



THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY

A Festival of Carols



Sunday 15th December 2024

5.30pm

Nave

Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Service

This service is designed to bring the story of the Nativity to people of all ages, and to gather us together to sing carols as we prepare for the coming of Our Lord at Christmas.

Our readers represent the many different departments that make up the vibrant life of this cathedral community.

During the singing of carols, the Nativity Tableau will be built up in front of the Nave Altar, with the participants moving from the West End of the Cathedral.

Cover Image: The Nativity, from the North Quire Aisle, Canterbury Cathedral

Livestreaming

This service will be livestreamed and you may be seen on camera, although we will not deliberately take any close-ups of the congregation.

By attending you agree to be seen in this way.

If you have any concerns please speak to a member of the clergy.



As part of our commitment to the care of the environment in our world, this Order of Service is printed on unbleached 100% recycled paper



Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off. No form of visual or sound recording, or any form of photography, is permitted during Services. Thank you for your co-operation.



An induction loop system for the hard of hearing is installed in the Cathedral. Hearing aid users should adjust their aid to T.



Large print orders of service are available from the stewards and virgers. Please ask.

We somewhat mislead people by suggesting that the season of Advent prepares us for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. It is truer to say that the season prepares us for the second coming of Christ. The scriptures speak of Christ's return to complete the work he has begun and that is to be 'very soon' because the new life of the Kingdom has already been inaugurated. The creed and other texts relate his second coming to his merciful but comprehensive judgement of the world – 'he will come again to judge the living and the dead'. So the major theme to Advent is judgement.

Judgement has become pejorative for many. We confuse Jesus saying not to be judgemental with our deep need for judgement. This is about an honest reckoning about the ways we both manage to live lovingly and gratefully and the ways we have failed. For some personalities or for some with certain kinds of mental illness, this can lead to an obsessiveness with failure and sin. However, there is also a proper, healthy accountability needed by which we can grow and learn and turn in a different direction. This is repentance.

I could begin to list how that Godly judgement impacts how we see others, especially the little, the least and the lost. However, this Advent in the church we are very aware of the judgement which sits facing us with respect to our failures in safeguarding and repeated patterns of abuse. This abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual and incidences of cruel deprivation or harshness leading to long term trauma. The Makin review of the activity of John Smyth makes sickening reading and has led to Archbishop Justin resigning.

Our practices and processes are much improved but they all rely on human consistency and diligence. This cathedral has cases of historic abuse which are horrifying. Alarmingly, I still encounter people who can't see the point of safeguarding or don't see it has anything to do with them. Whilst some of us carry particular responsibility, the responsibility and hence the judgement falls on us all. If anyone ever has any concern email safeguarding@canterbury-cathedral.org or speak to one of us.

This Advent I invite us to welcome the judgement of God and to welcome the judgement of those who have been hurt or harmed by our church. Such judgement is a gift if and when it helps us learn and find the ways that lead to healing and life in all its fullness. As the Transport for London motto now says 'see it, say it, sort it'.

Dean David

ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome and Introduction

Introit People look East

People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Words: Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965)

Music: Trad., arr. Roger Hemingway (b. 1951)

Stand to sing

Processional 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 th'angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem'.
Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.

²Christ, 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 Godhead see,
Hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.

³Hail the heav'n-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.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88) and others

Tune: MENDELSSOHN

Sit

Bidding

At Christmas time we delight again to hear the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the song of the angels, the surprise of the shepherds, and their joy as they found Jesus in the manger.

But lest we forget he was born to poverty, we remember at this season all who are hungry or cold.

And lest we forget he became a refugee, we remember now the stranger and the lonely among us.

And lest we forget he felt the pain of life and death, we remember now those who are ill, or anxious, or bereaved.

And because we know he came for our salvation, let us in heart and mind go once again to Bethlehem, to hear the message of the angels and worship afresh the Son of God.

First Reading Read by Fred McCormack, Head Constable

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.'

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.

Remain seated as the choir sings

Angelus ad Virginem

Angelus ad Virginem
Subintrans in conclave,
Virginis formidinem
Demulcens, inquit: Ave!
Ave regina virginum;
Caeli terraeque Dominum
Concipies
Et paries intacta
Salutem hominum;
Tu porta caeli facta,
Medela criminum.

Quomodo conciperem
Quae virum non cognovi?
Qualiter infringerem
Quod firma mente vovi?
Spiritus Sancti gratia
Perficiet haec omnia;
Ne timeas,
Sed gaudeas, segura
Quod castimonia
Manebit in te pura
Dei potentia.

Ad haec virgo nobilis
Respondens inquit ei:
Ancilla sum humilis
Omnipotentis Dei.
Tibi caelesti nuntio,
Tanti secreti conscio,
Consentiens,
Et cupiens videre
Factum quod audio;
Parata sum parere,
Dei consilio.

Eia mater Domini,
Quae pacem reddidisti
Angelis et homini,
Cum Christum genuisti:
Tuum exora filium
Ut se nobis propitium
Exhibeat, Et deleat peccata:
Praestans auxilium
Vita frui beata Post hoc exsilium.
Deo Gratias.

Words: Anonymous 13th century,
tr Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89)

*Gabriel, from heaven's king
Sent to the maiden sweet,
Brought to her blissful tiding
And fair 'gan her to greet.
'Hail be thou, full of grace aright!
For so God's Son, the heaven's light,
Loves man, that He
a man will be and take
Flesh of thee, maiden bright,
Mankind free for to make
Of sin and devil's might.'*

*Gently to him gave answer
The gentle maiden then:
'And in what wise should I bear
Child, that know not man?'
The angel said: 'O dread thee nought.
'Tis through the Holy Ghost that wrought
Shall be this thing
whereof tidings I bring:
Lost mankind shall be bought
By thy sweet childbearing,
And back from sorrow brought.*

*When the maiden understood
And the angel's words had heard,
Mildly, of her own mild mood,
The angel she answered:
'Our Lord His handmaiden, I wis,
I am, that here above us is:
And touching me
fulfilled be thy saw;
That I, since His will is,
Be, out of nature's law
A maid with mother's bliss.'*

*Filled full of charity,
Thou matchless maiden-mother,
Pray for us to him that He
For thy love above other,
Away our sin and guilt should take,
And clean of every stain us make
And heaven's bliss, when our time is to die,
Would give us for thy sake;
With grace to serve him by
Till He to us him take.*

Music: 13th century
Arr. Carter & Rutter

Sit

Third Reading Read by Emma Clarke, Events Manager

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 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.

Remain seated as the choir sings

The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing woolly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice!
Little Lamb who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb I'll tell thee!
He is callèd by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek and he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee!

Words: William Blake (1757-1827)

Music: John Tavener (1944-2013)

Fourth Reading Read by Sarah Fellows, Stained Glass Conservator

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.

Stand to sing



Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round the virgin and her child:
holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace;
sleep in heavenly peace!

²Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quail at the sight,
glory streams from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing 'Alleluia,
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born!'

³Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light:
radiant beams your holy face
with the dawn of saving grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)
Tr. John Freeman Young (1820-85)

Tune: STILLE NACHT

AM 84

Sit

Fifth Reading Read by Joel Hopkinson, Head of Estates and Fabric

It's kind of difficult to explain, Mr Cohen...and I can well understand why you're angry...I mean to say...I would be angry too if I were in your position.

I know I've only been working with you for a week, but I can assure you it's not the kind of things I do often. I always stay on the job.

But what I said it perfectly true...you can ask Larry or Samuel...admittedly, it does seem a bit incredible...

I mean there were noises in the sky...musical noises, and we did go to the village...just the three of us, and...and there was a baby...a boy...and we weren't drunk...just a bit emotional.

OK...that doesn't explain where the sheep got to. And I know it's highly unusual for Goldberg the butcher to be selling lamb at bargain prices.

But, Mr Cohen, there are some things in life more important than sheep...

No, I don't want to go into the priesthood. I want to be a shepherd. But shepherds can believe in God too, can't they?

Stand to sing



While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

²'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
'glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.

³'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:

⁴'the heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'

⁵Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

⁶'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease.'

Words: Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Tune: WINCHESTER OLD

AM 89i

Sit

Sixth Reading Read by Richard Moppett, Lodge/ISC General Manager

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.'

'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

They set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house,

they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Stand to sing



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.*

³Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship him, God most high:

⁴Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb:

²Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
Gold I bring to crown him again,
King for ever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign:

⁵Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and sacrifice.
Heaven sings: 'Alleluia';
'Alleluia.' the earth replies:

Words: E J Hopkins (1818-1901)

Tune: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

AM 105

Sit

Seventh Reading Read by Helen De La Haye, Schools' Department

This was the moment when Before
Turned into After, and the future's
Uninvented timekeepers presented arms.
This was the moment when nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the earth.
This was the moment when even energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote provinces.
And this was the moment
When a few farm workers and three
Members of an obscure Persian sect
Walked haphazard by starlight straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.

Stand to sing



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 tonight.

²O 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 wond'ring love.

³O 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: Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Tune: FOREST GREEN

Sit or kneel

Jesus, whose mother was Mary:
we pray for all families, especially those who are in need and who find
Christmas a difficult time.
Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, cradled in a manger:
we pray for all those who have no home, or who have had to flee from
their homes through violence or danger.
Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, sharing the stable with the animals:
we pray for all of your creation, that we may care for all you have made.
Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, worshipped by shepherds and kings:
we pray for all the nations of the world, especially where there is war,
natural disaster or living with challenging conditions.
Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, our Emmanuel:

we pray for all those in need: for all who will spend Christmas in danger or on their own.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Remain seated or kneeling as we sing this carol as a prayer for all children who need to know that Jesus is near to them tonight. The first verse will be sung by the choir and children only.

*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 thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.

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

Words: Anon.

Tune: CRADLE SONG

As our Saviour Jesus taught us, so we pray:

**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.**

Stand to sing



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.*

²God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not
the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:

³Child, for us sinners
Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee,
with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?

⁴Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens
of heaven above:
'Glory to God
In the highest':

Words: Latin 18th century
Tr F Oakeley (1802-80) and others

Tune: ADESTE FIDELES

Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Remain standing as the choir and clergy depart

Organ Voluntary

At the end of the service, there will be retiring collection for the work of the Cathedral. Please be generous. If you would prefer to give electronically, please use the QR code.



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