

God is with us!

I had to pinch myself the other day, to make sure that what I had experienced wasn't a dream, but had truly happened. It was a day when I had received some professional training. During the course, I realised afresh that for many people, their working lives allow only a small proportion of who they really are to be shared with others. I came away newly aware of how I need to share my whole life with those I serve. I had not fully comprehended how special the church environment is, where people are in general very open with each other.

It set me thinking, as I read the words in Ephesians 2:18, that Church is like that because God has made himself approachable and known to us personally. "through Jesus we ...have access in one Spirit to the Father."

Christmas time is when we celebrate the coming of Jesus (God in the flesh – Emmanuel) to live as a human being among us. He has made it plain for all to see how God loves us, and what He is like. Through the shedding of his blood, he paved the way for all human beings to make their peace with God, if they choose to follow Him.



We live in a society where loneliness is common. People might feel that to be acceptable in church circles, they have to behave in a certain way or conform to a certain set of expectations. But the shepherds, who were called down the hillside to give their welcome to Jesus, were not anything out of the ordinary.

Maybe you are one of the lucky ones who has a number of people with whom you can share your whole life, your inner thoughts, worries, questions. Or maybe, you would love to know God personally so that you could share directly with Him. Christianity Explored <https://www.christianityexplored.org/> offers a safe place to ask your questions. The 8-week course will start on Monday January 27th in the Rectory. Go to the contact page to sign up.

Meanwhile, a truly blessed Christmas to you all,

Rev. Charles Sugden (Rector)