



THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY



A Celebration of Christmas

Favourite Carols and Readings for all the family

Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Celebration of Christmas

Cover Image: Detail from The Nativity (Christopher Whall), South West Transept

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Produced by the Music & Liturgy Department:
precentor@canterbury-cathedral.org – 01227 865281
www.canterbury-cathedral.org

ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome

The Dean

See, amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the Lamb of God appears,
Promised from eternal years!

2 Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime,
Sits amid the cherubim!

*Hail, thou ever-blessèd morn!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem:
Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

3 Sacred Infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss
Down to such a world as this!

4 Teach, O teach us, Holy Child,
By Thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble thee,
In thy sweet humility.

Words: Edward Caswall (1814-78)

Tune: HUMILITY (OXFORD)

The First Lesson

Luke 1.29-35, 38

The Archangel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.'

Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

Carol **The Angel Gabriel from heaven came**

The angel Gabriel from heaven came
His wings as drifted snow his eyes as flame
'All hail' said he 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favoured lady,' Gloria!

'For know a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold
Most highly favoured lady,' Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.'
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
'Most highly favoured lady,' Gloria!

Words: Basque carol, translated by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Music: Basque traditional carol, arranged by Charles Edgar Pettman (1866-1943)

The Second Lesson Matthew 1.18-25

St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',
which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round the Virgin and her Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glory streams from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God love's pure light.
Radiant beams from your holy face
With dawn of saving grace,
Jesus Lord, at your birth,
Jesus Lord, at your birth.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848), tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885) *Tune:* STILLE NACHT

Reading

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Carol **In the bleak midwinter**

In the bleak midwinter frosty winds made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter 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 midwinter a stable place sufficed.
The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

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.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

Music: Harold Darke (1888-1976)

The Third Lesson

Luke 2.8-16

The shepherds go to the manger

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, good-will to men,
From heaven's all gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing;
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years,
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the
song
Which now the angels sing.

Words: Edmund Sears (1810-76)

Tune: NOEL

Carol **Carol of the Bells**

Hark! how the bells,
Sweet silver bells,
All seem to say
'throw cares away.'
Christmas is here,
Bringing good cheer,
To young and old,
Meek and the bold.

Oh how they pound,
Raising the sound
O'er hill and dale,
Telling their tale,
Gaily they ring
While people sing
Songs of good cheer.
Christmas is here

Ding, dong, ding, dong,
That is their song,
With joyful ring,
All carolling.
One seems to hear
Words of good cheer
From everywhere
Filling the air.

Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas!
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas!

On, on they send,
On without end,
Their joyful tone
To every home.

Words: Peter J. Wilhousky (1902-1978)

Music: Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921)

Reading

Clement Clarke Moore, *The night before Christmas*

Carol **We wish you a merry Christmas**

We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
And a happy New Year.

*Good tidings we bring to you and your kin,
We wish a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.*

Now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring us some figgy pudding,
Now bring some out here.

For we all like our figgy pudding,
We all like our figgy pudding,
We all like our figgy pudding,
With all this good cheer.

And we won't go until we get some,
We won't go until we get some,
We won't go until we get some,
So bring some out here.

Words: Traditional

Music: Traditional, arranged by Arthur Warrell (1882-1939)

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.*

3 See how the shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh
with lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:
*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:
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

4 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens
of heaven above:
'Glory to God
In the highest':
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

5 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born that happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing:
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

Words: Latin 18th century Tr F Oakeley (1802-80) and others

Tune: ADESTE FIDELES

The Friends' Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ,
in whose name our Cathedral Church is dedicated,
Grant that its life and worship
May ever abound to your greater glory;
And that as Friends we may do our part,
By prayer and offering,
To strengthen its witness to all the world;
Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit
Live and reign ever One God.
Amen.

The Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.