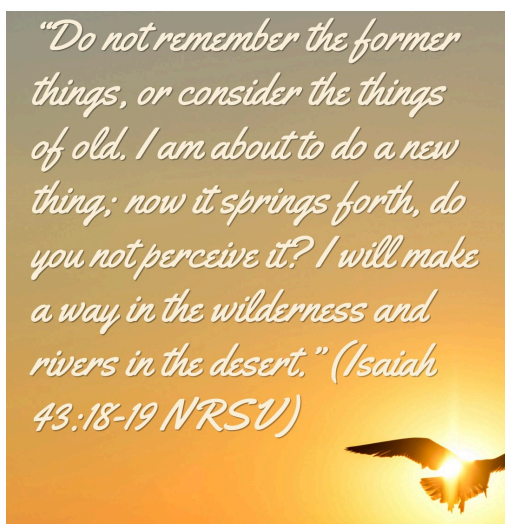
### Questions for Reflection

1. Do you ever find yourself idealising Christmas?
2. Do you ever find yourself idealising life with God?
3. Is it time to open up a "messy" space in your life to Jesus?

God bless, Malcolm

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## A New Thing



**"A New Thing" teaching and preaching series, January, February and March 2024.**

As we enter a new year God surely has plans to do new things among us. What those are we may

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not yet know. But we can be sure they will be revealed as the year progresses. In this teaching series we will be seeking to learn from the great men and women of faith who encountered something new, were called to something new, took on something new, and left lessons in faith for us who follow after them.

Characters covered will include Elijah and Elisha; Moses and Joshua; Abraham; Rahab; Esther; Nehemiah; Peter, and the Samaritan woman.

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## Finance Update

Bronwen presented a finance update last Sunday. It was particularly focused on our vision to employ a youth worker in 2024. If you have questions please speak to anybody on the leadership team - that being myself, Penny, Danny, Becky, Charl and Bronwen.

God bless, Malcolm

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## 2024

If you have suggestions for events or subjects for preaching and teaching next year please pass them on to me. Malcolm

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## Heating

The heaters will be fixed starting 20th December.

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## Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-1aef90>

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