



Christmas Carol Service

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and 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 the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in these villages of Bepton, Heyshott, West Lavington, and Cocking, and the Diocese of Chichester.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those 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 man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are forever one.

May the almighty God bless us with his grace;
Christ give us the joys of everlasting life,
and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of angels bring us all.

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.

And through all His wondrous childhood
He would honor 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.

First Lesson: Isaiah 9.2,6-7

Carol: See Amid the Winter's Snow

See, amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on Earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever blessed morn,
Hail redemption's happy dawn,
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies;
He who, throned in height sublime,
Sits among the cherubim.

Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
What your joyful news today;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?

"As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light:
Angels singing 'Peace On Earth'
Told us of the Saviour's birth."

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

Second 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
porcelain 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 giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive Him still,
the dear Christ enters in.

Third Lesson: Luke 1.26-38

Carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

1

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.

2

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven 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.

3

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.

4

Angels and Archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But only His Mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

5

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.

Fourth Lesson: Luke 2.1-7

Carol: Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright

Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace!
Sleep in heavenly peace!

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake 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!

Fifth Lesson: Luke 2.8-20

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, good will 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 lowly plains
They bend on hovering 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 angel-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 splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Sixth Lesson: Matthew 2.1-12

Carol: The First Nowell the Angel Did Say

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

[Refrain]

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

[Refrain]

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.

[Refrain]

Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

[Refrain]

Seventh Lesson: John 1.1-14

Carol: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn 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 hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
*Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;

hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.
[Refrain]

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 from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
[Refrain]

Prayers

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. **Amen.**

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

O LORD Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee: Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

O LORD, raise up (we pray thee) thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

ALMIGHTY 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 as our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us, we are bold to say:

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: O Come All Ye Faithful

1

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:
[Refrain]

5

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?
[Refrain]

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:
[Refrain]

6

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

4

*Lo! star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer him incense, gold, and
myrrh;
We to the Christ Child
Bring our heart's oblations:
[Refrain]

7

[On Christmas Day]
*Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:
[Refrain]

Blessing

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God almighty...