

Reflection - O Holy Night



I don't know about you, but for me, not singing carols in church this year has been really challenging - I'm sure many of you would agree! I did enjoy singing very loudly at home along to our joint Carol Service but it's just not the same as singing with multiple voices. The benefit of not singing, perhaps, is that we take longer to look at the words. There is such depth of Christian faith in our Christmas carols and it is good to have the opportunity to reflect more on these this year.

I was reading recently, that viewers of Songs of Praise had voted 'O Holy Night' as the most popular carol in the UK. To be honest, I didn't really like it until this year, when it just came alive to me. The version played on the evening of our Carol service was so moving and when we consider the lyrics they are really helpful for this current year. The words that particularly struck me were from the end of the first verse...

'A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.'

That thrill of hope is desperately needed after the past 9 months we have had. And this message of hope is what Matt and I have felt is what we should be giving as churches, and as Christians, over the last year. We don't know what 2021 will be like - when, how and whether we will recover following Coronavirus as a nation, as a world - and life feels wearisome at the moment. However, we are reminded on Christmas Day that as Jesus came into the world he brought the ultimate message of hope - that God will not leave humanity alone in darkness; we are loved.

My hope and prayer for us, and our nation for the coming year is that we see the breaking of a new and glorious day, and the thrill of hope, in a very real way. And also, that as a nation and a city, we will lift our eyes back to Jesus, the King of Kings, and hope of the nations.