



# Advent Carol Service 2024

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December, 5pm

You are welcome to take this order of service home with you if you wish.  
*Before the service starts, the church lights will be extinguished.*

**Organ music before the service:**

*Herr Gott, nun sei gepreiset BWV 601 - J S Bach*

*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645 - J S Bach*

*Prelude on 'This is the truth sent from above' - Rawsthorne*

*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 599 - J S Bach*

*Please stand*

**Choir sings introit inside the West Door: *Matin Responsory - Palestrina***

*I look from afar*

*and lo, I see the pow'r of God coming,*

*and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.*

*Go ye out to meet Him, and say*

*"Tell us, art thou He that should come to reign over thy people Israel?"*

*High and low, rich and poor, one with another,*

*Go ye out to meet him, and say*

*"Are you he that should come?"*

*Hear, O Thou Shepherd of Israel,*

*Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,*

*Tell us, art thou he that should come?*

*Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come,*

*To reign over thy people Israel!*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*

*I look from afar*

*and lo, I see the pow'r of God coming,*

*and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.*

*Go ye out to meet Him, and say*

*"Tell us, art thou He that should come to reign over thy people Israel?"*

**Bidding Prayer**

*Please sit or kneel*

Minister: In the name of God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and made a place for us in the kingdom of his beloved Son, we welcome you: grace to you and peace.

As we meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's kingdom, we hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us – how that when we were far off, he met us in his Son and brought us home; how he humbled himself to take our human nature – sharing in our joys and sorrows – and that we might share his divine glory.

Let us then so celebrate this coming with our carols and hymns of praise, that our lives may be charged with his life; that we may bear witness to his glory and so bring light to those who sit in darkness.

So first we pray for those among whom the Christ was born: the poor and helpless, the aged and young children; the cold, the hungry and the homeless; the victims of poverty, injustice and oppression, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; those in despair or in the shadow of death.

Then, as we hear again the message of peace on earth and goodwill among all his people, we pray for the leaders of the nations, that all may be inspired to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace the world over. And that we may bear true witness to this hope in a divided world, we pray for the peace and unity of Christ's Body, the Church universal, that the whole earth may live to praise his name.

Finally, as we rejoice with the saints in heaven and on earth, we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we offer up our prayers for the coming of his kingdom, in the words he himself has taught us, saying:

**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.**

And may the Lord when he comes find us watching and waiting,  
now and at all times. **Amen**

**Choir:** *Creator of the stars of night Please remain seated  
(During this anthem, the congregation's candles are to be lit)*

**First Reading: Carrying a candle by Jan Sutch Pritchard**

Carrying a candle from one little place of shelter  
to another is an act of love.  
To move through the huge  
and hungry darkness, step by step,  
against the invisible wind  
that blows for ever around the world,  
carrying a candle,  
is an act of foolhardy hope.  
Surely it will be blown out:  
the wind is contemptuous,  
the darkness cannot comprehend it.  
How much light can this tiny flame shed  
on all the great issues of the day?  
It is as helpless as a newborn child.  
Look how the human hand, that cradles it, has become translucent:  
fragile and beautiful; foolish and loving.  
Step by step.  
The wind is stronger than this hand,  
and the darkness infinite  
around this tiny here-and-now flame  
that wavers, but keeps burning:  
carried with such care  
through an uncaring world  
from one little place of shelter to another.  
An act of love.  
The light shines in the darkness  
and the darkness can never put it out.

**Hymn: Wake, O wake! With tidings thrilling**  
*(During this hymn, the choir will process to the crossing)*

*Please stand*

Wake, O wake! with tidings thrilling  
The watchmen all the air are filling,  
    Arise, Jerusalem, arise!  
Midnight strikes! No more delaying,  
'The hour has come!' we hear them saying.  
    'Where are ye all, ye virgins wise?  
    The Bridegroom comes in sight,  
    raise high your torches bright!'  
    Alleluya!

The wedding song swells loud and strong:  
Go forth and join the festal throng.

Zion hears the watchmen shouting,  
Her heart leaps up with joy undoubting,  
    She stands and waits with eager eyes;  
See her Friend from heaven descending,  
Adorned with truth and grace unending!  
    Her light burns clear, her star doth rise.  
    Now come, thou precious Crown,  
    Lord Jesus, God's own Son!  
    Hosanna!

Let us prepare to follow there,  
Where in thy supper we may share.

Every soul in thee rejoices;  
From earth and from angelic voices  
    Be glory given to thee alone!  
Now the gates of pearl receive us,  
Thy presence never more shall leave us,  
    We stand with Angels round thy throne.  
    Earth cannot give below  
    The bliss thou dost bestow.  
    Alleluya!

Grant us to raise, to length of days,  
The triumph-chorus of thy praise.

*Wachet auf!*

*Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608)*

*Translated F.C. Burkitt (1864-1935)*

**Second Reading: Psalm 118.19-29**  
**Open to me the gates of righteousness**

*Please sit*

Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.  
This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.  
I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.  
The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.  
This is the LORD's doing;  
it is marvellous in our eyes.  
This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!  
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.  
We bless you from the house of the LORD.  
The LORD is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with  
branches, up to the horns of the altar.  
You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God; I will extol you.  
O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

**Choir:** *People look east – Farjeon arr. Shaw*

*Please remain seated*

**Hymn: Hark the glad sound**

*Please stand*

*(During this hymn the Choir will proceed to the front of the nave)*

**Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes,  
The Saviour promised long!  
Let every heart prepare a throne  
And every voice a song.**

He comes the prisoners to release,  
In Satan's bondage held;  
The gates of brass before him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,  
The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of his grace,  
Enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heaven's eternal arches ring  
With thy beloved name.

**Third Reading: Isaiah 9.2,6,7**

*Please sit*

**The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.**

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.

Great will be his authority,  
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 onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Choir:** *O radiant dawn - Macmillan*

*Please remain seated*

**Hymn: O come, O come, Emmanuel**

*Please stand*

*(During this hymn the lights will be gradually switched on; the congregation are asked to start extinguishing their candles after the first verse.)*

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
redeem thy captive Israel,  
that into exile drear is gone,  
far from the face of God's dear Son:  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, thou Branch of Jesse! Draw  
the quarry from the lion's claw;  
from the dread caverns of the grave,  
from nether hell, thy people save.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!  
pour on our souls thy healing light;  
Dispel the long night's lingering gloom,  
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, thou Lord of David's key!  
the royal door fling wide and free;  
safeguard for us the heavenward road,  
and bar the way to death's abode.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, O come, Adonai,  
Who in thy glorious majesty  
From that high mountain, clothed with awe,  
Gavest thy folk the elder law.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

*Words: Advent Antiphons; Tune: Veni Emmanuel*



**Fourth Reading: Advent Calendar by Rowan Williams**

*Please sit*

He will come like last leaf's fall.  
One night when the November wind  
has flayed the trees to the bone, and earth  
wakes choking on the mould,  
the soft shroud's folding.

He will come like frost.  
One morning when the shrinking earth  
opens on mist, to find itself  
arrested in the net  
of alien, sword-set beauty.

He will come like dark.  
One evening when the bursting red  
December sun draws up the sheet  
and penny-masks its eye to yield  
the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come,  
will come like crying in the night,  
like blood, like breaking,  
as the earth writhes to toss him free.  
He will come like child.

**Choir:** *Gaudete Omnes – Hieronymus Praetorius*

*Please remain seated.*

*Gaudete omnes, et laetamini,  
quia ecce, desideratus advenit.  
Introite in conspectu eius in exultatione.  
Scitote quoniam ipse est expectatio nostra. Alleluia!*

*Rejoice and be glad, all of you  
for behold he for whom you longed comes.  
Enter into his presence with singing.  
Know that he is our hope. Alleluia.*

**Fifth Reading: Isaiah 7.10-15**

*Please sit*

**Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son.**

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,

‘Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.’ But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.’

Then Isaiah said, ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also?’

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.

He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

**Hymn: Hills of the north rejoice**

*Please stand*

**Hills of the North, rejoice,  
Echoing songs arise,  
Hail with united voice  
Him who made earth and skies.  
Christ comes in righteousness and love,  
He brings salvation from above.**

**Isles of the Southern seas,  
Sing to the listening earth,  
Carry on every breeze  
Hope of a world's new birth:  
In Christ shall all be made anew,  
His word is sure, his promise true.**

**Lands of the East, arise,  
He is your brightest morn,  
Greet him with joyous eyes,  
Praise shall his path adorn:  
The God whom you have longed to know  
In Christ draws near, and calls you now.**

**Shores of the utmost West,  
Lands of the setting sun,  
Welcome the heavenly guest  
In whom the dawn has come:  
He brings a never-ending light  
Who triumphed o'er our darkest night.**

**Shout, as you journey on,  
Songs be in every mouth,  
Lo, from the North they come,  
From East and West and South:  
In Jesus all shall find their rest,  
In him the sons of earth be blest.**

*C. E. Oakley (1832-65); Tune : Little Cornard - Martin Shaw (1832-1958)*

**Sixth Reading: Matthew 1.18-25**  
**An angel tells Joseph of the coming birth of Jesus**

*Please sit*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us.'

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Choir: Magnificat from Gloucester Service – Howells**

*My soul doth magnify the Lord :  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

*For he hath regarded :  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.*

*For behold, from henceforth :  
all generations shall call me blessed.*

*For he that is mighty hath magnified me :  
and holy is his Name.*

*And his mercy is on them that fear him :  
throughout all generations.*

*He hath shewed strength with his arm :  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat :  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things :  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :  
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever. Luke 1.46-55  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :  
world without end. Amen.*

**Hymn: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus**

*Please stand*

**Come, thou long expected Jesus  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's Strength and Consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us for ever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

*Words: Charles Wesley;  
Tune: Cross of Jesus*

**Seventh Reading: God of Waiting by Jan Berry**

*Please sit*

God of birth,  
we watch in fear for your coming;  
scared of the pain and risk,  
the struggle of new life emerging  
and of our own capacity to bear it.  
God of waiting, wait with us.

God of the future,  
we watch in hope for your coming:  
anticipating an unknown future,  
uncertain of the unnamed reality,  
not sure of the form it will take.  
God of waiting, wait with us.

God of celebration,  
we watch in joy for your coming;  
expectant with promises of freedom,  
eager for new possibilities,  
delighting in the gift of birth.  
God of waiting, wait with us.

**Choir:** E'en so Lord Jesus - Manz

*Please remain seated*

**Intercessions**

*Please sit or kneel*

Watchful at all times, let us pray for strength to stand with confidence before our Maker and Redeemer.

That God may bring in his kingdom with justice and mercy,  
let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That God may establish among the nations his sceptre of righteousness, let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures and recognise him in the breaking of the bread,  
let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That God may bind up the broken-hearted, restore the sick and raise up all who have fallen,  
let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That the light of God's coming may dawn on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death,  
let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That, with all the saints in light, we may shine forth as lights for the world, let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

We commend ourselves and all for whom we pray to the mercy and protection of our heavenly Father:

*Silence is kept.*

Almighty God, as your blessed Son Jesus Christ first came to seek and to save the lost; so may he come again to find in us the completion of his redeeming work; for he is now alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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.**

## Concluding Responses

*Please stand*

The night is far spent, the day is at hand.  
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness  
and put on the armour of light.

Come, O Lord, comfort the soul of your servant.  
**Even so, Lord, come.**

O Lord Jesus Christ, come  
**at evening time, with light,**

and in the morning, with your glory,  
**to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

He who receives our prayers says:  
Surely I come quickly.  
I am the root and offspring of David,  
I am the bright and morning star.  
**Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

**Final Hymn: Lo he comes with clouds descending!**

**Lo! He comes with clouds descending,  
once for favoured sinners slain;  
thousand thousand saints attending,  
swell the triumph of his train:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
God appears, on earth to reign.**

**Every eye shall now behold him  
robed in dreadful majesty;  
those who set at naught and sold him,  
pierced and nailed him to the tree,  
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,  
shall the true Messiah see.**

**Those dear tokens of his passion  
still his dazzling body bears;  
cause of endless exultation  
to his ransomed worshippers;  
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture  
gaze we on those glorious scars!**

[continued...]

**Yea, Amen! let all adore thee,  
high on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own;  
O come quickly, O come quickly, O come quickly,  
Alleluia, come, Lord, come!**

*Words: Charles Wesley; Tune: Helmsley*

## **The Blessing**

**Minister:** Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon us, scatter the darkness from before our path, and make us ready to meet him when he comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always.

**All:** Amen.

**Organ voluntary: Toccata in G – Dubois**

No collection will be taken during this service but donations in support of our ministry and mission are gratefully received.



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