

Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



A Service of Lessons and Carols Sunday 13th December 2020 Led by Revd Natasha

Carol 1: It came upon a midnight clear

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.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
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.

Welcome and prayer

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service, we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of carols.

As we gather in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world;

for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognise their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom, and peace everywhere;

for all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love and all who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:

The Lord's prayer

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.

Lesson One:

Isaiah 9. 2, 6-7 Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold

Ann Sibley

Carol 2: Hills of the north rejoice

Hills of the North, rejoice,
Echoing songs arise
Hail with united voice
Him who made earth and skies,
He 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.

Lesson Two:

Luke 1.v26-35 & v38 The angel Gabriel speaks to the virgin Mary

Jennifer Pickering

Carol 3: The angel Gabriel from heaven came

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
With wings as drifted snow, his eyes as
flame.
"All hail," said he, "O 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 God's
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!

Lesson Three:

Luke 2. 1-7 Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

Ken Morris

Carol 4: 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 streets 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 all on earth! For Christ is
born of Mary
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
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!

Lesson Four:

Luke 2. 8-14 The shepherds go to the manger.

Julie Cawood

Carol 5: Hark the herald angels sing

Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn 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 newborn King!

Christ 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 the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n 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 newborn King!

Lesson Five:

Luke 2.15-20 Shepherd's find a Messiah

Janet Cottrell

Carol 6: Go tell it on the mountain

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Saviour's birth.

While shepherds kept their watching
over silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens,
there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain...

Down in a lowly manger
our humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation,
that blessed Christmas morn.

Go, tell it on the mountain...

Go, tell it on the mountain...

Collect for the 3rd Sunday in Advent

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lesson Six:

John 1. 1-14 The word becomes flesh and dwells with us.

Richard Beckingsale

Carol 7: Joy to the world

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns;
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains

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.

Address:

Revd Natasha

Reflective Carol 8: Coventry Carol

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child,
Bye bye, lully, lullay.
Thou little tiny child,
Bye bye, lully, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do
sing,
“Bye bye, 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.

That woe is me, poor child, for thee
And ever mourn and may
For thy parting neither say nor sing,
“Bye bye, lully, lullay.”

Prayers and blessing

Hidden God, we long for your coming.
We are restless to know your presence with us.
We will wait and watch – awake each day to the signs of your arriving. Amen.

May God himself, the God of peace,
make you perfect and holy,
and keep you safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body,
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;
and the blessing of God almighty
Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and ever more. Amen.

Carol 9: 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.....

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..

Thank you for joining us for Lessons and Carols today