



Welcome to Carols by the Crib



St Mary's Church, Hampton Poyle

5pm Christmas Eve 2023

Welcome and Prayer

Carol

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.

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;
Where, like stars, his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

Lighting the Christmas
Candles.



First Reading: Isaiah (52.7-10)

The people who 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. 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, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his
government and of peace there shall be no end, upon
the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it
and to establish it with judgement and with justice from
henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts
will perform this. Thanks be to God

Carol

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
o 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.

But 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; –
O 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
Shall come the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth,
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song,
Which now the angels sing.



Second Reading Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her. Thanks be to God

Carol

The angel Gabriel from heaven came
With wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame
All hail said he thou lowly maiden Mary
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

For know a blessed mother thou shalt be
All generations laud and honour thee
Thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head
To me be as it pleaseth God she said
My soul shall laud and magnify his holy
name Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn
And Christian folk throughout the world
will ever say Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Third Reading Luke 2. 1-5

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

Angels from the realms of glory
Wing your flight through all the earth
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth
Gloria In excelsis deo Gloria In excelsis deo

Shepherds, in the fields abiding
Watching o'er your flocks by night
God with man is now residing
Yonder shines the infant light
Gloria In excelsis deo Gloria In excelsis deo

Sages, leave your contemplation
Brighter visions beam afar
Seek the great desire of nations
Ye have seen His natal star
Gloria In excelsis deo Gloria In excelsis deo

Fourth Reading: Luke 2. 5-7

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. Thanks be to God.



Carol

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay;
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes.
I love You, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask You to stay
Close by me forever and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
And fit us for heaven to live with you there

Fifth Reading Luke 2. 8-20

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a

baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.”

When the angels had left them the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. Thanks be to God



Carol

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 spoke 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 highest heaven
begin and never cease!'

Sixth Reading Matthew 2.1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. Thanks be to God



Carol

We three kings of orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain Moor and mountain
Following yonder star

*O star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown Him again
King for ever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign

Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh
Prayer and praising All men raising
Worship Him, God most high

Myrrh is mine
It's bitter perfume breathes
A life of gathering gloom
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying
Sealed in the stone cold tomb

Glorious now behold Him arise
King and God and Sacrifice
Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia
Heaven to earth replies



Seventh Reading: 'A Tale Of Two Gardens'

God gave us all a garden once
And walked with us at eve
That we might know him face to face
With no need to believe.

But we denied and hid from him
Concealing our own shame
Yet he still came to look for us
And call us each by name.

He found us where we hid from him
He clothed us in his grace
But still we turned our backs on him
And would not see his face.

So now he comes to us again
Not as a Lord most high
But weak and helpless as we are
That we might hear him cry.

And he who clothed us in our need
Lies naked in the straw
That we might wrap him in our rags
Whom once we fled in awe.

The strongest comes in weakness now
A stranger to our door
The king forsakes his palaces
And dwells amongst the poor.

And where we hurt he hurts with us
And when we weep he cries
He knows the heart of all our hurts
The inside of our sighs.

He does not look down from above
But gazes up at us
That we might take him in our arms
Who always cradles us.

And if we welcome him again
With open hands and heart
He'll plant his garden deep in us
The end from which we start.

And in that garden there's a tomb
Whose stone is rolled away
Where we and all we've ever loved
Were lowered in the clay.

But Lo! the tomb is empty now
And, clothed in living light,
His ransomed people walk with One
Who came on Christmas night.

So come Lord Jesus, find in me
The child you came to save
Stoop tenderly with wounded hands
And lift me from my grave.

Be with us all Emmanuel
And keep us close and true
Be with us till that Kingdom comes
Where we will be with you.

*Malcolm Guite - contemporary priest and poet. Written in
2022*

Reflection and Prayer:
The 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 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.**

Blessing

God grant you the light in Christmas
which is faith,
The warmth of Christmas
which is love,
The radiance of Christmas
which is purity,
The righteousness of Christmas
which is justice,
The belief in Christmas
which is truth,
And the all of Christmas
which is Christ.

Amen



Carol

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 heav'n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,
Hail th' incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with man with
dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel

Hark the.....

Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n 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.....

*Thank you for your generosity tonight- our retiring collection is
for the continuing work of the church in this village.*

Thank you for Coming Tonight

We Wish You All A Peace-full Christmas

And may you hear the sleigh bells ringing tonight!



(I don't have a photo of Santa as he is a very private person and didn't give me permission to take one - keep your eyes shut tonight if you hear his sleigh bells and don't forget to put out a carrot for those reindeer)

*Photos: HP church Xmas Eve 2022 (Carolyn Castle I think)
Christmas 2022 live nativity event in Kidlington
A home made decoration by Rosemary Meara
And my granddaughter with her Christingle (sorry!)*

Our website is kept up to date. Please do have a look:

Web site www.kidhp.org.uk

And we are active on Facebook:

Kidlington Anglican Churches.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with the clergy at any point - we are here for you and not too busy.

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