

Christ Church, New Mill
Service of Readings and Carols



Sunday, December 23rd 2007, 4.00pm.

Welcome to Christ Church, New Mill, and especially to this celebration of the Nativity of our Lord in words and music. You are invited to stand and join in the items marked "HYMN", and sit or kneel as appropriate for the other items. We hope you enjoy the service.

HYMN (*verse 1 sung as a solo*)

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.

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 meek and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

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.

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.

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.

*Words: Cecil F. Alexander(1818-95) Music: H.J. Gauntlett (1805-76).
Descant: Philip Ledger*

PRAYER

We meet to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world.
The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us
And we beheld his glory.

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of
our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our
sins
(Silence is kept)

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness to stand in
your presence as your children.
We have sinned:
Forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.
Forgive our disobedience to your will.
We have sinned:
Forgive and heal us.

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty in a manger.
Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.

Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus the king.

Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself
that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh,
and be cleansed from all our sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We say together:

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.

READING 1: Isaiah 61: 1-3, 11

HYMN:

Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes,
The Saviour promised long;
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure;
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.

His silver trumpets publish loud
The jub'lee of the Lord
Our debts are all remitted now
Our heritage restored.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
And Heav'n's eternal arches ring
With Thy belovèd Name.

Words: Philip Doddridge 1735; Music: Thomas Ravenscroft 1621

READING 2: Luke 1 : 26–38.

CAROL: A maiden most gentle.

(Words and arrangement of a French trad. melody, by Andrew Carter)

HYMN:

Now tell us, gentle Mary,
What Gabriel said to thee;
And tell us of the tidings
He brought to Galilee.
“He told me I was favoured,
That I would be the one
God chose to be the mother
Of Jesus, his own Son”.

Now tell us, gentle Mary,
The birth of Christ that morn -
Thy baby, Jesus Christ our Lord,
Where was it he was born?
“Not in a palace glorious,
Not in a silken bed,
But in a humble stable
Did Jesus lay his head”.

*Words: from a French Carol, 15th Century, arr. GL. Music: English trad.
harm. R. Vaughan-Williams 1872-1958*

READING 3: Luke 2: 1-7

CAROL: : Tomorrow shall be my dancing day. (*English trad. arr.
David Willcocks*)

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 the dance:

Sing O 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 the dance:

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 the dance:

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 the dance:

READING 4: That Midnight Hour (by Frederick M Lynk)

CAROL: O little town of Bethlehem (*Words P. Brooks 1835-93; Music Louis Redner 1868. V3 arr. G.L.*)

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 tonight.

O morning stars, together

Proclaim the holy birth,

And praises sing to God the King,

And peace to men on earth;

For Christ is born of Mary,

And gathered all above,

While mortals sleep, the angels keep

Their watch of wondering love.
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.

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!

READING 5: Luke 2: 8-16

HYMN:

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

“Fear not!” said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind.
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

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

Thus spake the seraph and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God on high,
Who thus addressed their song:

“All glory be to God on high,
And to the Earth be peace;
Good will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease!”

Nahum Tate, ca. 1700; first appeared in Tate & Brady's 1700 supplement to their Psalter of 1696. It was the only hymn authorised at that time to be sung in Anglican churches.

READING 6: Matthew 2: 1-11

CAROL: Bethlehem Down

(Words by Bruce Blunt [1899-1967]; music by Peter Warlock [1894-1930])

READING 7: Journey of the Magi (T.S. Eliot),

CAROL: The Three Kings (*Words and music by Peter Cornelius [1824-74], using a chorale by Philipp Nicolai [1556-1608]. This arrangement by Ivor Atkins [1961].*)

Three kings from Persian lands afar,
To Jordan follow the pointing star:
And this the quest of the travellers three,
Where the newborn King of the Jews may be.
Full royal gifts they bear for the King:
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

The star shines out with a steadfast ray:
The kings to Bethlehem make their way,
And there in worship bend the knee,
As Mary's child in her lap they see;
Their royal gifts they show to the King,
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

Thou child of man, lo to Bethlehem
The kings are travelling – travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace
Shall lead thy heart to its resting place,
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring;
Offer thy heart to the infant King.
Offer thy heart!

Choral accompaniment:
How brightly shines the
morning star
With grace and truth from
heaven afar
Our Jesse tree now bloweth.

Of Jacob's stem and David's
line,
For thee, my Bridegroom,
King divine.
My soul with love
o'erfloweth.

Thy word, Jesu, inly feeds us,
Rightly leads us, Life
bestowing.
Praise, O praise such love
o'erflowing.

READING 8: Hebrews 2: 14a, 17; Luke 1: 68-76

HYMN:

Unto us is born a Son, King of quires supernal:
See on earth his life begun, of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ from heaven descending low, comes on earth a
stranger;
Ox and ass their owner know becradled in the manger.

This did Herod sore affray and grievously bewilder.
So he gave the word to slay, and slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild this the Christmas story;
And O that Mary's gentle child might lead us up to glory!

O and A and A and O, cum cantibus in choro,
Let our merry organ go, benedicamus domino.

*Words & melody from Piaie Cantiones, 1582. tr. G.R. Woodward,
arr. David Willcocks)*

CAROL: *Wolcum Yole (Words 14th C., Music : James W. Morgan)*

Wolcum, Yole!, Wolcum be thou hevenè king,
born in one morning, for whom we sall sing!
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,
seintes lefe and dere innocents every one.
Wolcum Twelfth Day both in fere,
Wolcum be ye Stevene and Jon,
Wolcum be ye good Newe Yere.
Wolcum Candelmesse, Quene of bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum be ye that are here,
Wolcum alle and make good cheer,
Wolcum alle another yere, Wolcum,. Wolcum Yole!

READING 9: The Christmas Gospel – please stand John 1: 1-14

HYMN: (*during which a collection will be taken*)

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!*

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!*

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!*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, 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 & melody by J.F. Wade 1711-86 . Descant by G.L.)

COLLECT & BENEDICTION

Holy Jesus, to deliver us from the power of darkness you humbled yourself to be born among us and laid in a manger. Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, and bring us at last to the joyful vision of your beauty, for you are now alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen**

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one

Things earthly and heavenly,

Bestow upon us the fullness of inward peace and goodwill;

And the blessing of God almighty,

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Be upon us and remain with us always. **Amen**

HYMN: 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!'

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 as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.

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

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 men no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.

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

*(Words by C. Wesley 1707-88; Music by Mendelssohn 1809-47.
Descant by David Willcocks).*