



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

The Christmas Carol Service 2020

Introit: 'Up good Christen folk and listen'

Ding-dong, ding:
ding-a-dong-a-ding:
ding-dong, ding-dong:
ding-a-dong-ding.

Up! good Christen folk, and listen
how the merry church bells ring,
and from steeple
bid good people
come adore the new-born King:

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmastide,
bringing gladness,
chasing sadness,
show'ring blessings far and wide.

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
ex Maria Virgine,
in a stable
('tis no fable),
Christus natus hodie.

Text: George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)

Music: from Piae Cantiones, 1582, arranged by G. R. Woodward (1848-1934)

The opening prayer

The prayer ends:

...These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven,
in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying 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.**

Carol: 'Once in royal David's City'

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 mean, 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.

Text: C. F. Alexander (1818-1895)
Music: 'Irby', H. J. Gauntlet (1805-1876)

First lesson: Isaiah 11.1-9 'The righteous reign of the coming king'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God**

Carol: 'Jesus Christ the Apple Tree'

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Text: Collected by Joshua Smith (1760-95)
Music: Elizabeth Poston (1905-87)

Second Lesson: Luke 1.26-38 'The birth of Jesus foretold'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God**

Carol: 'O come all ye faithful'

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 ...

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God in the highest:

O come, let us adore him ...

Yea, Lord we greet thee,
born on Christmas morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him ...

Text: trans. F. Oakeley, W. T. Brooke and others
Music: 18th Century, arranged by David Willcocks (1919-2015)

Third lesson: Luke 2.1-7 'Jesus is born in Bethlehem'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord
All: **Thanks be to God**

Carol: 'The Little Road to Bethlehem'

As I walked down the road at set of sun,
the lambs were coming homewards one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them
along the little road to Bethlehem

Beside an open door as I drew nigh
I heard sweet Mary sing a lullaby.
She sang about the lambs at close of day
and rocked her tiny King among the hay.

Across the air the silver sheepbells rang,
"The lambs are coming home," sweet Mary sang.
"Your star of gold, your star of gold is shining in the sky
So sleep, my little King, go lullaby."

As I walked down the road at set of sun,
the lambs were coming homewards one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them
along the little road to Bethlehem

Text: Margaret Rose (d.1958)
Music: Michael Head (1900-76)

Fourth Lesson: Luke 2.8-16 **'Good news of great joy for all the people'**

Reader: This is the word of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God

Carol: 'The Sussex Carol'

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring:

*News of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful King's birth.
when from our sin he set us free
all for to gain our liberty?*

Then why should men on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad.
Then why should men on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad:

News of great joy news of great mirth ...

When sin departs before his grace
then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing,
all for to see the new born King:

News of great joy, news of great mirth ...

All out of darkness we have light
which made the angels sing this night:
Glory to God and peace to men,
now and forever more, Amen.

Text: Bishop Luke Waddinge (1628-c.91)
Music: trad, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Fifth Lesson: Matthew 2.1-12
'Foreign visitors from Afar'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God

Carol: 'The Nativity Carol'

Born in a stable so bare,
born so long ago,
Born 'neath light of star,
he who loved us so.

*Far away, silent he lay,
born today, your homage pay.
For Christ is born for aye,
born on Christmas Day.*

Cradled by mother so fair,
tender her lullaby.
Over her son so dear,
angel hosts fill the sky.

Far away, silent he lay ...

Wise men from distant far land,
shepherds from starry hills,
worship this babe so rare,
hearts with his warmth he fills.

Far away, silent he lay ...

Love in that stable was born
into our hearts to flow.
Innocent dreaming babe,
make me thy love to know.

Far away, silent he lay ...

Text: John Rutter (b.1945)
Music: John Rutter

Sixth Lesson: John 1.1-14
'The Glory of God is revealed'

Reader: This is the word of the Lord
All: **Thanks be to God**

Carol: 'In the bleak midwinter'

In the bleak midwinter, 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 midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven 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.

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)
Music: Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Sermon

Carol: 'O little town of Bethlehem'

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!

Text: Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Music: 'Forest Green', English traditional Melody, descant by Thomas Armstrong (1898-1994)

The Blessing

May Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one life on earth and life in heaven
fill you with joy and peace this Christmas.
And the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Voluntary

Chorale Prelude on In dulci jubilo (Fantasia), BWV 729
J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Services next term

Thank you for joining us for the Christmas Carol service this year. We are sorry that we could not welcome students and staff to Chapel in person, but we are glad that we could share the service not only with students and staff in College but also with friends and former students of the College around the world, and we wish you well for Christmas and for the new year.

We expect that our first service next term will be an Epiphany Carol Service on Sunday 17 January 2021, and that Choral Evensong will resume from Sunday 24 January onwards.

In the meantime, we hope that you are enjoying our Choral Advent Calendar:
<https://www.univ.ox.ac.uk/news/choral-advent-calendar/>