



# CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE



20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025  
4.00PM

Welcome to Holy Trinity Church, Prestwood for our Christmas Carol Service.  
The celebration of Christ's coming at Christmas is one of the two poles of the  
Christian year. The wonderful mystery of God's dwelling among us in the  
fullness of humanity, as Emmanuel, foretold by the prophets  
and born of Mary, is the reason for all our festivities:

Hark, hark, the wise eternal word,  
like a weak infant cries!

In form of servant is the Lord,  
and God in cradle lies.

(Thomas Pestel)

As we welcome you to our service tonight we hope the joy of this most holy  
season will be yours and your family's, as we hear the story of Jesus' birth and  
sing the carols that celebrate it again this year.

**Our worship celebrates Christ's love for all people.**

**We find rest in God's presence.**

**The Holy Spirit empowers our lives.**

**We enjoy building a loving community.**

We believe in **inclusive church** – a church which **celebrates and affirms every person** and does not discriminate. We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of **disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality**. We believe in a Church which **welcomes and serves all people** in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.



If you don't already give regularly, you can support us by using the contactless donation box by the door as you enter or leave the church. To give regularly please take a **Parish Giving Scheme** leaflet from the rack, or sign up to the **Parish Giving Scheme**:  
Scan the QR code to get started:



A toilet with disabled and baby changing facilities is available  
in the front and left corner of the church.



**This service will be live-streamed to Facebook.**

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.

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.

And through all his wondrous childhood  
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 heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-95)

### ***The Bidding***

#### **The priest says**

Friends, we gather today as the family of God. We gather in God's presence to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we will be reminded of the good news of the birth of Christ, and we offer our thanks to God in the joyful singing of carols.

#### **Please sit**

Lord Jesus, we thank you that when the world was very dark you came to bring light into our darkness.

You came in the night to bring light into the lives of Mary and Joseph.

You came to Bethlehem - then, as now, a very troubled town - bringing light to all who came to trust you.

You come to us now, into our lives and into our world, bringing light still to your people.

We ask you now once again to accept this worship that we bring as we come again to the manger.

Help us to see there the light that will shine for us, not just at Christmas but every day of the year.

We join our prayers with the words Christ himself taught us:

Our Father, which 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 them that 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.

## **Reading**

### **Isaiah 9:2, 6-7**

Isaiah foretells the coming of the Messiah

### **Carol**

Please stand  
(REH 42)

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.

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
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 morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to those on earth.  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.

Where children pure and happy  
pray to the blessed child,  
Where misery cries out to thee,  
Son of the mother mild;  
where charity stands watching  
and faith holds wide the door,  
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks,  
and Christmas comes once more.

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)

## **Reading**

Please sit

Who walks when you walk in darkness?

Anon

## **Carol**

Please stand  
(REH 39)

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 midwinter,  
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 midwinter  
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 Georgina Rossetti (1830-94)

## **Reading**

Please sit

### **The Impossible Promise**

Bob Hartman

## **Carol**

Please stand

(REH 48)

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.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight:  
glory streams from heaven afar,  
heav'nly hosts sing, 'Alleluya,  
Christ, the Saviour is born,  
Christ, the Saviour is born!'

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.

German, Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

tr John Freeman Young (1820-85)

## **Reading**

Please sit

### **The Angel's View**

Steven Shakespeare

## **Carol**

Please stand

(REH 30)

Angels from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story  
now proclaim Messiah's birth.  
***Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

Shepherds in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing;  
yonder shines the infant light.  
***Refrain***

Sages, leave your contemplations;  
brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations;  
ye have seen his natal star.  
***Refrain***

Saints, before the altar bending,  
watching long in hope and fear,  
suddenly the Lord descending,  
in his temple shall appear.

**Refrain**

Though an infant now we view him,  
he shall fill his Father's throne,  
gather all the nations to him;  
every knee shall then bow down.

**Refrain**

James Montgomery (1771-1854)  
from *Iris* (1816) and *The Christmas Box* (1825)

**Reading**

Please sit

One Very Long Journey

Bob Hartman

**Carol**

Please stand  
(REH 40)

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:

**Refrain**

Child, for us sinners  
poor and in the manger,  
fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;  
who would not love thee,  
loving us so dearly?

**Refrain**

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God,  
in the highest:

**Refrain**

Latin, vv 1-2, 4-5 anonymous 18 cent  
tr Frederick Oakeley (1802-80)  
v 3 Étienne Jean François Borderies (1764-1832)  
tr William Thomas Brooke (1848-1917)

**Reading**

Please sit

A Flash Mob of Angels

Bob Hartman

## **Carol**

Please stand  
(MP 114)

Ding dong! Merrily on high  
in heaven the bells are ringing.  
Ding dong! Verily the sky  
is riven with angels singing:  
***Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

E'en so, here below, below,  
let steeple bells be swungen;  
and io, io, io,  
by priest and people sungen!  
***Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

Pray you, dutifully prime  
your matin chime, ye ringers;  
may you beautifully rime  
your evetime song, ye singers:  
***Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)

## **Reading**

Please sit

### **The Hush of Christmas**

Carl F. Verge

## **Prayer**

We come before you, Christmas child, in silent amazement. May we welcome you among us.

As Mary welcomed you and rejoiced in God's holiness and mercy, we pray for the church as Christmas approaches.

As shepherds welcomed you, disturbing their work and lives, we pray for your disturbing presence in our world.

As Joseph welcomed you, giving you a home and a name, we pray for all who seek shelter in our community.

As angels welcomed you, singing of glory and peace, we pray for all who seek healing and hope.

As Simeon welcomed you, recognising in you his journey's fulfilment, we pray for those who have died and for all who love them and miss them.

As wise men welcomed you, risking a journey and following a star, we pray that we may take risks in following you.

The love of God is in us: The spirit of joy is with us, Emmanuel, Jesus, now and always.

**All:     Amen**



## **Carol**

Please stand  
(REH 37)

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 the incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel:  
**Refrain**

Hail the heaven-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:  
**Refrain**

Charles Wesley (1707-88) and others

## **The Blessing**

Please remain standing

### **The priest says**

May your eyes be opened to the wonder of the daily miracles around you and your sense of mystery be deepened.

May you be aware of the light that shines in the darkness, and that the darkness can never put out.

May you be blessed with companions on the journey, friends who will listen to you and encourage you with their presence.

May you learn to live with what is unsolved in your heart, daring to face the questions and holding them until, one day, they find their answers.

May you find the still, quiet place inside yourself where you can know and experience the peace that passes understanding.

May love flow in you and through you to those who need your care.

May you continue to dream dreams and to reach out into the future with a deeper understanding of God's way for you.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you tonight and all the nights to come.

All:     **Amen**

***Hot chocolate, mulled wine and mince pies will be served.***



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using the contactless donation box by the door,  
or you can scan here  
to make a one-off donation from your phone:



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**Please join us for  
Midnight Mass at 11.00pm on Christmas Eve  
and for our  
Parish Eucharist at 9.30am on Christmas Day**

**With grateful thanks to**



**for supplying the Christmas Tree in church, our  
straw bales and our Christingle oranges**



from  
the Reverend Nigel Spoor, Associate Priest,  
the Reverend Kayleigh Lucas, Assistant Curate  
the Churchwardens and all at Holy Trinity, Prestwood