



The Chapel *of*
The Transfiguration

A FESTIVAL OF
NINE LESSONS
& CAROLS

Sunday 7th December 2025
6.00 p.m.

About this Service

Most people associated with S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia know that the School was founded in 1851 by James Chapman, first Anglican Bishop of Colombo, on the model of Eton College, Windsor, where he had been a student and later a Fellow. Fewer, however, may know of the School's links to King's College, Cambridge, where Bishop Chapman had been a King's Scholar. It was from King's that Fr Roy Henry Bowyer-Yin later came to us as Chaplain, bringing with him the order for this Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

After training for the priesthood at Cuddesdon, Bowyer-Yin returned to King's as Assistant Chaplain, later serving at Hurstpierpoint School before coming to S. Thomas' at the invitation of Bishop Cecil D. Horsley, taking up duties on Boxing Day 1946. He was determined to strengthen the Chapel's choral tradition, already shaped by Fr T. W. Gilbert, R. B. W. Jayasekera, Fr A. J. Foster and Budd Jansze. His most enduring legacy became the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, first held on 7th December 1947, closely modelled on the King's College service. The Bidding Prayer used then and now is that composed by Dean Eric Milner-White, originator of the King's service in 1918. Reflecting on that first service, Fr Yin wrote in his Chapel Notes that "there was a real atmosphere of devotion and at no time was there any feeling that the service was degenerating into a concert or recital."

In 1962, the year of Fr Yin's departure, one of his pupils, Russel Bartholomeusz, joined the staff and soon became organist and later Choirmaster, continuing his mentor's work for over forty years. Between Fr Yin's leaving and Mr Bartholomeusz's taking charge, the choir was ably trained by Fr Lucian G. B. Fernando. In recognition of his long service, Warden Neville de Alwis appointed Mr Bartholomeusz Precentor of the Chapel in 1997.

Upon his retirement in 2004, his former pupil and past leader of the choir, Mr Vinodh Senadeera became Organist and Choirmaster (later appointed Precentor in 2019), faithfully carrying forward the Festival until his untimely passing in January 2019. Following his death, the then Sub-Warden, Mr Asanka Perera, assumed responsibility for the choir and continued the tradition with dedication up until December 2024.

Now in its 79th year, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols continues to bear witness to the timeless hope of the Incarnation. Today, the choral tradition entrusted to us by those before continues under the direction of Mr Denham Pereira, as the Chapel Choir seeks faithfully to uphold the best of Anglican liturgical worship for generations yet to come.

I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew Him, had Him in their care,
To men He was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there.
And the world's danger.

I saw a stable
Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861–1907)

Please remain silent before the service starts

Music before the service

Choral Prelude 'Wachet Auf' BWV 645

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 599

J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Away in a manger

June Nixon (b.1946)

Vom Himmel Hoch P. 52

Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706)

Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich, BWV 605

J. S. Bach

'Whence is that goodly fragrance' No. 1 *from* 2 carols for Organ

Harrison Oxley (1933–2009)

Music after the service

Carillon Sortie

Henri Mulet (1878–1967)

ORDER OF SERVICE

*The congregation joins in all text printed in **bold***

All stand as the Cross appears from the west end of the Chapel

Processional Carol

Choir only

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.**

Congregation only

**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.**

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1828–95)

Tune: IRBY

Henry Gauntlett (1805–76)

harm. Arthur Henry Mann (1850–1929)

Descant: James O' Donnell (b.1961)

Remain standing. The chaplain gives

Bidding Prayer

BELOVED in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care
and delight to prepare ourselves 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;
and let us make this Chapel glad with our carols of praise:

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world;
for peace and goodwill over all the earth;
for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build,
and especially in this our land.
We give thanks for our Founder and our benefactors,
and we pray also for all those near and dear to us.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart,
let us at this time remember in his name
the poor and the 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 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 for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to
the throne of heaven,
in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

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 trespasses,
As we forgive them that 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.

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.

All sit. The choir sings

Introductory Carol

ON Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
'Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen.'

Words: English, Traditional

Music: English, Traditional
Arranged by Sir Philip Ledger (1937–2012)

*God announces in the Garden of Eden
that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

AND they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 3. 8–15

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

A DAM lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden
Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been;
Ne had never our lady
A-been heavene queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gratias!

Words: 15th cent.

Music: Howard Skempton (b.1947)

*God promises to faithful Abraham
that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

AND the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22. 15–18

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

*Nowell sing we now all and some,
For Rex pacificus¹ is come.*

IN Bethlehem, in that fair city,
A child was born of a maiden free,
That shall a lord and prince be,
A solis ortus cardine².

As the sun shineth through the glass,
So Jesu in his mother was;
Thee to serve now grant us grace,
O lux beata Trinitas⁴.

Children were slain in full great plenty,
Jesu, for the love of thee;
Wherefore their souls saved be,
Hostis Herodis impi³.

Now God is come to worship us;
Now of Mary is born Jesus;
Make we merry amongst us;
Exultet caelum laudibus⁵.

Words: 15th cent.

Music: Elizabeth Maconchy (1907–94)

¹*King of peace*

²*From where the sun arises*

³*Impious Herod, shouldst thou fear*

⁴*O blessed light of the Trinity*

⁵*Let the heavens exult with praises*

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 to-night.

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.

Choir only

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.

Words: Bishop Philip Brooks (1835–93)

Tune: FOREST GREEN
Ralph V. Williams (1872–1958)
Vs. 3 arranged by Sir Philip Ledger
Descant by Thomas Armstrong (1898–1994)

Third Lesson

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

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. 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. 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 judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9. 2, 6, 7

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

THERE is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu:
Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was
Heav'n and earth in little space:
Res miranda. [Wonderful thing]

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three:
Pares forma. [Equal in form]

Then leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyous birth:
Transeamus. [Let us follow]

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:
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,
Comes round 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.

Words: Edmund Sears (1810–76)

Tune: NOEL
Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900)
Descant by John Scott (1956–2015)

Fourth Lesson

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11. 1-4, 6-9

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

දෙව් කුමරු ඉපදුණා බෝ අනගි සුඛ දින
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Words: B. A. Wijesinghe

On this blessed and beautiful day when the Son
of God was born,
Let us all sing with joy.

Glory be to God on high,
And his mercy on all creation.
May we live in unity and love
And grow in harmony.

As the heavenly angels proclaimed and the
shepherds went forth,
Let us also go to worship the Son of God.

As the kings, with their gifts, followed the star,
Let us also go to see the Son of God

Music: B. A. Wijesinghe
Arranged specially for this service by
Harin Amirthanathan (b.1987)

The angel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary.

AND in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 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. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 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: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be seeing I know not a man? 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. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

St Luke 1. 26–35, 38

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

I SAW three ships come sailing in,
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas day in the morning

And what was in those ships all three? ..
Our Saviour Christ and his lady ..
Pray whither sailed those ships all three? ..
O they sailed into Bethlehem ..

And all the bells on earth shall ring ..

And all the Angels in heaven shall sing, ..

And all the souls on earth shall sing, ..

Then let us all rejoice amain!

On Christmas day, on Christmas day,

Then let us all rejoice amain,

On Christmas day in the morning

Words: English, Traditional

Music: English, Traditional
Arranged by Philip Marshall (1921–2005)

All stand to sing

Carol

OF the Father's heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha: from that Fountain,
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.

By his word was all created;
He commanded and 'twas done;
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
All that breathes beneath the sun,
Evermore and evermore.

O how blest that wondrous birthday,
When the Maid the curse retrieved,
Brought to birth mankind's salvation,
By the Holy Ghost conceived;
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
In her loving arms received,
Evermore and evermore.

**Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
Let your joyous anthems ring,
Every tongue his name confessing,
Countless voices answering,
*Evermore and evermore.***

Words: Prudentius (b.348)

Tune: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Melody from 'Piae Cantiones'

Arranged by Sir David Willcocks cbe (1919–2015)

All sit. The Acting Sub-Warden reads

Sixth Lesson

St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

NOW the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

St Matthew 1. 18–23

Thanks be to God.

இல்லாரில் இறைவன் இருக்கின்றார்
நல்லாரின் இதயம் இதையறியும்
சொல்லாமல் வாழ்வில் வருகின்றார்
தள்ளாமல் அவரை அணைத்திடுங்கள்

God lives in the poor
Good hearts recognise him;
He comes unannounced,
Embrace him without rejecting him.

மாளிகையில் அவர் இல்லை
குடிசையில் அவரை கண்டிடுங்கள்
ஏழையிலே பிறந்திருக்கும்
இல்லாரின் தெய்வத்தை தொடர்ந்திடுங்கள்

He is not in the palace;
Find him in the lowly hut.
Follow him the God of the poor;
Who is born in the midst of them.

இருப்போரும், இல்லாரும்
வாழ்வில் பேதம் தானெதற்கு
மண்மீதில் விண்ணரசை
அமைத்திட வேண்டும் உழைத்திடுங்கள்

Why the chasm of the haves and
The have nots in this world;
Come, work to build the
Heavenly kingdom on this earth

Words: The Rev'd Canon Joshua Ratnam (b. 1952)

Music: The Rev'd Canon Joshua Ratnam

An Old Boy reads

Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger

AND there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 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. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 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. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

St Luke 2. 8-16

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

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 first saw 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;
Radiance beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Words: Josef Mohr (1792–1848)

Music: Franz Gruber (1787–1863)
Arranged by Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

All stand to sing

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.**

All lower voices:

**‘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.’**

All upper voices:

**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 men
Begin and never cease.’**

Words: Nahum Tate (1652–1715)

Tune: WINCHESTER OLD
Thomas Este’s Psalter, 1592

All sit. The Acting Warden reads

Eighth Lesson

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 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. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 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. When they 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 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.

St Matthew 2. 1–11

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings

Carol

TOMORROW shall be my dancing day:
I would my true love did so chance
To see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance:

*Sing, O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
This have I done for my true love.*

Then was I born of a virgin pure,
Of her I took fleshly substance;
Thus was I knit to man's nature,
To call my true love to my dance:

In a manger laid and wrapped I was
So very poor this was my chance,
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,
To call my true love to my dance:

Then afterwards baptized I was;
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,
My Father's voice heard from above,
To call my true love to my dance:

Words: English, Traditional

Music: John Gardner (1917–2011)

All stand to sing

Carol

during the singing of this and the next carol a collection will be taken.

This year's collection will be sent to the Board of Social Responsibility of the Diocese of Colombo who are supporting those who have been affected by the recent floods in the country.

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:**

All lower voices **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:**

*Congregation
only* **This star drew nigh to the north-west;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay;**

Choir only Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in his presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense:

**Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of naught,
And with his blood mankind has bought:**

Words: English, Traditional

Music: English, Traditional
Arranged by Sir David Willcocks

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 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: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 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.

St John 1. 1-14

All sing

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 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:**

**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:**

Words: Charles Wesley (1707–88)

Tune: MENDELSSOHN
Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)
Descant by Sir Philip Ledger

All kneel or sit

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 on 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 Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ thy Son who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

CHRIST, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

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:**

Choir only

Child, for us sinners
Poor and in a manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?

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

Words: Latin, 18th century
trans. Frederick Oakeley (1802–80)

Tune: ADESTE FIDELES
J. F. Wade (1711–86) and others
Descant by Sir David Willcocks

Thank you for worshipping with us
Please take this order of service with you to reflect on the readings and carols
and as a reminder of your visit