

The Crib Service

24 December 2024

wantage parish

*Welcome to the Crib Service! We warmly invite you to take part by singing the Carols and by saying the words **in bold**.*

Children are also welcome to dress up as Angels, Animals, Shepherds, or Kings, and to join in as we tell the story by coming up to the Crib when invited. If you would like to dress up, please ask a member of the team in costume near the doors of the Church for something to wear.

Our play this year is taken word-for-word from the Bible, in which this story was first told. Do read it for yourselves if you'd like to relive the drama!

Please do stay behind afterwards to look at the Crib, and to meet the Donkey. We hope you enjoy the service, and have a very blest Christmas!

Introduction and Opening Prayer

The Nativity Play

Scene 1: An Angel tells Mary that she will give birth to Jesus, the Son of God.

*The **Angels** gather around the Crib as we sing **Silent night**.*

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace!
Sleep in heavenly peace! | 2 | Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born! |
| 3 | Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth! | | |

Scene 2: An Angel comes to Joseph and tells him to look after Mary. Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem, where Jesus is born in a stable.

*The **Animals** gather around the Crib as we sing **Away in a manger.***

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.

Scene 3: An Angel comes to some shepherds and tells them that Jesus has been born. They rejoice and go to see him.

*The **Shepherds** gather around the Crib as we sing **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 heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'

Scene 4: Some Wise Men come to Jerusalem, following a Star. King Herod sends them to Bethlehem, where they find Jesus and worship him.

*The **Kings** gather around the Crib as we sing **We three kings of Orient are**.*

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field & fountain, moor & mountain,
following yonder star:

<i>O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.</i> | 2 One brings gold to crown a king;
one, incense, praise offering,
one brings myrrh, its bitter perfume
bitter death heralding:

3 Glorious now behold him arise,
king and God and sacrifice.
Heaven sings: 'Alleluia';
'Alleluia,' the earth replies: |
|--|---|

Scene 5: Everyone returns home after they have found Jesus, just as they were told.

Blessing of the Crib

Anthem: 'How far is it to Bethlehem?', by John Ridgway

sung by the Junior Choir; words by Frances Alice Chesterton

Prayers

The Minister leads us in prayer. We finish by saying together

**Our Father, who are 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.

Closing Prayer

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!

See how the Shepherds, summoned to his cradle,

Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;

We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:

Lo! star-led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,

Offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;

We to the Christ Child bring our heart's oblations:

Sing, choirs of Angels, sing in exultation,

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;

Glory to God in the Highest: