

Lessons & Carols

for Christmas

WELCOME TO ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL

Welcome to St George's Cathedral for this service of Christmas Lessons and Carols. We are so glad that you are here. As we gather, we acknowledge that in Kingston we are situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory. We are grateful to be able to live, learn and worship on these lands.

This service is based on the Sarum Rite mediaeval monastic office of Vigil for Christmas and is sung in Cathedrals, Collegiate Churches, and parishes throughout the world. This service was a way of telling the Christian story of the birth of Jesus to the people through song and story. Each lesson of Scripture is followed by a carol that illustrates the point made in the reading that precedes it.

If you are a Christian, then this service is a chance to renew once again your familiarity with the story of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. If you are not a Christian, you are certainly welcome here! We hope you enjoy the music and atmosphere as you listen to the story which Christians commemorate at this time of year as we believe it the source of our hope for the whole world.

The service consists of a procession, a bidding prayer and Lord's Prayer, a number of lessons with appropriate carols and hymns, a closing collect, blessing and recessional. Traditionally, the lessons are read in a defined order: a chorister first, followed by members of the parish holding various offices and ending with the Bishop reading the last lesson from the High Altar.

LEADING THE SERVICE

The Right Reverend William G. Cliff

Bishop

The Very Reverend Douglas Michael

Dean

Brad Barbeau

Choirmaster

Nathan Jeffery

Organist

READERS

Marten Yam

Derek Falkner

Jann Van Vugt

Eden Cameron

Jane Kirkpatrick

Matthew Wright

SIDESPEOPLE

Brian Hinchey

Lois Jaja

Tilly Nelson

Valerie Jackson

The people's responses are in **bold**. During the congregational carols, the people stand as able to sing together.

Organ Voluntary

Processional Carol | Sung by all.



CHOIR:

*Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a Mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed;
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.*

*2 He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

ALL:

**3 And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden
In whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.**

Irby

H. J. Gauntlett 1805-76

Descant: Stephen Cleobury 1948-2019

4 For he is our childhood's pattern:

**Day by day like us he grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew;
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.**

5 And our eyes at last shall see him through

**His own redeeming love,
For that child, so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.**

6 Not in that poor, lowly stable

**With the oxen standing by
We shall see him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When, like stars, his children, crowned,
All in white shall wait around.**

C. Frances Alexander 1818-95

The Bidding Prayer

Dean Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore, let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and health over all the earth; for unity and goodwill within the Church he came to build, and especially in the dominions of our sovereign King Charles and within this Diocese of Ontario.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold and the hungry, the abused, the exploited and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the isolated, the lonely and the unloved; the elderly and the little children; all who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

People **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The people are seated.

The First Lesson | Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

Read by Marten Yam

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden
Written in their book.

Adam lay ybounden, B. Ord 1897-1961

Ne had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our Lady
Abeen heavene queen.
Blessed be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen,
‘Deo gracias!’

15th Century Sloane MS, modernized

The Second Lesson | Genesis 22:15-18

Read by Eden Cameron

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



Of the Father's heart begotten
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha: from that Fountain,
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.

2 By his word was all created;
He commanded and 'twas done;
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
All that breathes beneath the sun,
Evermore and evermore.

3 He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
Evermore and evermore.

4 O how blest that wondrous birthday,
When the Maid the curse retrieved,
Brought to birth the world's salvation,
By the Holy Ghost conceived,
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
In her loving arms received,
Evermore and evermore.

5 Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
Let your joyous anthems ring,
Every tongue his name confessing,
Countless voices answering,
Evermore and evermore.

Melody from *Piae Cantiones* 1582,
arr.: D. Willcocks 1919-2015

Prudentius c.348-413, trans.: R. F. Davis 1866-1937

The Third Lesson | Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour

Read by Derek Falkner

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter,
Long ago.

Our God, Heav'n cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
Heav'n and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

In the Bleak Midwinter, H. Darke 1888-1976

Enough for him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti 1830-91

The Fourth Lesson | Isaiah 11: 1-3a; 4a; 6-9

Read by Jane Kirkpatrick

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

What is this lovely fragrance wafting
Like to the scents of flowers in spring?
Shepherds, O tell us, whence such beauty,
Hear you not heavenly caroling?
What is this lovely fragrance wafting
Like the scents of flowers in spring.

What is this light so fair, so tender
Breaking upon our wondering eyes?
Never the Morning Star so radiant
Followed his course o'er eastern skies.
What is this light so fair, so tender,
Breaking upon our wondering eyes?

Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps
Seek the Savior, born today.
Low at His feet we lay our treasure,
Heart's adoration, love for aye.
Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps
Seek the Savior, born today.

What is this lovely fragrance, Healey Willan 1880-1968

Poem translated from the French by Ysobel

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay!
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we had gone astray:
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

2 From God our heavenly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:

3 The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding

In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
This blessed Babe to find:

4 And when to Bethlehem they came,
Where Christ the infant lay,
They found him in a manger
Where oxen fed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling
Unto the Lord did pray:

5 Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

The first good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of one;
To see the blessed Jesus Christ
When he was first her son:
*When he was first her son, good man,
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of two;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
To make the lame to go:
*To make the lame to go, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of three;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
To make the blind to see:
*To make the blind to see, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of four;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
To read the Bible o'er:
*To read the Bible o'er, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of five;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
To bring the dead alive:
*To bring the dead alive, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of six;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
Upon the crucifix:
*Upon the crucifix, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

The next good joy that Mary had,
It was the joy of seven;
To see her own son, Jesus Christ,
To wear the crown of heaven:
*To wear the crown of heaven, good man:
And blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
To all eternity.*

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

Long and weary was the journey,
Hard and dark the road we trod;
Deep enfolded in the stillness of the night
It seemed I heard the voice of God:
'Fear not, Joseph, weep not Mary,
Travel onward through the darkness of night;
Bethlehem will see his glory:
Christ, Emmanuel, the Lord of light.'

*Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum
Here in a stable lies your heav'nly King,
Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum,
Alleluia, alleluia hear the angels sing.*

Joseph's Carol, John Rutter b. 1945. Written in 2020 and respectfully dedicated to the Oxford Vaccine Team.

2. Journey's end was just a stable bare,
Cold and lonely for a birth;
Ox and ass were our companions there
When God revealed himself on earth.
Shepherd came in awe and wonder,
Kneeling low beside his manger stall;
Angels singing, Wise men bringing
Gifts to lay before the Lord of all.

*Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum
Here in a stable lies your heav'nly King,
Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum,
Alleluia, alleluia hear the angels sing.*

Carol | Sung by the choir.

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day;
I would my true love did so chance
To see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,
Of her I took fleshly substance
Thus was I knit to man's nature
To call my true love to my dance.

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day, John Gardiner 1917-2011

In a manger laid, and wrapped I was
So very poor, this was my chance
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass
To call my true love to my dance.

Then afterwards baptized I was;
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,
My Father's voice heard I from above,
To call my true love to my dance.

Traditional English Carol

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

3 How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him ,still
The dear Christ enters in.

2 O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the king,
And peace to all on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

Forest Green arr. R. Vaughan Williams 1872-1958
Descant: Thomas Armstrong 1898-1994

Phillips Brooks 1835-93

The Seventh Lesson | Luke 2: 8-16

Read by Jann Van Vugt

The shepherds go to the manger.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

During the carol, a collection will be taken. If you are able, please consider supporting the ministry and mission of St George's Cathedral by giving generously. To give online, you may visit www.stgeorgescathedral.ca/give. Thank you.

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

2 'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and humankind.

3 'To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign:

4 The heavenly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid.'

5 Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

6 'All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heaven to all
Begin and never cease.'

*Winchester Old
Thomas Este's Psalter 1592*

Nahum Tate 1652-1715

The Eighth Lesson | Matthew 2: 1-12

Read by The Very Rev. Douglas Michael

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Carol | Sung by the choir.

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain,
Moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

2 Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring to crown him again,
King for ever,
Ceasing never
Over us all to reign.

3 Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh,
Prayer and praising,
Voices raising,
Worship Him, God on high.

We three kings, J.H. Hopkins, arr. Martin Neary (1940-2025)

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing,
Bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

5 Glorious now behold Him arise,
King, and God and Sacrifice;
Heav'n sings
Alleluia;
Alleluia the earth replies.

J.H. Hopkins 1820-91

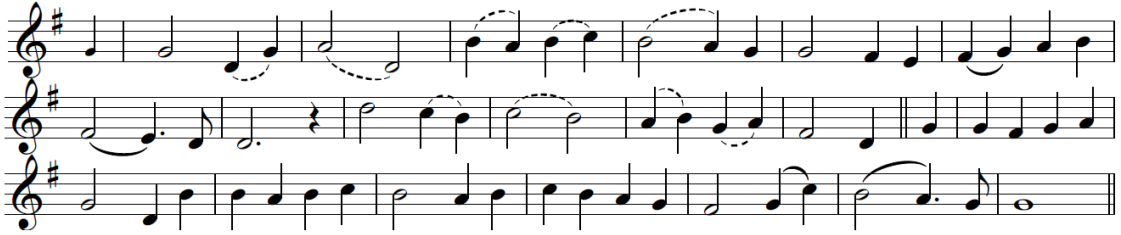
The Ninth Lesson | John 1: 1-14

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnations

Read by The Right Rev. William Cliff

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of all people. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all people through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every one that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the King of Angels:
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 Christ the Lord!

2 God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:

3 Child, for us sinners
Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?

4 Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the Highest:

Adeste Fideles

Descant: Stephen Cleobury, 1948-2019

J. F. Wade (c.1711-1786), trans.: F. Oakley, W. T. Brooke et al;

THE COLLECT AND BLESSING

Bishop The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Bishop Let us pray. O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Choir Amen.

Bishop Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Choir Amen.

Congregational Carol | Sung by all.



Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem:

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come

Offspring of a Virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased on earth with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us all from earth,
Born to give us second birth:

*F. Mendelssohn 1809-1847; adapt.: by W. H. Cummings 1831-1915
Descant: Stephen Cleobury, 1948-2019*

C. Wesley 1707-1788 et al

Organ Voluntary | *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*, Keith Chapman 1945-1989

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MUSIC NOTES

BY DR. PHIL ROGERS

Once in royal David's city

Cecil Frances Humphreys (later Mrs. C.F. Alexander) published this hymn in 1848 in her book *Hymns for Little Children*, in a set of hymns elaborating on clauses of the Apostle's Creed. This hymn was for "conceived by the holy ghost and born of the Virgin Mary." Other well-known hymns were "All things bright and beautiful," for "maker of heaven and earth" and "There is a green hill far away," for "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried." The remaining hymns have not been adopted into modern hymn books. A year after the hymn was published, it was set to the tune "Irby" by Henry John Gauntlett, church and concert organist and composer. Gauntlett composed an SATB arrangement for the 1856 *Supplement to Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Since the second year of the service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge, in 1919, the hymn has begun the service there, and in many other places, in the arrangement of Arthur Henry Mann, who was organist of King's from 1876 to 1929.

Adam Lay ybounden

The words of this carol were written down in the 15th century, but it was probably circulating orally in the 14th century, possibly as part of a wandering singer's repertoire. The 15C manuscript contains two other Christmas songs: "I syng of a mayden" and "Lullay myn lyking." The carol is based on the concept of the "fortunate fall," *Felix culpa*, an idea originating with St Ambrose, continued by his pupil St Augustine, and later picked up by St Thomas Aquinas. The "4000 winters" of the first stanza refers to the time Adam spent in hell before the harrowing of hell by Christ. "Clerkes" are scholars and "their book" is the Bible. Our setting is by Boris Ord (1897-1961), who was educated at Clifton College, Bristol, the RCM, and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. In 1929 he was appointed organist of King's College, a post he held until 1957 except for a period of military service during World War II, when Harold Darke filled in for him. He composed the music for *Adam lay ybounden* in 1957. Ord was succeeded at King's by David Willcocks.

Of the Father's heart begotten

The Latin words of this hymn were written by the Roman poet Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, a Spanish Christian of the 4th century (348-413) in *Hymnus omnis horae*, "Hymn for all hours." The poem presents the entire life of Christ in its 38 stanzas; the hymn uses stanzas 4 to 8 and the last two words of the final stanza: *seculorum seculis*, "evermore and evermore." Our translation is by Roby Furley Davis (1866-1937) in *The Hymns of Prudentius*, 1895. The plainchant tune, *Divinum mysterium*, is from the Finnish collection *Piae Cantiones* (1582), but it is much older, originating as an elaboration (a "trope") on the Sanctus in the 10th-12th century.

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) wrote this poem in 1872 in response to a request for a poem from the American magazine, *Scribner's Monthly: An Illustrated Magazine for the People*. Entitled "A Christmas Carol," it was printed with an illustration of the holy family and the shepherds, and with banners carrying phrases from the *Magnificat*. The poem is in 5 stanzas of unequal length; all the lines are metrically irregular. Gustav Holst was the first to set the poem to music, when Ralph Vaughan Williams asked him for a Christmas carol for *The English Hymnal* (published in 1906). The poem had been published in Rossetti's *Poetical Works* edited by her brother Michael in 1904. Harold Darke (1888-1976) composed the setting we sing a few years later, in 1911, when he was organist of Emmanuel Church, W. Hampstead, and a student at the Royal College of Music. His setting omits Rossetti's v. 4; Darke changed Rossetti's phrase "breast full of milk" to "heart full of mirth" in the third stanza, a change that entered several hymn books. Darke became organist of St Michael's, Cornhill (in the City) in 1916 and stayed until 1966 except for the brief period when he

deputised for Ord at King's College, Cambridge, in the Second World War. (Rossetti later wrote another Christmas poem, "Love Came Down at Christmas," which was set to music by Darke and by John Rutter.)

What is this lovely Fragrance?

Having come to Canada in 1913, Healy Willan (1880-1968) became organist at St Paul's, Bloor Street in Toronto; he left St Paul's for St Mary Magdalene in 1921 and remained there until his death. Willan composed this arrangement of a traditional French carol around 1942. The French nativity carol, *Quelle est cette odeur agréable*, was first written down in the 17th century, though it probably existed in oral form earlier. The tune was in England by 1710, and both Thomas d'Urfey in *Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (published in several volumes 1698-1720) and John Gay in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) used it for a drinking song: "Fill every glass, for wine inspires us/With courage." The French poem was translated for Willan's arrangement by a close friend (given the pseudonym Ysobel), using 3 of the 6 stanzas in the original. This reduces, and perhaps somewhat masks the dialogue of Angels and shepherds in the French. In our score upper voices sing the first verse and lower voices the second. The third verse is arranged for SATB chorus.

God Rest You merry, Gentlemen

William Sandys collected this hymn in the West Country of the U.K. for his *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern of 1833*. It's also in John Payne Collier's *A Book of Roxburghe Ballads*, 1848. The tune is based on a country dance tune called "Chestnut" (printed by John Playford in *The English Dancing Master*, 1651). A version with slightly different wording is in a manuscript collection of Recusant verse (Bodleian ms. Eng. Poet. b.5) compiled between 1650 and 1657. It was printed on a broadsheet about 1760, and seems to have been familiar enough that the reviewer of a new opera in 1764 could casually refer to it. The carol was so well known in 19th-century England that Dickens used it in *A Christmas Carol* (Scrooge chases away someone singing it) and George Eliot quoted the first stanza in *Silas Marner*. An article in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1824 complains about "some croaking ballad-singer bawling out 'God rest you, merry gentlemen'." Note the placement of the comma; that comma has moved frequently, but the position after "merry" is the right one. The phrase means, "God keep you merry, gentlemen," and it points to the carol's use in house-to-house carol singing for donations.

Joys Seven

English tradition to the end of the fourteenth century uniformly recognized Five Joys of the Virgin, viz.: the Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension, and [Mary's] Assumption (the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary differ somewhat); but the number varies, growing to seven, nine, and even fifteen in popular culture. The earliest text in the tradition in English is a short lyric, *Marie Moder, Wel Thee Be*, in a manuscript of the 14th century. This carol based on that tradition is one of the counting songs associated with Christmas. The tune is "traditional English." (There's also a "traditional Irish" tune.) It was first printed in Bramley and Stainer's *Christmas Carols New and Old* (1871). We sing a setting composed by Stephen Cleobury (1948-2019), Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge, from 1982 until his death.

Joseph's Carol

Responding to a request from Marios Popodopoulos, the conductor of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, John Rutter wrote the words and the music of this very human carol in 2020 as part of a concert to honour the Oxford scientists who worked on the Covid-19 vaccine. The premiere performance was given in the Sheldonian Theatre, with bass Bryn Terfel as the soloist. The two verses of the carol carry echoes of T.S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi," here emphasizing the difficulties of the long trek that Joseph and Mary are forced by an occupying power to make from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem, simply because Joseph is

a distant descendant of an ancient king. The way is arduous, made moreso, no doubt, by Mary's being pregnant, a matter that may still be a bit puzzling to Joseph. But Joseph's sense of some miraculous intervention counters the difficulties. And the recognition of miracle is picked up by the chorus, who sing in Latin, "Behold the miracle"—now perhaps alluding to Thomas Tallis' *Videte miraculum*—and then "Alleluia, alleluia," for the Christ is born.

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day

The oldest written version of the words this carol is in *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* (1833), compiled by William Sandys (1792-1874), a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a member of the Percy Society. It is in the middle section of his collection, containing songs "obtained in different parts of the west of Cornwall, many of which, including those now published, are still in use." The carol is certainly much older, perhaps from the 16th century. Sandys prints 11 stanzas in which Jesus narrates his life from birth through the temptations in the desert, the betrayal of Judas, the trial and crucifixion, the harrowing of hell and the ascension to the right hand of God. Mankind is the "true love," and Jesus' words at the carol's end reveal that his life's purpose is "that man/ May come unto the general dance." "Tomorrow," then, refers to the parousia, when lover and true love will be united in the dance. There are arrangements by Holst, Stravinsky (!), and Willcocks. John Gardner (1917-2011), who composed the arrangement we sing, was educated at the Wellington School in Berkshire and at Exeter College, Oxford, where he was organ scholar. In 1940 he enlisted in the RAF and, after the war, worked as a répétiteur at Covent Garden. Later he taught at the Royal Academy of Music and at St Paul's Girls School, succeeding Holst, all the while composing operas, symphonies, concertos and much more. This arrangement was published in 1965, along with an arrangement of *Good King Wenceslas*. Gardner sets the first four stanzas of the carol. He disregards the old tune in 3/4 time, variously called "Traditional " and "Old Cornish Carol," and creates a new tune which alternates between 3/4 and 2/4, with syncopations, and he adds percussion. This arrangement is a rollicking dance, infectious in its rhythm

O little town of Bethlehem

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia in 1868, wrote the words of this hymn after having visited Bethlehem three years earlier. Brooks later became Rector (and creator, really) of Trinity Church, Boston. In 1891 he was elected Bishop of Massachusetts. Brooks' organist in Philadelphia, Lewis Redner, wrote the tune "St Louis" for this hymn, and it remains the usual tune in the U.S. We sing the tune "Forest Green" by Ralph Vaughan Williams, based on a folk tune collected in 1903 from a singer who lived in that village in Surrey. The tune set the words of "The Ploughboy's Dream." Vaughan Williams used it for this hymn in the *English Hymnal* of 1906.

While Shepherds Watched their Flocks

The words of this carol, paraphrasing Luke 2:8-14, were first published in the *Supplement* (1700) to the *New Version of the Psalms of David Fitted to the Tunes used in Churches* (1686), edited by Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady. It is probably by Tate alone, although there is no attribution in the *Supplement*. The text is accompanied by a note saying it "may be sung to any of the tunes of common measure." As the only *New Version* Christmas song it is the only Christmas song approved by the church before the end of the 18C. Primarily known as an adapter of earlier English plays, Tate began by writing his own plays; he also wrote the libretto for Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and he collaborated with Dryden on the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*. He was appointed Poet Laureate by William III and Mary II in 1692. The words of this carol were first paired with the tune Winchester Old as arranged by W.H. Monk in the first edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1861). The melody, however, is much older, having been published in Thomas Est's *Whole Booke of Psalmes* of 1592. It may have been adapted from a tune by Christopher Tye (ca. 1497-1572). The hymn name "Winchester" first appears in Thomas Ravenscroft's *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, 1621.

We three kings

The text and the tune are both by John Henry Hopkins Jr. (1820-1891), eldest son of the Bishop of Vermont and later the eighth Presiding Bishop of ECUSA. After studying at the University of Vermont (A.B. 1839; M.A. 1845) Hopkins worked as a journalist for awhile and then went to the General Theological Seminary in NYC (B.D. 1850), where he then taught music 1850-1857. He was the founding editor of the (Anglo-Catholic) *Church Journal* 1853-1868. Ordained to the priesthood in 1872, he was rector of Christ Church (Episcopal) in Williamsport, Pennsylvania from 1876 to 1887. Hopkins became a noted U.S. hymnologist. This carol was written for a Christmas pageant at the New York Seminary in 1857 and published in Hopkins' 1863 *Carols, Hymns, and Songs*.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

John Francis Wade (1712-1786), a Roman Catholic and a Jacobite, wrote down the Latin hymn *Adeste Fideles* in four stanzas (*Adeste fideles* "Come, all ye faithful"; *Deum de Deo* "God of God"; *Cantet . . . chorus Angelorum* "Sing choirs of angels"; and *Ergo qui natus* "Yea, Lord"). It is possible that part or all of the hymn existed earlier, but there is no conclusive evidence of it. Wade wrote the tune as well: mss. with the tune, probably in his hand, date from 1740 and the 1750s. In *An Essay on the Church Plain Chant* (1782), written with Samuel Webbe the Elder, organist of the chapel in the Portuguese Embassy, Wade writes the tune with a bass part, in 4/4, and includes the fuguing chorus. A music scribe specializing in plainchant, and an important figure in the revival of plainchant, Wade taught the subject briefly at the English College in Douai, where he might have gone because of the failure of the 1745 Jacobite rising, or simply to escape the Penal Laws. But he returned to London before 1782, and he was acquainted with musicians in various foreign embassies, the only places where Roman Catholic services could legally be held. In the late 18C (after 1794) Etienne Jean François Borderies, a French Catholic Priest who had heard the carol while in refuge in England during the Revolution, wrote three additional stanzas (*En grege relicto*, "See how the shepherds"; *Aeterni parentis* "The eternal splendour of the father" and *Pro nobis ergenum* "For us sinners"). Finally, one more stanza, (*Stella duce, magi*, "Led by a star") by an unknown writer, appeared in 1857 in a Belgian publication, *Thesaurus Animae Christianae*.

The translation of Wade's Latin hymn into English is the work of Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880). Educated at Christ Church College, Oxford, and then Chaplain and a Fellow of Balliol, Oakeley was appointed incumbent of Margaret Chapel in London (now All Saints, Margaret Street) in 1839; he translated the hymn in 1841. (Suspended from priestly duties by the Bishop of London for defending Newman's Tract XC, Oakeley left the C of E for the Roman Catholic Church in 1845.) The verses written by Borderies were translated by William T. Brooke (1848-1917), who also translated the anonymous stanza. Brooke was a Baptist businessman who developed an interest in hymns; he converted to C of E in 1867.

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley published this hymn as "Hymn for Christmas Day" in John Wesley's 1739 collection *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. In its original form it had 10 4-line stanzas, but the last four have never been part of the modern hymn. The opening couplet as Wesley wrote it was "Hark, how all the welkin rings/Glory to the King of Kings." It was George Whitefield, the Wesleys' sometime colleague, who created the present opening, along with other changes, in his *Collection of Hymns for Social Worship* (1754). Wesley himself had altered the words in the second edition of his brother's collection, and the hymn has undergone many other alterations since then. The repetition of the opening lines at the end of each stanza first appeared in 1782, in a new edition of Tate and Brady's *New Version of the Psalms of David*. At the same time the hymn was restructured into stanzas of 8 lines. The music, from Part 2 (*Lied*) of Mendelssohn's "Gutenberg Cantata,"

composed in 1840 to commemorate the invention of printing with moveable type, was adapted for Wesley's hymn in 1855 by William H. Cummings (1831-1915). Cummings, a tenor, noted especially for his performances of the Evangelist in Bach, was the organist of Waltham Abbey. He was later a voice teacher and ultimately Principal of the Guildhall School of Music in London. His setting was published with this hymn in 1856 and included in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861.

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