

THE JOY OF CHRIST'S COMING'

FESTIVAL OF CAROLS



SUNDAY 13th DECEMBER 2020

11:00 am

Compassionate God, bless the people of the world in all their diversity of creeds and cultures – and in their daring to believe that though hatred can disrupt, though hatred can destroy, it can never bind hands stretched out in forgiveness, it can never silence voices that whisper ‘Peace’, it can never corrupt hearts that go on loving. Lord, the way of the crib is fragile and vulnerable, the way of the cross is costly; but we would walk that way. So steer and guide our footsteps until all peoples walk as one, free from fear and living together in your way Lord Jesus. Amen.

Welcome

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.

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.

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.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895) alt.

Lord's Prayer

**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 today 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: 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,
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.*

Attributed to John Francis Wade (1711-1786)
trans. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880)

The first lesson: Micah 5:2-4

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 all the 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.

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) alt.

The second lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Carol – It came upon the midnight clear

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, goodwill to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

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 lonely plains
they bend on heavenly wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet, with the woes of sin and strife,
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angels' strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and man, at war with man, hears not
the love-song which they bring:
oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
and hear the angels sing.

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 send back the song
which now the angels sing!

Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810-1876) alt.

The third lesson: Luke 2:1-7

Carol: Silent Night

Silent night, holy night.
All is calm, all is bright,
round the virgin mother and child;
holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quail at the sight,
glories stream 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 thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace:
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)
trans. John Freeman Young (1820-1885)

The fourth lesson: Luke 2:8-16

Carol: While Shepherds Watched

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 swaddling bands,
and in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace,
goodwill henceforth from heaven to all
begin and never cease.'

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

The fifth lesson: John 1:1-14

Carol: Hark, the herald-angels sing

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 th'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 Emmanuel.

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Hail, the heav'n-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 the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788), George
Whitefield (1714-1770), Martin Madan
(1726-1790) and others, alt.

Blessing