

**WISH**

**CHRISTMAS RESOURCE PACK**

**FROM AMOS TRUST**



**WE DO HOPE**

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## WISH

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**“ POLITICIANS COMPETE FOR THE HIGHEST OFFICES. BUSINESS TYCOONS SCRAMBLE FOR A BIGGER AND BIGGER PIECE OF THE PIE. ARMIES MARCH AND SCIENTISTS STUDY AND PHILOSOPHERS PHILOSOPHISE AND PREACHERS PREACH AND LABOURERS SWEAT. BUT IN THAT SILENT BABY, LYING IN THAT HUMBLE MANGER, THERE PULSES MORE POTENTIAL POWER AND WISDOM AND GRACE AND ALIVENESS THAN ALL THE REST OF US CAN IMAGINE.**

**BRIAN D. MCLAREN**

AMERICAN PASTOR, AUTHOR AND SPEAKER

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#### WELCOME

#### INTRODUCTION

##### HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN

*“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out. Above all, it is this hope that gives us the strength to live and continually try new things, even in hopeless conditions.”*

VÁCLAV HAVEL

This Christmas, our focus is on Gaza and the hope embodied in the Al Ahli Hospitals’ breast cancer screening programme. It is a shining example of how the light breaks through the cracks and starts the long, often painful, process of turning them into doors and windows.

To learn more, please read November’s First Of The Month essay, and to find out how you can support the hospital, [please turn to page 30](#).



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### ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2022

#### READINGS

##### ADVENT BY MARTIN WROE

We wait, like shepherds, like stargazers  
We wait for the kind of hearing which can tune  
into angel voices  
For the kind of sight which can notice God appear  
in our world  
In these days we wait to see where Jesus Christ  
is being born in our lives  
We wait for love to come down at Christmas  
Some of us are waiting for a decision  
What’s next? Which is the way?  
Waiting for a sign, a clue, a star that seems to move  
Some of us are waiting for love — to know we are loved,  
to know how to love someone  
Some of us are waiting for the gift of life  
Some of us are living with the pain of loss and death  
All of us are waiting to know our calling in the midst of  
everything that arranges itself into our life?  
We wait for love to come down at Christmas

Some of us can’t wait any longer  
We are in countries where conflict never ends  
We have fled one nightmare for another  
We are the ones judged mean and lowly  
The star we followed misled us and now we sleep rough  
on the streets of a strange city  
In these dark streets shines no everlasting light  
We are waiting for Love to appear, wondering who  
Love will be



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All of us are waiting,  
To be seen and recognised,  
To be looked in the eye with love  
To know ourselves no longer walking in darkness  
To find ourselves under a bright light  
in the great sky of all these days  
a light which opens a path to follow  
We are waiting for Love to come down

We are waiting, like shepherds, like mothers, like stargazers  
Waiting for history to change everything

Most days we don't know what we're waiting for  
Until it arrives  
Until, at Christmas, we understand that God is waiting  
for us

In the face of stranger and friend  
In the face of someone in trouble, someone in need  
In the face of someone we fear or someone we love

As we wait in silence for Jesus Christ to be born  
Outside in the darkness, in the noise and confusion  
of every sacred day,  
Jesus Christ waits for us

As we wait for Love to come down,  
Love waits for us to rise up.

**“ WHEN MARY SPOKE HER WORDS  
OF PRAISE, SHE TRUSTED IN A GOD  
WHO ALWAYS HAS AND ALWAYS WILL  
LIBERATE THE OPPRESSED.**

NANCY FRAUSTO

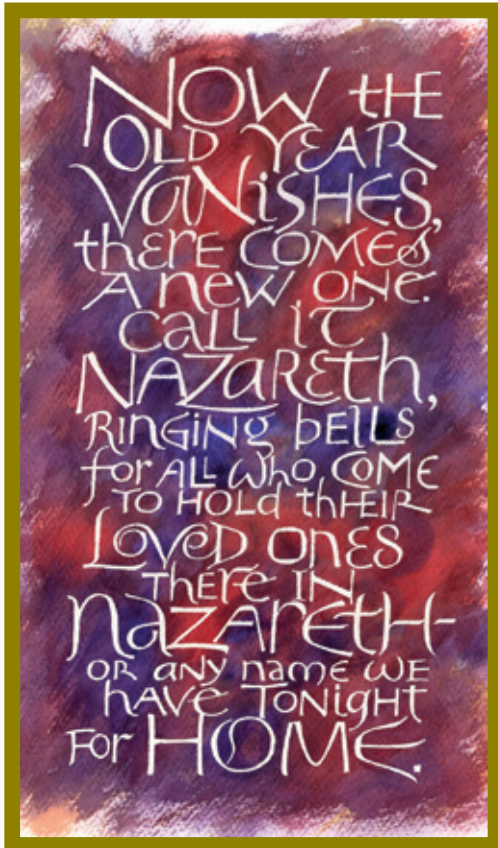
ASSOCIATE RECTOR AT ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

WE DO HOPE



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#### CALL IT NAZARETH BY CAROL ANN DUFFY

Now we make the journey home  
to where we came from —  
call it Nazareth —  
hoping still to know the way and find our loved ones, there  
in Nazareth —  
or any name we have tonight for home. Jerusalem,  
Bosnia,  
Nazareth,  
or any name we have tonight for home.  
Now our story twists and turns, we need an ending —  
call it Nazareth —  
altered so by what we've seen away from the loved ones  
there in Nazareth —  
or any name we have tonight for home. Baghdad,  
New Orleans,  
Nazareth,  
or any name we have tonight for home.  
Now the old year vanishes there comes a new one.  
Call it Nazareth,  
ringing bells for all who come to hold their loved ones there  
in Nazareth —  
or any name we have tonight for home. Darfur,  
Palestine,  
Nazareth,  
or any name we have tonight for home. Bethlehem,  
Manchester,  
Nazareth.



A BOMBED-OUT NEIGHBOURHOOD  
JUST OUTSIDE GAZA CITY

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#### NEVER UNDERSTAND BY CHRIS ROSE

The hopes for a political resolution  
have smouldered and grown cold.  
The promises of aid to rebuild the ashes of Gaza  
have proved as worthless  
as the sand on the shore at Beach Camp.  
Independent reports and calls for international justice  
have been denounced as “politically inexpedient”.  
New Year celebrations will be overshadowed  
by the commemoration of so many deaths.

The Christmas story reminds us  
that the promises of politicians  
and the latest round of peace talks  
are not where hope is found.  
These are the flashlights that dazzle us,  
not the slow burn that glows in the darkest places.

The slow realisation  
that lies will become transparent,  
that violence will not lead to peace,  
that human dignity always exerts itself,  
that beauty appears amidst the wreckage,  
that our protests are not in vain,  
that hope is found in the birth of a child  
in an occupied village.  
The miraculous daily promise of new life.





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#### ADVENT PRAYERS

##### A PRAYER FOR BETHLEHEM

We pray for Bethlehem this Christmas.  
May the town where the Prince of Peace was born know  
peace this Christmas.

May mothers in the refugee camps not weep as Rachel  
wept, for their children, but see a future for them free from  
fear and oppression.

May the people of Bethlehem experience the good news  
the angels promised and hope be rekindled.

May the leaders of Israel and Palestine know that their  
fates are intertwined and pursue the difficult steps towards  
a just peace.

And may we be resolute in our support of all those who  
seek to bring peace, justice and reconciliation in a land we  
long to call Holy.



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#### A PRAYER FOR GAZA

We pray for the children of Gaza  
Whose entire lives have been lived  
under the Israeli blockade  
Who have been fenced in  
unable to visit Jerusalem, to leave this tiny strip of land,  
or to go too close to the border wall  
Children who have lived through four major conflicts  
Who have become too familiar with the sounds of drones and  
bombing raids  
And to seeing those injured and the funeral procession for  
another lost life

We pray for their parents; far too many  
Dependent on food aid  
Without work and deeply in debt  
In overcrowded temporary housing,  
Deeply traumatised and re-traumatised by the recent conflict.

We pray for those working with Gaza's children  
For the teachers and medics  
For youth and children's workers  
For the psychosocial workers — seeking to address their  
trauma  
For the schools, training colleges and universities  
Seeking to equip young people  
With skills and education  
When there are so few jobs and no sign of better days.



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#### A PRAYER FOR PALESTINE AND ISRAEL BY RAMINI LEATHARD

Pray not for Arab or Jew  
for Palestinian or Israeli  
Pray rather for ourselves  
that we may not divide them in our  
prayers but hold them together in our heart

#### A PRAYER FOR PEACE BY FLEUR DORRELL

God, help us to lead our world in the ways of  
Justice and Peace.

Help us to be at peace with ourselves, our families,  
friends and neighbours.

May peace, not conflict, arise from our hearts  
wherever we go.

Help us to be active peacemakers — to bring peace  
through peace, into the world.

Help us never to stand back and watch people  
suffer, but to look for solutions in the smallest and  
the largest situations.

May our peace be a sign of strength and not of weakness  
that others may follow peace with peace.

**“ LIFE IN A PRISON CELL MAY WELL  
BE COMPARED TO ADVENT; ONE WAITS,  
HOPES, AND DOES THIS, THAT, OR THE  
OTHER — THINGS THAT ARE OF NO REAL  
CONSEQUENCE — THE DOOR IS SHUT,  
AND CAN BE OPENED ONLY FROM  
THE OUTSIDE.**

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

LETTERS FROM PRISON — 21 NOVEMBER, 1943

**WE DO HOPE**

“

A LITERAL 'BEACON' OF HOPE

The American composer, lyricist and playwright Jonathan Larson said that the opposite of war is not peace; it is creation. Shareef Sarhan built a working lighthouse in Gaza's harbour made from construction materials collected from the rubble of bombed buildings.

I have never been more impressed or moved by piece of public art. To take that which has been destroyed and turn it into a literal 'beacon' of hope is very powerful.

JAMES WALMSLEY  
CURATOR





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#### NADAA BREAST CANCER IN GAZA

*"I have a message for breast cancer women. At the beginning of my disease, I was ashamed to go to the doctor or to investigate or do a consultation. If it is early detection, it will be easy for you to continue your life, but if it is too late, it is very bad for you."* NADAA, GAZA

Like many women in Gaza, Nedaa was afraid to go to the breast clinic at Al Ahli Hospital for a mammogram; she thought she might have a lump but was worried about how her family would react if she were diagnosed with breast cancer. By the time she went for testing, her cancer had already advanced, and she needed radiotherapy. With the help of Al Ahli Hospital and its community network, she got permission to leave Gaza to undergo radiation therapy in Jerusalem. Whilst she was away, Gaza came under attack, and she told us how hard it was to leave her daughters with her Father as her husband had left her and the children after her diagnosis.

Women in Gaza are three times more likely to die from breast cancer than in the UK due to a lack of information, social taboos and the ongoing Israeli blockade of Gaza.

The stigma around breast cancer leads to many cases being detected at the later stages, and as a result, women often need radiotherapy. This presents considerable complications in Gaza. Radioisotopes, which are integral to radiotherapy treatment, are forbidden entry into Gaza by the Israeli authorities.



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This means patients like Nadaa must try to obtain a visa to leave Gaza (28% of which are rejected) and then travel to Jerusalem on their own to receive treatment.

This is why Al Ahli Hospital's education and support work in the communities is so important. Women (many of whom have had breast cancer) visit communities to talk about the importance of early screening.

When women present at the hospital, they are taught self-examination methods and given an initial examination and a mammogram and other tests if necessary. If they have a positive diagnosis, they will receive treatment at the hospital or help to get permits to travel to Jerusalem for radiotherapy.

All women who receive a positive diagnosis are then offered a place in the Health, Mind and Body Group, where they are offered psychological support and education around self-care methods, such as massage. In addition, the group provides a support network and helps women socialise again.

*"Sometimes we're happy together, and sometimes we cry together; we feel comfortable. We're fearless and not lonely."* MANAL, GAZA

For more about Nadaa's story and the work of Al Ahli Hospital, [please follow this link](#) or read our [Christmas Appeal](#).



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#### WORDS OF HOPE ADVENT

##### INVITATION

*the moon asked about  
her luminosity said  
I know all about hope*

DANIEL LADINSKY

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth  
God said, "Let there be light"  
God saw that the light was good  
Morning and evening the first day

**In the beginning was the Word  
And the Word was with God  
And the Word was God**

The Word was with God in the beginning  
Through the Word all things were created.  
Not one thing came into being without the Word

**In the Word was life  
And that life was the light of all people  
The light shines in the darkness  
And the darkness has never put it out**

**“ IT IS A SERIOUS THING  
JUST TO BE ALIVE ON THIS  
FRESH MORNING IN THIS  
BROKEN WORLD.**

MARY OLIVER

AMERICAN POET

**WE DO HOPE**



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#### ADVENT PROMISE

The people living in darkness have seen a great light.  
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them the  
light has shined.  
For you have ended their oppression and burnt the  
garments of war as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
Authority rests upon his shoulder, and he shall be called  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.  
His rule will grow continually and there will be  
endless peace. ISAIAH 9

He came  
**Where least expected**  
**Longed for but unwelcome**  
**The person they did not want**  
**Proclaiming justice, freedom, love and peace**

He still comes  
**As an unasked for alternative**  
**As the message we try not to hear**  
**The person we try to avoid**  
**Proclaiming justice, freedom, love and peace**

He will come  
**And every tear will be dried**  
**The sick will be healed**  
**The homeless housed**  
**There will be justice, freedom, love and peace**



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#### CONFESSION

So often we hide from the light  
Afraid that it will show who we really are  
So we hide our light away  
And are threatened when it shines in others  
**May we not be afraid to walk in the light, as children  
of the light**

Mary an unwed teenager  
Accepted your call to be mother of the promised one  
**Forgive us when we are reluctant to hear your calling**  
**And fail to do what we know to be right**

Your son Jesus was born in poverty in a stable, in a  
country under occupation  
**Forgive us when we only think of our comfort**  
**And shut out the suffering of so many**

The shepherds left their sheep in the field  
And ran to Bethlehem to celebrate a new birth  
**Forgive us when we do not delight in the wonders  
around us**  
**and do not grasp your vision of the world to come**

The magi travelled across borders following a star  
Hoping to find an answer to their searching  
**Forgive us when we reject those who have had to  
flee across borders and may we have enough trust to  
follow your lead**

**May we not be afraid to walk in the light, as children  
of the light**



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#### STATEMENT OF BELIEF

The angels sang  
Glory to God in the highest  
Peace on earth, where God's favour lies

We believe  
That justice is how love looks in public  
That hope is a song in a weary voice  
That stumbling is not falling  
Together we can be the change we long to see

We believe  
That peace is the apology of the strong to the weak  
That faith is being sure of what we hope for  
That we all come from the creator  
Trailing wisps of glory

We believe  
That if we have eyes to see  
That if we have ears to hear  
That when we least expect it, hope bursts into life  
Stable walls echoing to a baby's first cry

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY,  
BETHLEHEM, PALESTINE





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#### THE LIVING WORD

The Word became flesh and lived among us  
So this day

We stand with those whose freedom is denied  
We link arms with those who have fled war,  
torture and despair  
We come in penance for broken promises and  
political fixes  
We walk the long road with all those who strive  
for peace, justice and reconciliation  
We weep with those who long to return to home  
We pray in hope that one day all people (in Palestine  
and Israel) will live in peace, as neighbours with  
full equal rights



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#### CLOSING RESPONSES

When the song of the angels is stilled  
When the star in the sky is gone  
When the kings and princes are home  
When the shepherds are back with their flocks  
The work of Christmas begins  
To find the lost  
To heal the broken  
To feed the hungry  
To release the prisoner  
To rebuild our world  
To bring peace

For last year's words belong to last year's language.  
And next year's words await another voice.  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.

Listen to the pain of the voiceless  
Water the barren earth  
Plant seeds in the wasteland  
Act as if our hope in the future is irresistible.

And may we be blessed with:  
A lightness in our spirit  
A calmness in our soul  
A heart for justice  
A peace that forgives  
And the knowledge that all will be well

WITH THANKS TO DANIEL LADINSKY,  
HOWARD THURMAN AND T.S. ELIOT



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#### PLAYLIST CHRISTMAS EXTENDED MIX

The funkier Christmas party gives way to a more thoughtful mid-section, before we pick up again with the Pogues, Gregory Porter's Christmas Gospel, Ella and the saddest Christmas song of them all.

**JAMES BROWN** — Santa Claus Go Straight To The Ghetto

**SHARON JONES** — Ain't No Chimneys in the Projects

**THE STAPLE SINGERS** — Who Took The Merry...

**DONNY HATHAWAY** — This Christmas

**MARVIN GAYE** — Purple Snowflakes

**TRACEY THORN** — Snow in Sun

**SMITH & BURROWS** — When the Thames Froze

**LOW** — Long Way Around the Sea

**THE POGUES FEAT. KIRSTY MACCOLL** — Fairytale of New York

**GREGORY PORTER** — Take Me To The Alley

**ELLA FITZGERALD** — Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

**JUDY GARLAND** — Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas

[Listen to the Spotify playlist now.](#)

**“ YET AS I READ THE BIRTH  
STORIES ABOUT JESUS, I CANNOT  
HELP BUT CONCLUDE THAT THOUGH  
THE WORLD MAY BE TILTED  
TOWARD THE RICH AND POWERFUL,  
GOD IS TILTED TOWARD THE UNDERDOG.**

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**PHILIP YANCEY**

AUTHOR

**WE DO HOPE**



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ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2022

### THAT'S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN CHRISTMAS APPEAL

**“ I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR BREAST CANCER  
WOMEN. IF IT IS EARLY DETECTION, IT WILL  
BE EASY FOR YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR LIFE,  
BUT IF IT IS TOO LATE, IT IS VERY BAD FOR YOU.**

NADAA, GAZA



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Women in Gaza are three times more likely to die from breast cancer than in the UK due to a lack of information, social taboos and the ongoing Israeli blockade of Gaza.

Early identification, providing free easily accessible services and supporting women to meet other women who have been through treatment is vital.

— **£10** will allow Al Ahli to teach a woman how to identify a lump and to introduce her to the treatments available. This is done through the use of prosthetic breasts and by bringing women in to experience the hospital's oncology unit. The hospital's aim is that 5,000 women will be trained each year.

— **£45** will pay for a woman to have a mammogram. Al Ahli aims to screen 3,000 women a year over 40.

— **£80** will support a woman who has had breast cancer to come to Al Ahli's Health, Mind and Body group, at which she will receive psychosocial support, meet other women who have received treatment, and learn how she can talk about her experience.

— **£120** will support a woman to obtain a visa to travel to Jerusalem and the cost of making this journey.

We are delighted to announce every gift donated online through the Big Give between 29th November and 6th December will be doubled! You can donate now by visiting [amotrusted.org/christmas-appeal](https://amotrusted.org/christmas-appeal)

THANK YOU.

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