



MERTON COLLEGE

The Chapel of St Mary and St John

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

5.00pm and 7.30pm

Wednesday 16 December 2020

Welcome to this livestreamed Christmas Carol Service. For those who are with us in the Chapel, we're sorry that the UK government's Covid-19 regulations don't currently permit congregational singing.

This service is sung by the Merton College Girl Choristers and lower voices. The choir was established in September 2016, giving girls aged 8 to 16 from many different schools across the city the opportunity to sing in the College Chapel. The girl choristers rehearse twice weekly and sing Evensong at 6.15pm on Wednesdays during the University term. Do come back to hear them again!

There will be a retiring collection for the staff charity **PAPYRUS**, which works in many ways to prevent young suicide. Please give generously.

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 Christmas disc, *O Holy Night!*, are available from our online shop: <https://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/recordings>

Please take this away with you and recycle it.



Please remain seated as the choir enter the Chapel and for the

INTROIT *Up! good Christen folk, and listen*

Melody from *Piae Cantiones* (1582)

Harmonised by G R Woodward (1848-1934)

*Ding-dong, ding:
ding-a-dong-a-ding:
ding-dong, ding-dong:
ding-a-dong-ding.*

Up! good Christen folk, and listen
how the merry church bells ring,
and from steeple
bid good people
come adore the new-born King:

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmastide,
bringing gladness,
chasing sadness,
show'ring blessings far and wide.

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
ex Maria Virgine,
in a stable
('tis no fable),
Christus natus hodie.

G R Woodward

The Chapel bell is rung and the congregation stands.

HYMN

Solo

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

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.

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 heav'n 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 Frances Alexander (1818-95)

*The Chaplain reads the Bidding Prayer
and all say together the Lord's Prayer*

All Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed by 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 *There is a flower springing*

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

There is a flower springing,
from tender roots it grows,
from Eden beauty bringing,
from Jesse's stem a rose.
On his green branch it blows:
a bud that in cold winter
at midnight will unclose.

Pure Mary, maiden holy,
the dream by prophets seen,
Who in a stable lowly
above her child did lean,
so gentle and serene:
This was Isaiah's vision,
the tree of living green.

Anon.

First

Micah 5.2-5

Reading

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of Bethlehem

All stand.

HYMN

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.

Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Second Reading Luke 1.26-38
The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

All sit.

CAROL *I sing of a maiden* Lennox Berkeley (1903-89)

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless:
King of all kinges
To her son she ches.

He came all so stille
There his mother was,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so stille
To his motheres bowr,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the flour.

He came all so stille
There his mother lay,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well may such a lady
Godes mother be.

Anon.

Third Reading Luke 2.1-7
St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

CAROL

The little road to Bethlehem

Michael Head (1900–1976)

As I walked down the road at set of sun,
The lambs were coming homewards, one by one,
I heard a sheep-bell softly calling them
Along the little road to Bethlehem.

Beside an open door, as I drew nigh,
I heard sweet Mary sing a lullaby.
She sang about the lambs at close of day
And rocked her tiny King among the hay.

Across the air the silver sheep-bell rang,
'The lambs are coming home,' sweet Mary sang,
'Your Star of Gold is shining in the sky,
So sleep, my little King, go lullaby.'

Margaret Rose (d. 1958)

All stand.

HYMN

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...

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...

*Latin 18th century
tr. Frederick Oakley (1802-80) and others*

All sit.

Fourth

Luke 2.8-16

Reading

The shepherds go to the manger

CAROL

Candlelight Carol

John Rutter (b. 1945)

How do you capture the wind on the water?
How do you count all the stars in the sky?
How can you measure the love of a mother?
Or how can you write down a baby's first cry?

*Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow
Shine on his cradle till breaking of dawn.*

Gloria! Gloria in excelsis deo!

Angels are singing; the Christ child is born.

Shepherds and wise men will kneel and adore him,
Seraphim round him their vigil will keep;
Nations proclaim him their Lord and their Saviour,
But Mary will hold him and sing him to sleep.

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow...

Find him at Bethlehem laid in a manger:
Christ our Redeemer asleep in the hay.
Godhead incarnate and hope of salvation:
A child with his mother that first Christmas Day.

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow...

John Rutter

All stand.

Fifth

John 1.1-14

Reading

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

All sit.

CAROL

Carol of the Bells

Mykola Leontovych (1877–1921)

Hark! How the bells, sweet silver bells,
All seem to say 'throw cares away'
Christmas is here, bringing good cheer,
To young and old, meek and the bold,
Ding, dong, ding, dong, that is their song,
With joyful ring, all carolling.
One seems to hear words of good cheer,
From everywhere, filling the air,
Oh how they pound, raising the sound,
O'er hill and dale, telling their tale,
Gaily they ring, while people sing
Songs of good cheer, Christmas is here!
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas!
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas!
On, on they send, on without end,
Their joyful tone to every home
Ding, dong, ding, dong.

Peter J Wilhousky (1902–78)

All stand.

HYMN

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 the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven 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
Glory to the new-born King.*

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen 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
Glory to the new-born King.*

Charles Wesley (1707-88)

DISMISSAL

*All remain standing as the Chaplain prays the Collect of Christmas Eve
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 *Vom Himmel Hoch*

Garth Edmundson (1892–1971)

*There will be a retiring collection
to support the work of
PAPYRUS.*

Please give generously.

