

St Andrew's with Castle Gate URC
Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
Sunday 20th December 2020



The theme of our Nine Lessons and Carols Service is
'Familiarity at Christmas'.

We hope some of your favourite carols are included.

Worship will proceed without announcement.

CAROL Once in Royal David's City

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.

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.

Cecil Francis Alexander (1818-95)

Welcome and Notices

The lighting of the advent candles

Our charity this year is the Nottinghamshire
Hospice



OPENING PRAYERS

Gracious God, we come to hear the glorious message of this season, the glad tidings of great joy; ever old and ever new. We come to recall the faith of Mary, the commitment of Joseph, the response of the shepherds, the pilgrimage of the wise men, their experience of that life-changing day in Bethlehem. But it is not just their story of which this season speaks; it is our story too! A Saviour has been born to us, who is Christ the Lord.

Gracious God, we thank you for this time, this season which speaks so powerfully of your love, which reveals so wonderfully your purposes for the world, and which demonstrates so clearly your grace. This is a time for praise, a time for joy, a time for thanksgiving, a time for us. A Saviour has been born to us, who is Christ the Lord.

We say together the prayer that Jesus himself taught us:

**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,**

**Lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, forever and ever.**

Amen.

CHOIR

Of the fathers heart begotten

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.

He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
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.

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

Sing, ye heights of heav'n, 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.

Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-
405)

Trans. Roby Furley Davis (1866-1937)

READING The prophet foretells the coming of a
Saviour

Isaiah 9, verses 2, 6 & 7

CAROL It came upon the 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, goodwill to men,
From heav'n'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 hov'ring 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 send back the song
 Which now the angels sing.

E.H Sears (1810-76)

READING The prophet foretells the coming of the
 Prince of Peace Isaiah 11, verses 1-9

CHOIR Gabriel's Message,

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
 His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
 "All hail," said he, "Thou lowly maiden Mary,
 most highly favoured lady."

Gloria!

"For known a blessed Mother thou shall be,
 all generations laud and honour thee,
 thy Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
 most highly favoured lady."

Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
 "To me be as it pleaseth God," she said.
 "My soul shall laud and magnify His holy
 name."

Most highly favoured lady.

Gloria!

Of her, Immanuel 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!

Basque Carol

Para. S Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

READING The Angel Gabriel greets the Virgin Mary
 Luke 1, verses 26-38

CAROL Angels from the realms of glory

Angels from the realms of glory,
 Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 Ye who sang creation's story
 Now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
 Watching o'er your flocks by night,
 God with you is now residing;
 Yonder shines the Infant Light:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of Nations;
Ye have seen His natal star:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear;
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

James Montgomery (1771-1854)

READING Mary and Joseph
Matthew 1, verses 18-24

CAROL 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 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.

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!

Bishop Phillips Brookes (1835-93)

READING The birth of Jesus in the manger
Luke 2, verses 1-7

Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
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 midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

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 I can I give Him
Give my heart.

Christine Rossetti (1830-94)

READING Reflection: Familiarity at Christmas

CHOIR The First Noel, Pachelbel's Canon
Arr. Michael Clawson

READING John unfolds the mystery of the
Incarnation
John 1, verses 1-5 and 10-14

BLESSING

Almighty and Eternal God, may your light
shine anew in our world, bringing hope,
healing, joy and renewal. May we play our
part in sharing that light through the faith
we proclaim, the love that we offer and
the people we are. May you be born in our
hearts and in our souls in a new way this
Christmas.

**And may the blessing of Almighty
God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be
with us all and with all those whom
we love and cherish, this day and for
evermore.
Amen.**

CAROL 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,
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

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,
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

*Latin 18th cent., possibly J F Wade (c 1711-86)
Tr. F Oakeley (1802-80), W T Brooke and
others*

*Minister: Rev Chris Ford
Choir Director: Phil Hodgson
Organist: Gemma Marshall*

CCL114191



St Andrew's with Castle Gate
United Reformed Church, Nottingham

Living God's love through faith and action

Find out more at:

www.standrewswithcastlegate.org.uk

 **St Andrew's with Castle Gate United Reformed Church**