



Carol Service

Carol: Once in Royal David's City

Choir 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 the 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.

Please stand

All 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.

C.F. Alexander 1818-1895

Please be seated

Welcome and Opening Prayers

Lord as we gather here this night,
kindle the light of hope within us.
Fill us with the Spirit of Joy
as we prepare to celebrate the Birth of Jesus.
Renew your gift of Peace to our world,
to our country and to our communities.
May Jesus, the light of the world,
bring light, joy, peace, and love
to all those who search in darkness.
Help us to welcome the light of Christ into our lives,
a light that gives us the gift of hope.
We ask this through Christ our Lord

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit
one God now and forever.

All Amen

As we light each Advent candle in turn,
let us remember:

Jesus Christ is the light of the world

All a light no darkness can overcome.

When the shepherds kept watch by night

All your glory shone around them.

Today, your light still scatters the darkness

All and shines throughout the world.

And your glory will transform our broken world

All Your healing love brings peace to all people.

Let us pray together:

All Lord God

Creator and Redeemer of this world

The holy mystery at the heart of life

Kindle in us tonight

The flame of faith

And reveal your loving light among us

**As you did when you came to share your life
with us in Jesus.**

Amen.

Reading 1

Prayer

Almighty and ever living God, you revealed to your servant Isaiah the promise of a child who would bring light and peace to all the nations. Help us to know the fullness of that promise as we share the light and peace of Christ with one another. May your kingly rule of endless tranquillity and justice be our constant inspiration and hope as we pray for the fulfilment of your loving purposes for the whole of creation.

This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Please stand

Carol: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice, rejoice...

O come, Thou rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell Thy people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Rejoice, rejoice...

O come, Thou dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by Thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow's put to flight.

Rejoice, rejoice...

O come, Thou key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice, rejoice...

8th Century Latin. Translated J.M Neale 1818-1866

Please be seated

Reading 2:

Please stand

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 street 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.

Phillips Brooks 1835-1893

Please be seated

Reading 3:

Prayer

Almighty and ever living God,
you revealed to Mary
the good news of your gracious favour.
Help us, as we reflect on this story
of our human nature
being overshadowed by your amazing Spirit,
to be ever attentive to your call and invitation
and, like Mary,
be ever willing to open our hearts
to the work of your glorious presence.
This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Please stand

Carol :The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven came,
his 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 pleases 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!

Please be seated

Reading 4:

Prayer

Almighty and ever living God,
you led Mary and Joseph from Nazareth,
their home-town, to welcome the Christ-child
in a strange place.

Help us, as we remember all those called to journey
in faith and find you in strange places,
to follow the path you set before us,
and to bear in our hearts the gift of your love
to the world throughout our earthly pilgrimage.
This we ask, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Please be seated

Choir Carol

Reading 5:

Please stand

Carol: Silent 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

Reading 6:

Prayer

Almighty and ever living God,
you gave the shepherds a vision of your glory
and invited them to know the joy of the Christ-child.
Help us, as we hasten in our imaginations
to see what has taken place in this story,
to rejoice at this sign of good news and,
like the shepherds,
to share our amazement and wonder
at the glorious things you have done.
This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Choir Carol

Reading 7:

Prayer

Eternal God,
in the stillness of this night
you sent your almighty Word
to pierce the world's darkness
with the light of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Please stand

Carol: Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing

Joy to the Earth, the Saviour reigns
Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders, of His love

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing

Please be seated

Reading 8:

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 heav'n 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!

Closing Prayers

Let us pray

Almighty God,
we have heard with joy once more
the good news of your Son's coming.
Fill the world with your glory
and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Blessing

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children.

All Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.

All Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary
became the God-bearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you and your family
always.

All Amen.

Please stand

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 the 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 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.

Charles Wesley 1707-1788

Go in the peace of Christ
All Thanks be to God

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