

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 – 10.30am**

**Service of Lessons and Carols**

*The congregational hymns are unannounced*

Voluntary: i) Prelude, Fugue and Variation  
ii) "Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen"  
iii) "In dulci jubilo"

César Franck  
Brahms  
Dietrich Buxtehude

**Hymn:** Once in Royal David's City

*Irby*

**(v1 Solo, v2 Choir; Congregation vv 3-6)**

*(Solo) 1. 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.*

*(Choir) 2. 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.*

**All: 3. 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.**

**4. 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.**

**5. 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.**

**6. 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.**

### **Prayer and Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father,  
Which art in heaven  
Hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever.  
Amen**

Choir: Past Three A Clock

trad., arr. Charles Wood

First Lesson: **Genesis 1:1-5**

God calls for light

*Alex Bleck*

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

### **We light the fourth Advent candle**

**We respond to God's love with our Offering**  
*(Children invited to help with the Offering)*

Offertory: "Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele"

Sigfrid Karg-Elert

**Prayer**

*The children leave for crèche and Sunday Club*

**Hymn:** 304 O little town of Bethlehem

*Forest Green*

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see you lie !  
Above your deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by ;  
yet in your streets is shining  
the everlasting Light ;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in you tonight.
  
- 2 O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all on earth.  
For Christ is born of Mary ;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.
  
- 3 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.

4. 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.

Second Lesson: **Isaiah 9:2-7** The promise of the birth of Jesus Christ is made  
*Irene Wilson*

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:  
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,  
upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* not increased the joy:  
they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest,  
*and* as *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder,  
the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

5 For every battle of the warrior *is* with confused noise, and garments rolled in  
blood;

but *this* shall be with burning *and* fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder:  
and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,  
The mighty God,  
The everlasting Father,  
The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end,  
upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,  
to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice  
from henceforth even for ever.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Choir: The Truth from Above

trad., arr. Vaughan Williams & M.W.

<sup>26</sup> And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary. <sup>28</sup> And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. <sup>29</sup> And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. <sup>32</sup> He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: <sup>33</sup> and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

<sup>34</sup> Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? <sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For with God nothing shall be impossible. <sup>38</sup> And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Choir: Hail, Blessed Virgin Mary

trad. Italian, arr. Charles Wood

**Hymn:** 296 While humble shepherds watched their flocks *Winchester Old*

- 1        While humble shepherds watched their flocks  
          in Bethlehem's plains by night,  
          an angel sent from heaven appeared,  
          and filled the plains with light.
  
- 2        'Fear not' he said, for sudden dread  
          had seized their troubled mind ;  
          'Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
          to you and all mankind.

- 3       ‘To you in David’s town, this day,  
is born, of David’s line,  
the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord ;  
and this shall be the sign :
- 4       ‘The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling-bands,  
and in a manger laid.’
- 5       Thus spake the seraph ; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God ; and thus  
addressed their joyful song :
- 6       ‘All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace ;  
good will is shown from heaven above  
and never more shall cease.’

Fourth Lesson: **Luke 2:1-20**

Luke tells the story of Jesus’ birth

*Marie Ogilvie*

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. <sup>2</sup> (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) <sup>5</sup> to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. <sup>6</sup> And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. <sup>7</sup> And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup> And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly

host praising God, and saying, <sup>14</sup> Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

<sup>15</sup> And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. <sup>16</sup> And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup> And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Choir: Sleep, Holy Babe!

J B Dykes

**Hymn:** 303 It came upon the midnight clear

*Noel*

- 1        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 you  
          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 blessèd angels sing.

3           But with the woes of sin and strife  
              the world has suffered long ;  
              beneath the angels' hymn have rolled  
              two thousand years of wrong ;  
              and warring humankind hears not  
              the love-song which they bring ;  
              oh, hush the noise and still the strife  
              to hear the angels sing.

4           And you, beneath life's crushing load  
              whose forms are bending low,  
              who toil along the climbing way  
              with painful steps and slow,  
              look now ! for glad and golden hours  
              come swiftly on the wing ;  
              oh, rest beside the weary road,  
              and hear the angels sing.

5           For lo ! the days are hastening on,  
              by prophet bards foretold,  
              when, with the ever-rolling years,  
              still dawns the Age of Gold,  
              when peace shall over all the earth  
              its ancient splendours fling,  
              and all the world give back the song  
              which now the angels sing.

Fifth Lesson:   **Matthew 2:1-12**      The wise men are led by the star to Jesus  
*Mark McInnes*

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. <sup>3</sup> When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. <sup>5</sup> And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, <sup>6</sup> And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.



<sup>7</sup>Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

<sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. <sup>11</sup>And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Choir: In the Bleak Midwinter

Philip Moore

Sixth Lesson: **Christmas**

by Sir John Betjeman

Jennifer Rimer

*The bells of waiting Advent ring,  
The Tortoise stove is lit again  
And lamp-oil light across the night  
Has caught the streaks of winter rain  
In many a stained-glass window sheen  
From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.*

*The holly in the windy hedge  
And round the Manor House the yew  
Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge,  
The altar, font and arch and pew,  
So that the villagers can say  
'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.*

*Provincial Public Houses blaze,  
Corporation tramcars clang,  
On lighted tenements I gaze,  
Where paper decorations hang,  
And bunting in the red Town Hall  
Says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.*

*And London shops on Christmas Eve  
Are strung with silver bells and flowers  
As hurrying clerks the City leave  
To pigeon-haunted classic towers,  
And marbled clouds go scudding by  
The many-steeped London sky.*

*And girls in slacks remember Dad,  
And oafish louts remember Mum,  
And sleepless children's hearts are glad.  
And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'  
Even to shining ones who dwell  
Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.*

*And is it true,  
This most tremendous tale of all,  
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,  
A Baby in an ox's stall ?  
The Maker of the stars and sea  
Become a Child on earth for me ?*

*And is it true ? For if it is,  
No loving fingers tying strings  
Around those tissueed fripperies,  
The sweet and silly Christmas things,  
Bath salts and inexpensive scent  
And hideous tie so kindly meant,*

*No love that in a family dwells,  
No carolling in frosty air,  
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells  
Can with this single Truth compare -  
That God was man in Palestine  
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*

**Hymn:** God rest you merry gentlemen

*God rest you merry*

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born upon this day,  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy!*  
*O tidings of comfort and joy!*

2. From God our Heav'nly Father  
A blessèd angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by name:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy!*  
*O tidings of comfort and joy!*
  
3. The shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoicèd much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
This blessed Babe to find:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy!*  
*O tidings of comfort and joy!*
  
4. But when to Bethlehem they came,  
Whereat this Infant lay,  
They found Him in a manger,  
Where oxen feed on hay;  
His mother Mary kneeling  
Unto the Lord did pray:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy!*  
*O tidings of comfort and joy!*
  
5. Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas  
All others doth deface:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy!*  
*O tidings of comfort and joy!*

Choir: O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

- 1 Good Christians, all rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice ;  
now give heed to what we say,  
Jesus Christ is born today :  
ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today !  
Christ is born today !
- 2 Good Christians, all rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice ;  
now you hear of endless bliss,  
Jesus Christ was born for this :  
he has opened heaven's door,  
and all are blessed for evermore  
Christ was born for this !  
Christ was born for this !
- 3 Good Christians, all rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice ;  
now you need not fear the grave,  
Jesus Christ was born to save,  
calls you one, and calls you all,  
to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save !  
Christ was born to save !

Seventh Lesson: **John 1:1-14**

John tells of the Incarnation

*Very Revd Dr Derek Browning*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>The same was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life; and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. <sup>7</sup>The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. <sup>8</sup>He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. <sup>9</sup>*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world

knew him not. <sup>11</sup> He came unto his own, and his own received him not. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: <sup>13</sup> which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Choir: Christ Was Born on Christmas Day

trad., arr. Herrick Bunney

Prayer

**Hymn:** 301 Hark! The herald angels sing

*Mendelssohn*

- 1 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 hosts proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem'.  
*Hark ! the herald angels sing,  
'Glory to the new-born King'.*
  
- 2 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'.*

3 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 man 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'.*

### **Benediction and Choral Amen**

Choral Amen

Orlando Gibbons

Voluntary: Toccata on "Il est né

Denis Bédard