

### Preaching Dates

**Christmas Eve, 24 December 2020**

**Caireen Likely** streamed live at  
Sheddocksley Baptist Church.

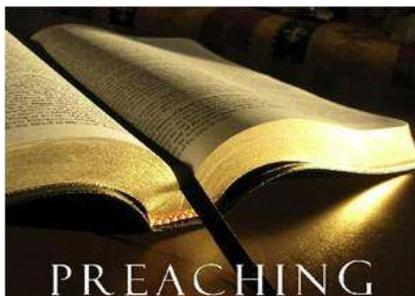
**Christmas Day, 25 December 2020**

**Stephen Ilett** at Dingwall Baptist Church

**Sunday 27 December 2020**

**Frances Bloomfield** (am) at  
Giffnock United Reformed Church

**Stephen Ilett** (am) at Dingwall Baptist Church



**“Emmanuel, God is with us.”**

**By Kay Leishman**

For most of us, Christmas this year has a very different feel. Families separated by miles and by concern for safety. Friends swapping gifts on the doorstep instead of being welcomed into the warmth. And churches limited to small distanced gatherings or online services. Things we have taken for granted are simply not part of our church experience this year, like chatting over coffee and mince pies after heartily singing out familiar carols, or wishing each other a Merry Christmas with handshakes and hugs. Perhaps, like me, you miss that closeness of fellowship and you feel the distance that separates.

At Christmas we celebrate the God who has drawn breathtakingly near. It is so amazing, so wonderful, to think that the One who made you and me should step down from the realms of glory and enter our world. It would be amazing enough if Jesus had come as a conquering king and claimed allegiance to his rule. It would be wonderful enough if he had come in glorious heavenly apparel with a train of angels attending to his every move. But what actually happened was so profound that it is truly stunning. The Son of God was born into our world as a vulnerable baby, completely dependent on his mother, the virgin Mary. Jesus was born with ten fingers and ten toes and a little Jewish nose. He fed from his mother's breast and he needed his nappy changed. God Almighty, Creator and sustainer of all things, held in a peasant girl's arms. Why did he humble himself like this? Only by becoming fully man could Jesus become one of us. And only as one of us, yet perfect and sinless, could Jesus take on himself our sin and pay, on our behalf, sin's penalty. And so, more than thirty years later, Bethlehem would lead to Jerusalem and to a cross on a hill outside the city walls. God gave his only Son so that he might offer to you and to me the gift of ete

Today, may the Lord work in each of us a deepening sense of awe and wonder at the miracle that is Christmas. Emmanuel, God is with us!  
Merry Christmas!