



MERTON COLLEGE

The Chapel of St Mary and St John

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE
5.45pm Sunday 29 November

Welcome to this livestreamed Advent Carol Service from Merton College, Oxford.

The season of Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas, when the first coming of Christ is celebrated, and it is also a time for directing our thoughts towards the end of time when Christ will come again in glory.

The collections from our Advent Carol Services normally go to *The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust* and *The Oxford Parent Infant Project*. Please consider making a donation to support their important work:
<https://charliewaller.org/>
<https://www.oxpip.org.uk/>

Livestreamed Services on YouTube

All of our choral services are livestreamed. Subscribe to our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/MertonCollegeChoir>) to receive updates and news, create individualised playlists, and to set personal reminders for services.

Recordings—Online Shop

All of the College Choir's recordings, including their Advent and Christmas discs, are available from our online shop:
<https://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/recordings>

Christmas Carol Services

We will be livestreaming two Christmas Carol Services on our YouTube channel:

8.30pm Friday 4 December *sung by the College Choir*

7.30pm Wednesday 16 December *sung by the Girl Choristers*

ORGAN PRELUDE

Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen (Op. 122, No. 8)

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

The bell rings, and all stand as the procession enters the Chapel

HYMN

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
and manifest thy virgin-birth:
let every age adoring fall,
such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,
but of the Spirit, thou art still
the Word of God, in flesh arrayed,
the promised fruit to man displayed.

The virgin womb that burden gained
with virgin honour all unstained,
the banners there of virtue glow,
God in his temple dwells below.

Forth from his chamber goeth he,
that royal home of purity,
a giant in twofold substance one,
rejoicing now his course to run.

From God the Father he proceeds,
to God the Father back he speeds,
his course he runs to death and hell
returning on God's throne to dwell.

O equal to thy Father, thou!
gird on thy fleshly mantle now;
the weakness of our mortal state
with deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
and darkness breathe a newer light,
where endless faith shall shine serene,
and twilight never intervene.

All laud, eternal Son, to thee
whose advent sets thy people free,
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Ghost for evermore. Amen.

*St Ambrose (c.340–397)
tr. JM Neale (1818–66) and others*

*The Chaplain reads the Bidding Prayer and all join in the
Lord's Prayer*

All 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.

All sit.

CAROL

This is the truth sent from above

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

arr. Christopher Robinson (b. 1936)

This is the truth sent from above,
the truth of God, the God of love:
therefore don't turn me from your door,
but hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
is that God did man create,
the next thing which to you I'll tell,
woman was made with man to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
till God the Lord did interpose,
and so a promise soon did run,
that he would redeem us by his Son.

And at that season of the year
our blest Redeemer did appear,
He here did live, and here did preach,
and many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,
to show us how we must be saved;
and if you want to know the way,
be pleased to hear what he did say.

Traditional English Carol

FIRST

Genesis 3.8-15

READING

In the Garden of Eden, God declares that a human being will come at last to undo the serpent's deceit.

CAROL

The Lord at first did Adam make

English melody (West Country)
arr. Michael Nicholas (b. 1938)

The Lord at first did Adam make
Out of the dust and clay,
And in his nostrils breathèd life,
E'en as the scriptures say.
And then in Eden's paradise
He placèd him to dwell,
That he within it should remain,
To dress and keep it well.

And thus within the garden he
Was set, therein to stay;
And in commandment unto him
These words the Lord did say:
The fruit which in the garden grows
To thee shall be for meat,
Except the tree in the midst thereof,
Of which thou shall not eat.

For in the day thou shalt it touch
Or do it then come nigh,
And if that thou dost eat thereof,
Then thou shalt surely die.
But Adam he did take no heed
Unto that only thing,
But did transgress God's holy Law,
And so was wrapt in sin.

Now mark the goodness of the Lord,
Which he to mankind bore;
His mercy soon he did extend,
Lost man for to restore;
And thereof to redeem our souls
From death and hellish thrall,
He said his own dear Son should be
The Saviour of us all.

*words adapted from Davies Gilbert's
'Some Ancient Christmas Carols' (1822)*

SECOND Isaiah 42.1-9

READING *The prophet proclaims that God's servant will bring forth justice for the nations.*

All stand.

HYMN

Hark! a herald voice is calling;
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,
let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all to be forgiven;

So when next he comes in glory,
and earth's final hour draws near,
may he then as our defender
on the clouds of heaven appear.

Honour, glory, virtue, merit,
to the Father and the Son,
with the co-eternal Spirit,
while unending ages run.

Latin, tr. E Caswall (1814-78)

All sit.

CAROL *Hosanna to the Son of David*

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)

Hosanna to the Son of David.
Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Blessed be the king of Israel.
Blessed be the king that that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest places.
Hosanna in the highest heavens.

Matthew 21.9

THIRD Ezekiel 47.6b-12

READING *The prophet describes a vision of God's abundant life and healing power*

CAROL *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree*

Elizabeth Poston (1905–1987)

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Traditional

All stand.

HYMN

Hark what a sound, and too divine for hearing,
stirs on the earth and trembles in the air!
Is it the thunder of the Lord's appearing?
Is it the music of his people's prayer?

Surely he cometh, and a thousand voices
shout to the saints, and to the deaf are dumb;
surely he cometh, and the earth rejoices,
glad in his coming who hath sworn: I come!

This hath he done, and shall we not adore him?
This shall he do, and can we still despair?
Come, let us quickly fling ourselves before him,
cast at his feet the burden of our care.

Yea through life, death, through sorrow
and through sinning,
he shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

FWH Meyers (1843-1901)

All sit.

FOURTH Isaiah 7.10–15

READING *The prophet proclaims the Virgin Birth.*

CAROL *There is no rose*

John Joubert (1927–2019)

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu; *Alleluia.*

For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in little space; *Res Miranda.*

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three; *Pares forma.*

Then leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth; *Transeamus*

Anon.

All stand.

HYMN

O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Redeem thy captive Israel,
that into exile drear is gone
far from the face of God's dear Son.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

(lower voices) O come, thou Branch of Jesse! draw
the quarry from the lion's claw;
from the dread caverns of the grave,
from nether hell thy people save.

(upper voices) O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
Pour on our souls thy healing light;
dispel the long night's lingering gloom,
and pierce the shadows of the tomb.

(lower voices) O come, thou Lord of David's key!
The royal door fling wide and free:
safeguard for us the heavenward road,
and bar the way to death's abode.

O come, O come, Adonai,
who in thy glorious majesty
from that high mountain clothed in awe
gavest thy folk the elder law.

*Advent Antiphons, tr. TA Lacey (1853–1931)
Editors of 'English Praise' (1975)
based on CE Oakley (1832–65)*

All remain standing.

ANTIPHON

O Emmanuel

Eriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

O Emmanuel, our King and lawgiver,
whom the nations all await as their Saviour;
come to save us, O Lord our God.

cf Isaiah 7.14

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

All Now it is time to awake out of sleep,
for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.
Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed,
All **for the night is far spent.**
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness
and put on the armour of light,
All **for the day is at hand.**
Put on the Lord Jesus Christ
and make no provisions for the flesh.
All **for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**

from Romans 13

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.
Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL Luke 1.26–38
READING

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

All sit.

My soul doth magnify the Lord
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded
the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me
and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel
as he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.

All stand.

HYMN

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty:
those who set at naught and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own.
O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

Charles Wesley (1707–88)

DISMISSAL

*All remain standing as the Chaplain prays the Collect of Advent Sunday,
to which all respond*

All **Amen.**

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

The Chaplain gives the blessing to which all respond

All **Amen.**

All Go in the light and peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God!

VOLUNTARY *Prelude in B minor BWV 544* JS Bach (1685–1750)