MERTON COLLEGE
The Chapel of St Mary and St John

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE
5.30pm Saturday 27 November
5.30pm Sunday 28 November
Welcome to Merton College Chapel and to this evening’s Advent Carol Service. A particular welcome to the Friends of the Choir.

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

This service begins in darkness and will proceed without announcement. As the procession enters the Chapel a light will be passed to the end of each row. Please use your hand-held candle to light the candles on the stalls in front of you. Please do not touch the glass. The hand-held candles are extinguished as we sit for the first reading.

During the hymn Hills of the North Rejoice there will be a collection: on Saturday, for the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust which works to promote awareness of mental health issues among young people; on Sunday, for OXPIP—the Oxford Parent Infant Project—which provides counselling, workshops, support and advice for local parents. Please give generously.

As we sing O come, O come, Emmanuel, please light your hand-held candle again. We turn to face the altar as the Gospel of the Annunciation is proclaimed. After the choir has sung Borogoditse Devo by Cheryl Frances-Hoad, current Visiting Research Fellow in the Creative Arts at Merton, we follow them into the Ante-Chapel where we face the screen for the final collect and blessing.

Organ Music before the service will include:

- JS Bach \(\text{Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland BWV 599}\)
- JS Bach \(\text{Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland BWV 659}\)
- JS Bach \(\text{Trio super ‘Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland’ BWV 660}\)
- JS Bach \(\text{Herr Christ, der einge Gottessohn BWV 601}\)
- Brahms \(\text{Es ist ein Ros’ entsprungen (Op. 122, No. 8)}\)
INTROIT  (sung by the choir in the Ante-Chapel)

Matin Responsory            Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-94)
adapted by David Willcocks

I look from afar:
and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?
High and low, rich and poor, one with another,
Go ye out to meet him and say:
Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel,
thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep.
Tell us, art thou he that should come?
Stir up thy strength, O Lord,
and come to reign over thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
I look from afar:
and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign
over thy people Israel?

from the Advent Matin Responsory

SERVICE OF LIGHT

Genesis 1.1-5 is read as a light is brought into the Chapel.

The first candle on the Advent Wreath is lit
and the Chaplain gives thanks to God for the light.

The prayer concludes
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
both now and for evermore.
All    Amen.
All stand.

When the light is passed to you, please use your hand-held candle to light the candles on the stalls in front of you.

(choir) Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest thy virgin-birth:
Let every age adoring fall,
Such birth befits the God of all.

(choir) 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.

(all) The virgin womb that burden gained
With virgin honour all unstained;
The banners there of virtue glow;
God in his temple dwells below.

(all) Forth from his chamber goeth he,
That royal home of purity,
A giant in twofold substance one,
Rejoicing now his course to run.

(all) 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.
(all) O equal to thy Father, thou!
Gird on thy fleshly mantle now;
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.

(choir) Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene,
And twilight never intervene.

(all) 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 say together 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 and extinguish the hand-held candles.
First Reading

The prophet proclaims that God’s chosen one will be filled with the spirit of the Lord

Choir

A tender shoot

Kerensa Briggs (b. 1991)

A tender shoot hath started
Up from a root of grave,
As ancient seers imparted,
From Jesse’s holy race,
It blooms without a blight,
Blooms in the cold bleak winter,
Turning our darkness into light.

This shoot Isaiah taught us
From Jesse’s root should spring;
The Virgin Mary brought us
The branch of which we sing;
Our God of endless might
Gave her this child to save us,
Thus turning darkness into light.

German 15th Century
Versified by Otto Goldschmidt (1829–1907)
Translated by William Bartholomew (1793–1867)

Second Reading

The prophet foretells the day when God’s people will enjoy the abundance of God’s blessing
All stand to sing

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.
Third Reading Baruch 4.36-5.9
The prophet foretells the gathering of Israel to see the salvation of God

Choir People, look East
Peter Tranchell (1922-1993)
arr. Peter Marchbank (b. 1943)

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 tho’ earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flow’r may flourish.
People, look East, and sing today:
Love the Rose is on the way.

Birds, tho’ long you’ve ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
E’en the hour when wings are frozen
He for fledgling time has chosen.
People, look East, and sing today:
Love the Bird is on the way.

Stars, keep watch. When night is dim,
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as the 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 ev’ry peak and valley humming
With the Word, the Lord is coming.
People, look East, and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965)

All stand to sing

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 Reading Ezekiel 47.4b-12

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

Choir Jesus Christ the apple tree Elizabeth Poston (1905-87)

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

During the next hymn a collection will be taken for the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust (Saturday); Oxford Parent Infant Project (Sunday). Please give generously.
All stand to sing

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.

*Editors of ‘English Praise’ (1975)*
*based on CE Oakley (1832-65)*

All sit.
Fifth
Reading Isaiah 52.7-10
The prophet looks forward to the joyful return of the Lord to his people.

Choir How lovely are the messengers
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

How lovely are the messengers
that preach us the gospel of peace.
To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words,
throughout all the lands their glad tidings.

*Romans 10.15 and 18*

*Please light your candle during the next hymn.*
*As the procession moves to the Sanctuary, all turn to face the altar from where the Gospel will be proclaimed.*
All stand to sing

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.

(all) O come, O come, Adonai,
Who in thy glorious majesty
From that high mountain clothed in awe
Gavest thy folk thy elder law.

Advent Antiphons, tr. TA Lacey (1853-1931)
PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

All remain standing and face the altar to join in the Responsory

Now it is time to awake out of sleep,

All

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 remain standing as the choir sings

Choir

Bogoroditse Devo

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

Rejoice, O Virgin Mother of God,
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, for thou hast borne the Saviour of our souls.

cf. Luke 1.28 and 42
The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

The Annunciation

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

All sit. Choir Bogoroditse Devo Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b. 1980)

Rejoice, O Virgin Mother of God,
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
for thou hast borne the Saviour of our souls.

cf. Luke 1.28 and 42
During the following hymns, the congregation follows the choir into the Ante-Chapel and turns to face the Screen. Please follow the directions of the stewards.

All stand to sing

Thou whose almighty word
Chaos and darkness heard,
And took their flight;
Hear us, we humbly pray,
And where the gospel day
Sheds not its glorious ray,
Let there be light.

Thou who didst come to bring
On thy redeeming wing
Healing and sight,
Health to the sick in mind,
Sight to the inly blind,
O now to all mankind
Let there be light.

Spirit of truth and love,
Life-giving, holy Dove,
Speed forth thy flight;
Move o’er the waters’ face,
Bearing the lamp of grace,
And in earth’s darkest place
Let there be light.
Blessed and holy Three,
Glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might,
Boundless as ocean’s tide
Rolling in fullest pride,
Through the world far and wide
Let there be light.

John Marriott (1780-1825)

A second hymn is sung as the procession into the Ante-Chapel continues.

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.
Now redemption, long expected,
See in solemn pomp appear;
All his saints, by man rejected,
Now shall meet him in the air:
Alleluia!
See the day of God appear!

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!

_The organ improvises before the last verse._

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
High on thy 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)*

*and John Cennick (1718-55)*

**DISMISSAL**

_All remain standing and face the Screen as the Chaplain prays the Collect of Advent Sunday, to which all respond_

_All_ Amen.

The Lord be with you

_All_ and also with you.

_The Chaplain gives the blessing to which all respond_

_All_ Amen.

Go in the light and peace of Christ.

_All_ Thanks be to God.
CDs priced at £14 will be available for purchase after the service or at
www.merton.ox.ac.uk/chapel-choir/recording
Members of College and Friends of the Choir can purchase them at a reduced price from the Verger: (leah.collins@merton.ox.ac.uk).
You can pay by cash or contactless card.

In the Stillness: Christmas at Merton
The brand new recording of the Merton College Girl Choristers is available tonight for purchase in a limited pre-release offer! Accompanied by the Lay Clerks, this disc of classic carols is the unmissable debut album of the Girl Choristers, which will be released commercially in 2022.

O Holy Night: A Merton Christmas
The Choir of Merton College joins forces with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra for a recording of favourite carols. Christmas old and new is celebrated with a fresh sense of all its magic and glory.
The perfect Christmas gift!

Sleeper’s Prayer: Choral Music from North America
Described by BBC Radio 3 as a ‘real feat of excellence and precision’ this CD focuses entirely on American music of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.
CAROL SERVICES & CONCERTS

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE
Thursday 2 December
8.30pm
To include the world premiere of John Rutter’s
Was I the Lamb?
Doors open at 8pm
All are welcome to join us!

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT
Saturday 11 & Sunday 12 December
5.00pm
The College Choir combines with the
Merton College Girl Choristers for a popular
programme of Carols and Christmas music.

Tickets available from the Oxford Playhouse Box Office
www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford 01865 305305

A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
Wednesday 15 December
6.00pm
Doors open at 5.30pm
sung by the Merton College Girl Choristers
and Lay Clerks
All welcome!
Have you thought of joining the Friends of the Choir?

Membership benefits include reserved seating for all special services (including our carol services), reduced ticket prices, and exclusive events and updates.

For more information please contact the Chapel Administrator chapel.administrator@merton.ox.ac.uk or visit the Chapel and Choir pages on the College website: www.merton.ox.ac.uk
We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Friends of the Choir for their generous support.

To find out more about becoming a Friend of the Choir, email chapel.administrator@merton.ox.ac.uk or visit www.merton.ox.ac.uk/friends-choir

### LIFETIME MEMBERS

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### ANNUAL MEMBERS

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