

# Battle Baptist Church

## Being Transformed Together



20th December 2020 - Advent 3

27th December 2020



“Don’t be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High.”

*Luke 1:30-32a*

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

*Matthew 1:20b,21*

“Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.”

*Luke 2:10b,11*

‘Simeon...took the child in his arms and praised God, saying...’I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people...’ Then Simeon... said to Mary, “This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, but he will be a joy to many others. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him.”

*Luke 2:28-34*

“So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah.”

*Acts 2:36*

### What a year!

The filter through which most of the last 12 months has been viewed has stopped us collectively in our tracks, the world over. As 2020 was welcomed in, the idea that we would face a global pandemic in the coming months, was not a possibility that we would have considered. And yet, here we are...

The impact and effect of this year will never be undone or forgotten. What is more, however much we’ve collectively been faced with challenge after challenge, we have also each had to navigate our way through personally as well, responding to the many new situations that have been laid before us.

Of all the different things to come out of the last 12 months, the ‘This is our Battle’ photography project and exhibition is one which sought to capture something of this extraordinary moment in time. Go to [This is our Battle](#) to find out more.

Local photographer, Darren Buss, took pictures of over 150 people between May and August, capturing their images and hearing their stories and reflections about the pandemic. During September, the photos were displayed on the Abbey Green and in various places around the town. You may have spotted two entries on the front doors of our Mount Street premises. As part of the project Darren also sought to raise funds for NHS Charities.

This week I received my order of the ‘This is our Battle’ book. A compilation of the ‘doorstep’ photos and accompanying comments from a wide range of individuals who are part of our community here in 1066 country. It makes for an interesting read. Darren took my photo one

Sunday at about 9am, before Emma and I live-streamed from the Prayer Room - I recall it was a rather wet morning!

Darren invited all participants in the project to reflect on what impact the pandemic has had on them. Under ‘Lockdown lessons’ I said this:

*“We never know what tomorrow is going to bring, so let’s make sure we simply do our best and look to God, trusting in Him. He ‘is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work with us’ (Ephesians 3:20).”*

I know for many, this year has been tough irrespective of the pandemic, and it continues to be so. Sadly, changing the date from 31st December to 1st January will not act like a magic wand, with us waking up realising it was all a bad dream.

As Pastor, I look back with a massive sense of pride at how people have responded, both to others within the church family, but also as a part of the community here in Battle. May I thank you also for the ongoing love, care and support shown in so many ways to Emma, me, and our family. I’ve joked on a number of occasions that I must have bunked off the lecture at Bible College on ‘How to pastor in a pandemic’ - hindsight is such a wonderful thing!

May we continue to look to God in all we face, whatever the future holds: He is faithful and invites us to continue to journey on with him through it all!

Be blessed, Happy Christmas and here’s to 2021.

Ed Jones

## PRAYER POINTERS

### COVID-19

Pray for NHS staff who are working on the ‘frontline’ in the battle against the virus. May each of them have some time for rest and recuperation over the holiday period.

### Our Country

In these unprecedented times, praise God that he is in control and is Lord of all. Pray for wisdom and good judgement for our political leaders, and all those in positions of national influence.

### Christmas

Pray particularly for those in our fellowship who will be alone this Christmas. “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you... I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”  
Isaiah 41:10

## NEWSLETTER

20th & 29th December

**Battle Baptist Church**  
*Being Transformed Together*

Battle Baptist Church is part of Life with Hope Trust; registered charity 1134288, Mount Street, Battle,

East Sussex TN33 0EG.

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## NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Blue Christmas:** This service has been cancelled: understandably people are reluctant to meet, even in a socially distanced way, given the current local COVID -19 context.

**COVID-19 pandemic:** Remember that we are open for private prayer, for LIFEgroups, and for other organised activities subject to capacity limits necessitated by social distancing requirements. Please get in touch with Jo to book the premises if you would like to.

**Christmas cards:** Some Christmas cards have been delivered to the church for various members. I'm sorry but we do not have the capacity to deliver these. I'll email out the details - please come and collect your cards at your convenience. Thank you (Jo).

**Music:** If anyone would like to listen again to recordings of carols that Ian has made recently, they can be accessed [here](#).

**Church Office:** The church office will be closed from 25th December until 3rd January.

**Staff Team:** Here are the details of holidays being taken by the staff team:

Caroline: 21st December - 3rd January

Jo: 21st December - 3rd January

Ed: 25th December - 2nd January

Tim: 23rd December - 2nd January

If you need pastoral support while Ed is on holiday, please contact one of the elders in the first instance.

**Church Meeting:** The first ordinary church meeting of 2021 will take place on Tuesday 19th January at 7.30pm, via Zoom.

"Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace." Luke 1:78,79

## What's happening in December...

**Caterpillar Pre-School reopens on Monday 4th January**

Activities for children and young people will take a break over the Christmas holidays unless stated otherwise.

**Children in years 3-6:** Join Tim for a Zoom chat after the morning broadcast on Sunday 20th December and Sunday 3rd January (we'll take a break on 27th December).

**Christingle Service, Sunday 20th December, 4pm:** We have reluctantly decided to cancel this, given the state of the pandemic locally.

**Walking Football:** 10am at the Rec each Tuesday. COVID-19 secure activities are in place.

**Advent Prayers:** Gather for the final meeting at 8am on Tuesday 22nd December at St Mary's.

**Thursday 24th December, Christmas Eve:** Communion at 8pm - broadcast via BBC's [YouTube channel](#)

**Friday 25th December, Christmas Day:** Christmas Day Celebration at **10am** - broadcast via BBC's [YouTube channel](#)

**Sunday broadcasts** continue as normal from 10.15am.