

wantage parish

**Lessons
and Carols
by Candlelight**

Sunday 22 December 2024

7pm

Carols by Candlelight

'Be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels.' —Eric Milner White

This Service of Lessons and Carols is inspired by that developed at Truro Cathedral in the 1870s and popularised by King's College Cambridge.

Please join in with the carols and the words in bold. It is customary to stand when singing, and for the blessing, but please do not feel obliged to do so. Whether standing or sitting, please take care with lit candles!

The Christmas Appeal this year is for

- **BeSpace (providing spirituality resources for local schools)**
- **Sobell House Hospice**
- **British Red Cross Gaza Appeal**

We welcome donations to these causes on your way out, which you can give by using the contactless donation point or the cash baskets.

Please be aware that Wantage Parish may use photos and videos from this event for communication and publicity purposes. For any queries, please contact our Parish Administrator (administrator@wantageparish.com).

This booklet is yours to keep.

Please stand when the bell rings. Candles are lit after the Ministers have entered.

Carol: Once in royal David's city

solo:

1 *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.*

choir:

2 *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.*

3 **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.**

4 **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.**

5 **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.**

6 **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.**

words: CF Alexander; music: HJ Gauntlett and AH Mann

The Vicar introduces the service and says the opening prayer.

Reading: Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6, 9

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

Anthem: 'People, look east' by John Ridgway

sung by the Choir

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.

Angels, announce to man and beast
Him who cometh from the east.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today:
Love the Lord is on the way.

words: Eleanor Farjeon

Reading: Micah 5:2-4

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labour has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

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 the 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 wond'rous 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.**

words: Phillips Brooks; music: trad., arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Reading: Luke 1:26–33

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.'

Anthem: 'I saw a fair maiden' by Peter Warlock

sung by the Choir

I saw a fair maiden sitten and sing:
She lulled a little child, a sweetë lording.

*Lullay, mine liking, my dear son, my sweeting;
Lullay, my dear heart, mine own dear darling.*

That eternal lord is he that made allë thing;
Of allë lordis he is Lord, of allë kingës King.

There was mickle melody at that childës birth,
All that were in Heaven's bliss they made mickle mirth.

Angelys bright they sung that night and saiden to that child
'Blessed be thou and so be she that is both meek and mild.'

Pray we now to that Child, and to his mother dear,
Grant them his blessing that now maken cheer.

*Lullay, mine liking, my dear son, my sweeting;
Lullay, my dear heart, mine own dear darling.*

words: medieval English

Reading: 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.

Anthem: 'Dormi Jesu' by David Cooper

sung by the Choir

Dormi, Jesu! Mater ridet
Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu! Blandule!
Si non dormis, Mater plorat,
Inter fila cantans orat,
Blande, veni, somnule.

*Sleep, Jesus! Mother smiles
Who sees such sweet sleep,
Sleep, Jesus, gentling!
If you sleep not, mother weeps
While she spins, in song she prays,
Come, gentle little sleep.*

words: Hieronymus Wierix

Reading: 'Noel' by J.R.R. Tolkien

Grim was the world and grey last night:
The moon and stars were fled,
The hall was dark without song or light,
The fires were fallen dead.
The wind in the trees was like to the sea,
And over the mountains' teeth
It whistled bitter-cold and free,
As a sword leapt from its sheath.

The lord of snows upreared his head;
His mantle long and pale
Upon the bitter blast was spread
And hung o'er hill and dale.
The world was blind,
The boughs were bent,
All ways and paths were wild:
Then the veil of cloud apart was rent,
And here was born a Child.

The ancient dome of heaven sheer
Was pricked with distant light;
A star came shining white and clear
Alone above the night.
In the dale of dark in that hour of birth
One voice on a sudden sang:
Then all the bells in Heaven and Earth
Together at midnight rang.

Mary sang in this world below:
They heard her song arise
O'er mist and over mountain snow
To the walls of Paradise,
And the tongue of many bells was stirred
in Heaven's towers to ring
When the voice of mortal maid was heard,
That was mother of Heaven's King.

Glad is the world and fair this night
With stars about its head,
And the hall is filled with laughter and light,
And fires are burning red.
The bells of Paradise now ring
With bells of Christendom,
And Gloria, Gloria we will sing
That God on earth is come.

Carol: In the bleak midwinter

**In the bleak midwinter, 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 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 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 manger full 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 I can I give him: give my heart.**

words: Christina Rossetti; music: Gustav Holst

Reading: Luke 2:8-15

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.'

Carol: While shepherds watched their flocks by night

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.**

**'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.**

**'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:**

**'The heav'nly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
And in a manger laid.'**

**Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:**

**'All glory be to God on high,
And in the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heav'n to men
Begin and never cease.'**

words: Nahum Tate; music: Thomas Este

Anthem: 'There shall a Star' by Felix Mendelssohn

sung by the Choir

There shall a Star from Jacob come forth,
And a Sceptre from Israel rise up,
And dash in pieces Princes and Nations.

How brightly beams the morning star!
With sudden radiance from afar
With light and comfort glowing!

Thy Word, Jesus, inly feeds us,
Rightly leads us, Life bestowing.
Praise, oh praise such love o'erflowing.

words: Christian Charles Josias von Bunsen

Reading: 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.

We keep a short period of silence.

Anthem: 'What sweeter music' by John Rutter

sung by the Choir

What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a Carol, for to sing
The Birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the Voice! Awake the string!

Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honour to this Day,
That sees *December* turn'd to *May*.

Why does the chilling Winter's morn
Smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn
Thus, on the sudden? Come and see
The cause, why things thus fragrant be:
'Tis He is born, whose quick'ning Birth
Gives life and luster, public mirth,
To Heaven and the under-Earth.

We see Him come, and know Him ours,
Who, with His Sun-shine, and His showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

The Darling of the world is come,
And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome Him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart,

Which we will give Him; and bequeath
This Holly and this Ivy Wreath,
To do Him honour; who's our King,
And Lord of all this Revelling.

What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a Carol, for to sing
The Birth of this our heavenly King?

words: Robert Herrick

The Homily is given by the Rev'd Thomas Frances Caroe, Curate.

Carol: Hark! the herald angels sing

**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.*

**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 th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:**

Hark! the herald angels sing . . .

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun 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 . . .

words: Charles Wesley et al.; music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Please kneel or sit for the prayers, which end with 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.**

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:**

**Child, 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?**

**Sing, choirs of Angels, sing in exultation
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the Highest:**

words: 18th century Latin, trans. Frederick Oakeley et al.; music: JF Wade

After the Vicar has given God's blessing, please remain standing until the Choir and Ministers have left.

Organ Voluntary: 'Adeste fideles' by Jeanne Demessieux

There is a basket and contactless donation point for the collection as you exit. Our Christmas Appeal charities this year are BeSpace, Sobell House Hospice, and the British Red Cross Gaza Appeal.

Christmas in Wantage Parish

Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul

Christmas Eve

3pm Crib Service *with donkey!*

11pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10.30am Choral Eucharist

Sunday 5 January

5pm Twelfth Night Carols

Holy Trinity, Charlton

Christmas Eve

8pm First Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day

9.15am Sung Eucharist



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