



MERTON COLLEGE

The Chapel of St Mary and St John

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

5.00pm and 8.30pm

Friday 4 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.

Oxford Mutual Aid was formed in response to the Covid-19 crisis as a grassroots community support group and action network focused on seeking out vulnerable people who are struggling to access support. Please consider making a donation to support their important work. There will be a retiring collection after the service, and you can also donate online: <https://opencollective.com/oxford-mutual-aid#section-contribute>

### **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>

### **Organ music before the service:**

<i>Sonata No.3 "Pastoral" (1st mvt) Op. 88</i>	Josef Rheinberger (1839–1901)
<i>Christum wir sollen loben schon BWV 611</i>	JS Bach (1685–1750)
<i>In dulci jubilo BWV 729</i>	JS Bach
<i>Vom Himmel hoch BWV 606</i>	JS Bach
<i>Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ BWV 604</i>	JS Bach
<i>Weihnachten Op. 145 No. 3</i>	Max Reger (1873–1916)

### **Christmas Carol Services**

5.00pm & 7.30pm Wednesday 16 December  
*sung by the Girl Choristers*  
*the 7.30pm service will be livestreamed.*



*Please remain seated as the choir enters the Chapel and for the*  
**INTROIT** *In the bleak midwinter* Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

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 mid-winter  
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven 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 mangerful 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.

*Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)*

*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 priest 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

*In dulci jubilo*

Old German Carol  
arr. RL Pearsall (1795-1856)

In dulci jubilo  
Let us our homage shew;  
Our heart's joy reclineth  
In præsepio  
And like a bright star shineth  
Matris in gremio.  
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule!  
I yearn for thee alway!  
Hear me, I beseech thee,  
O Puer optime!  
My prayer let it reach thee,  
O Princeps gloriae!  
Trahe me post te!

O Patris caritas,  
O Natilenitas!  
Deeply were we stained  
Per nostra crimina;  
But thou hast for us granted  
Cœlorum gaudia.  
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia,  
If that they be not there?  
There are angels singing,  
Nova cantica,  
There the bells are ringing  
In Regis curia:  
O that we were there!

*tr. Reginald Jacques (1894-1969)*

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)*

*All sit.*

CAROL

*Ave maris stella*

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Hail, star of the sea.  
God's cherishing mother,  
And, though still a virgin,  
the blessed entrance-way of heaven.

Bound by Satan's fetters,  
health and vision needing.  
God will aid and light us  
at thy gentle pleading.

So, as now we journey,  
aid our weak endeavour,  
Till we gaze on Jesus  
and rejoice for ever.

Father, Son and Spirit,  
Three in one confessing,  
Give us equal glory,  
equal praise and blessing. Amen.

*Hymn at First Vespers  
of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Second  
Reading

Luke 1.26–38

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary*



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)*

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

CAROL     *Away in a manger*     arr. David Hill (b. 1957)

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus lay 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 side until 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.

*William J. Kirkpatrick (1838–1921)*

*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 *The Shepherd's Carol*

Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

We stood on the hills, Lady,  
Our day's work done,  
Watching the frosted meadows  
That winter had won.

The evening was calm, Lady,  
The air so still,  
Silence more lovely than music  
Folded the hill.

There was a star, Lady,  
Shone in the night,  
Larger than Venus it was  
And bright, so bright.

Oh, a voice from the sky, Lady,  
It seemed to us then  
Telling of God being born  
In the world of men.

And so we have come, Lady,  
Our day's work done,  
Our love, our hopes, ourselves,  
We give to your son.

*Anon.*

*All stand.*

Fifth            John 1.1-14  
Reading        *St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation*

*All sit.*

Address        *The Chaplain*

On Christmas night all Christians sing,  
To hear the news the angels bring -  
News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,  
Since our Redeemer made us glad,  
When from our sin he set us free,  
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,  
Then life and health come in its place;  
Angels and men with joy may sing,  
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night:  
Glory to God and peace to men,  
Now and for evermore. Amen.

*Trad.*

*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**      *Prelude and Fugue in B Major (Op. 7)*  
Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

*There will be a retiring collection  
to support the work of  
OXFORD MUTUAL AID.*

*Please give generously.*

## CHAPEL NEXT TERM!

- From next term, Mel will be offering **beginners' lessons in New Testament Greek** for anyone who'd like to learn. The lessons will be **free of charge**, and textbooks will be provided. It's a wonderful way into the scriptures (Paul and friends were reading the Old Testament in Greek, not Hebrew!). If you're interested and would like to know more, drop Mel a line (melanie.marshall@merton.ox.ac.uk).
- Keep Fridays 3.30-4.30pm free for **next term's book group** - title to be announced, and cakes guaranteed. A great way to be together and discuss something new. Email Mel to find out more.
- **Would you like to move closer to the centre of the Chapel's worshipping life?** Sharing in the Lord's Supper (Eucharist) is the heart of what Christians do together. God calls everyone to be part of his family, and if you're considering this step it will be our pleasure to offer guidance and encouragement (and lively debate!). Let Mel know, and she can arrange to meet you for conversation and preparation for baptism and confirmation.
- If you are interested in **reading** or **serving** in Chapel on Sundays or during the week, or assisting in chapel in any other way, please have a word with Molly Clark (readers), Gian Piero Milani or Victor Ajuwon (servers) or one of the Chaplains.
- Email Mel if you would like to receive the weekly **Chapel email**.
- You can follow the Chapel and Choir on **Instagram**, **Facebook** and **Twitter** for all of our events and news! Our social media hub can be accessed through the link here: <https://compiled.social/MertonCollegeChapel>

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