

# Friday 11th December

## Dr Judy Ford

### Readings

Luke 1:39-47

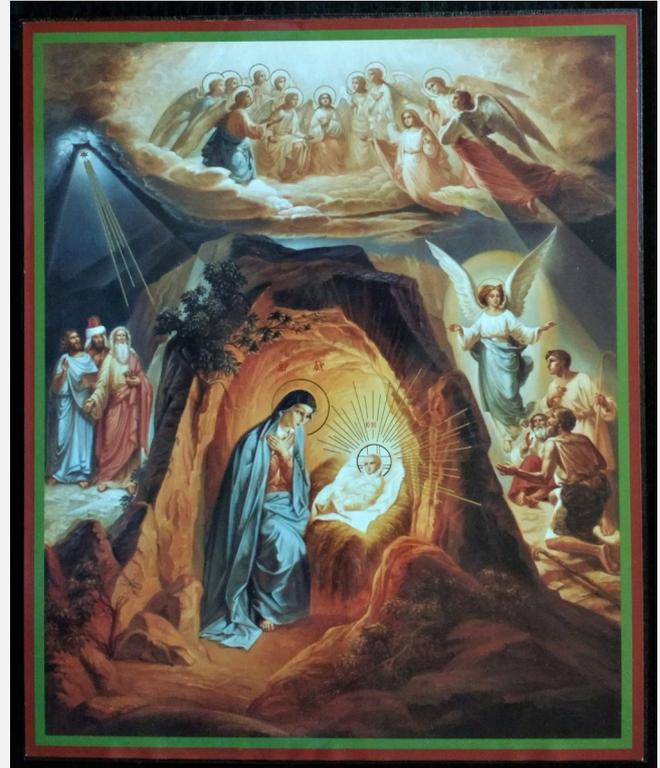
**Zechariah 2:14-17**

Revelation 11:19

Revelation 12:1-6

*Love shall be our token,  
love be yours and love be mine;  
love to God and neighbour,  
love for prayer and gift and sign.*

This Russian icon depicts the nativity. The Eastern Church often portrays things a bit differently from what we in the West are familiar with. For example, the Magi (on the left) are very definitely wise men, rather than kings, and there's a notable lack of animals in the stable, which is a cave and not a thatched barn. The thing that interests me most is the crowd of angels sitting on top of the clouds. They look much more real and solid than the usual Christmas angels; and they seem to be conferring together rather than singing "peace on earth"! It looks almost like a committee meeting.



It reminds me of the line in Charles Wesley's familiar hymn: *In vain the firstborn seraph tries to sound the depths of love divine*. The angels seem to be puzzled about what is happening. You can imagine them saying to one another, 'Why is He doing this? Why is He demeaning himself? Why is he bothering with those silly humans?' And perhaps God has to remind them that he is fulfilling a promise. He has always planned to come to Earth and dwell among those humans, because He cares about them and won't let concerns about His dignity get in the way of what needs to be done in order to enable them to join the angels in His heavenly realm.



# Friday 11th

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, love divine;  
love was born at Christmas  
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
love incarnate, love divine;  
worship we our Jesus  
what shall be our sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,  
love be yours and love be mine;  
love to God and neighbour,  
love for prayer and gift and sign.

C G Rossetti / Jubilate Hymns

## Love Came Down at Christmas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAjB0GVpleg>

We pray for our neighbours  
whose names we do not know.  
May we reveal your presence by  
our words and actions.



YouTube

Wirral Methodist Churches  
New Song Wirral



Wirral Methodist Churches  
New Song Wirral

## Prayer

Thank you Lord God for coming to dwell in our midst, not just for a few years in Palestine, but here and now, and forever. Help us to cease our chatter, to stop questioning your plans and to be still and listen to your call: a call to us to light a candle in the darkness; a call to love our neighbours as ourselves; a call to show the world that the light has come and nothing can put it out.

Amen

