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Post Christmas Blues

As I write this the weather is dull but mild. Almost magically, morning birdsong has returned to Buriton. In the freezing temperatures before Christmas the birds were almost silent. It's hard to be joyful when times are hard. It's hard to be festive if you are suffering.



In the church calendar the first Sunday of Christmas was when we read the terrible story in Matthew's gospel of the massacre of innocent children by Herod's soldiers. The joy and wonder and peace of Christmas is confronted by the evil of humankind. Lullabies are replaced by screams; carols become curses. Jesus was born into a world of pain and suffering.

Bethlehem in the 1st century was a place of occupation and oppression. Bethlehem today is again a place of oppression. Palestinian people are denied their basic freedoms. They are cut off by a wall. They cannot determine their own future. Jesus understands our human condition. He lived in our broken world. He suffered torture and death for us. He is 'at one' with us. There is atonement. Jesus speaks to all our human condition, whether our lives are full of joy and birdsong or are cold and empty, whether we are happy or sad, whether we are well or suffering. He came and lived on earth so that all people might have fullness of life in him.