



Crookwell Uniting Church

“To Know Christ and Make Christ Known”



*Witnessing to God's love for the world
From the main street to the paddock.*

January 2022

A Persistent Christmas

In 1863, at the height of the American Civil War, the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow sat nursing his eldest son Charley, who was gravely wounded on 27th November.

Charley had secretly joined the army without his father's permission earlier that year, and now lay fighting for his life.

Longfellow, who had been widowed after a tragic fire only two years earlier, now wondered whether he would also have to bury a son.

That Christmas morning, with his world falling apart, Longfellow heard the bells of the local Church ring out to announce the birth of Christ.

In response, he wrote the poem *Christmas Bells* in which he expressed all the doubt he was feeling in the face of such tragedy:

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"*

Contact Us

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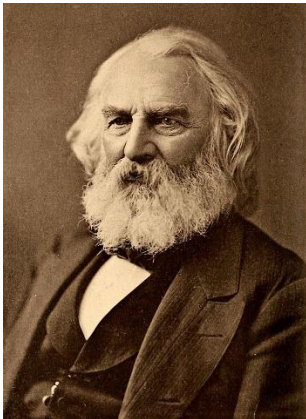
And yet, those Christmas bells kept ringing. Despite the tragedy, the hardship and the brokenness of the world, they persisted, and Longfellow himself came to a realisation:

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."*

In our own time of hardship, when our tanks might be feeling empty, and resilience low, I take great hope from this poem. For the truth it, despite all the tragedies that may befall us, Christmas always comes. It persists, just like those bells, because God persists.

No matter what else may happen this year, no matter how much we might despair, one truth continues to ring out: God is with us. Emmanuel!

- Daniel



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Worship & Readings

Sunday 2 January

9:00am Crookwell Wesley

Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:10-18

Sunday 9 January

9:00am Crookwell Wesley

Readings: Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Sunday 16 January

9:00am Crookwell Wesley

2:30pm Jerrara

Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

Sunday 23 January

9:00 Crookwell Wesley

Readings: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Luke 4:14-21

Sunday 30 January

9:30 Crookwell Wesley

Readings: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

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