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Christ Church West Wimbledon
Sermon :
December 24, 2017 ~ “Christmas Day”

Not so long ago there were basically four ways for people to communicate with each other. There was, obviously, speaking to each other face to face. Or we could put pen to paper and write a letter. There were telephones, though certainly not in all homes – and finally, in moments of crisis or extreme urgency, there were telegrams. And that was it. That was how things stayed for years. Then the internet exploded onto the world and changed our lives forever. And of course with the internet came loads of new ways for people to communicate, too many to list.

However, despite all these amazing advances, hopefully human beings will never lose the capability of speaking, which is often the best way of communicating with each other.

Yet if we think about this a bit more, there are many different ways of conveying messages other than by words and technology.

A painter who wishes to communicate uses brush and paints;

a composer uses music;

a deaf person will use sign-language;

a sailor will sometimes use flags;

a radio operator can use Morse code;

When God wished to convey his message that he loved us – his “Word” so to speak – he sent it in the person of Jesus Christ his Son.

So it is that we are here to celebrate a birthday – the birthday of the Son of God, who was born into our world to show us how we should live our lives. Whether or not you are a regular churchgoer, whether or not you have a religious belief, Jesus Christ was born into our world to teach people how they should behave. True, human beings have often ignored this teaching – but there are many who do follow it and live by it.

It is often said that the Christian message is best spread about not so much by our words but by our actions. In the familiar Christmas story, with Mary, Joseph, the angels, the shepherds, the wise men, one other person is often overlooked – and that's the innkeeper. He was there because he felt sorry for someone in difficulty and tried to do something to help. He didn't just speak words, he took action. At Christmas we are often reminded about those less fortunate than ourselves. It is no good just feeling sorry. We have to do something about it.

For many, the best antidote to the violence, depression, loneliness and isolation in our dark world is the powerful message of peace told through the Christmas story. At the heart of this message is God's love for human beings and his desire and hope that we should respect and value and care for each other. So at Christmas we remember that God wanted to communicate with us – and he gave a gift to our world – the gift of his Son – and it is this that we celebrate.

Let us pray: O God, we thank you for the message of peace that Christmas brings to our dark and dangerous world. Give peace among the nations; peace in our land; peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts as we remember the birth at Bethlehem of the Prince of peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. And I hope you all have a very happy and peaceful Christmas.