



A Service of
Lessons and Carols
for Advent & Christmas

3 December 2020

Music before the service:

J.S. Bach, *Chorale Prelude on Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 659)*

Philip Marshall, *Prelude on Forest Green*

Johannes Brahms, *Chorale Prelude on Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen*

ORDER OF SERVICE

All stand as the Choir sing the Introit:

ADAM LAY YBOUNDEN

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond:
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

Nè had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our lady
Abeen heavenè queen.

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

Blessèd be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen,
Deo gracias!

Peter Warlock (1894–1930)

Traditional, 15th century

Remain standing for

THE BIDDING

Beloved in Christ, as we enter, eager and expectant, into this solemn season of Advent, be it our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels: in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and with the Magi adore the Child lying in his Mother's arms.

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 the whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and brotherhood within the Church that Christ came to build, within the dominions of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, within this University and City of Oxford, and in this foundation of Worcester College: And let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the agèd and the little children; and all who know not the loving kindness of God.

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 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:

All join in praying

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 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.

Remain standing for the

HYMN

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.

This is he, whom seer and sibyl
Sang in ages long gone by;
This is he of old revealèd
In the page of prophecy;
Lo! he comes, the promised Saviour;
Let the world his praises cry!
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.

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Lat., Prudentius (348–413)
tr. by R.F. Davis (1866–1937)



All sit.

THE FIRST LESSON: A Child has been born for us
Isaiah 9.2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The Choir sing

IN THE BLEAK MID-WINTER

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.

Our God, heav'n cannot hold him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heav'n 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.

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.

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.

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 can I give him,
Give my heart.

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)



THE SECOND LESSON: The Annunciation St Luke 1.26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

All stand for the

HYMN

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.

And through all his wondrous childhood
 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.

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 meek and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

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

IRBY

Mrs C.F. Alexander (1818—1895)

The Choir sing the

COVENTRY CAROL

*Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
By by, lully, lullay.
Thou little tiny child,
By by, lully, lullay.*

Herod the king, in his raging,
Chargèd he hath this day
His men of might in his own sight
All young children to slay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do
sing, By by, lully, lullay.

That woe is me, poor child, for thee
And ever morn and may
For thy parting neither say nor sing,
By by, lully, lullay.

Traditional

THE THIRD LESSON: The Birth of Jesus
St Luke 2.1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Choir sing

THE CRADLE IN BETHLEHEM

There was no cradle for Jesus
When he was small,
Only a rough wooden manger
In a poor stall;
Yet the baby who lay there so lowly
Was king of us all.

There was no lamp in the stable
That winter night,
Only a shepherd's dim lantern
Gave fitful light;
Yet the star that burn'd o'er the roof tree
Made all Heaven bright.

Roger Quilter (1877–1953)

No man made music for Jesus,
Songs they made none;
Only Heav'n's angels were praising
Father and Son
In a song that will ring down the ages
Till ages are done.

We sing the glory of Jesus
As they sang then.
Soon may the whole earth re-echo
That song again:
Praise and glory to God in the highest,
Good will toward men.

Rodney Bennett (1890–1948)



THE FOURTH LESSON: Shepherds and Angels
St Luke 2.8-16

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the

Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

The Choir sing

BETHLEHEM DOWN

When He is King we will give him the King's gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes, said the young girl to Joseph
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When He is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep Him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

Peter Warlock

Bruce Blunt (1899–1957)



THE FIFTH LESSON: The Incarnation

St John 1.1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him

was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Choir sing

TOMORROW SHALL BE MY DANCING DAY

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.*

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

Then afterwards baptised I was;
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,
My Father's voice heard from above,
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.*

John Gardner (1917–2011)

Anonymous, traditional



Kneel for

THE PRAYERS

ending with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All stand to sing

THE HYMN

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.*

MENDELSSOHN

Charles Wesley (1707–88)
and others

The Chaplain pronounces

THE 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, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Remain standing for the exit of the choir and ministers.



Music after the service:

Leo Sowerby, *Postludium on IN DULCI JUBILO*