



**St Mary's Church**  
**Saffron Walden**  
Sharing God's Love

A Service of Nine lessons  
& Carols  
21<sup>st</sup> December 2025  
6.30pm

**Carol      Once in royal David's city**

*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.

*All*            **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.**

*All*            **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.**

*All*            **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.**

*All*            **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;**  
              **where like stars his children crowned**  
              **all in white shall wait around.**

*Please remain standing*

# Bidding Prayer

## **Carol     O little town of Bethlehem**

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 wondering love.

## **Choir**

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 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.

*Please sit*

## First Lesson

God announces in the Garden of Eden  
that the seed of woman shall bruise  
the serpent's head.

## Genesis 3: 8-15

Kathryn Bennett, Welcomer

## Choir    **Away in a manger**    French melody

Away in a manger no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid 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 thee, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

*Please stand*

## Carol    **Of the Father's heart begotten**

**Of the Father's heart begotten,  
ere the world from chaos rose,  
he is Alpha: from that Fountain  
all that is and hath been flows;  
he is Omega, of all things  
yet to come the mystic close,  
          *Evermore and evermore.***

**He assumed this mortal body,  
frail and feeble, doomed to die,  
that the race from dust created  
might not perish utterly,  
which the dreadful Law had sentenced  
in the depths of hell to lie,  
          *Evermore and evermore.***

**Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;  
Angels and Archangels, sing!  
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,  
let your joyous anthems ring,  
ev'ry tongue his name confessing,  
countless voices answering,  
*Evermore and evermore.***

*Please sit*

## **Second Lesson**

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

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold.    Hayden Rocks,  
Aftershock

## **Choir**

## **Torches**

## **Joubert**

Torches, torches, run with torches  
all the way to Bethlehem!  
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;  
come and sing your song to him!  
Torches, torches, run with torches  
all the way to Bethlehem!  
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;  
come and sing your song to him!

Ah, ro-ro, ro-ro, my baby,  
ah, ro-ro, my love, ro-ro;  
sleep you well, my heart's own darling,  
while we sing you our ro-ro.

Sing, my friends, and make you merry,  
joy and mirth and joy again;  
lo, he lives, the king of heaven,  
now and evermore. Amen.  
Lo, he lives, the king of heaven,  
now and ever, evermore. Amen.

## **Third Lesson**

The Gospel brings comfort to  
those who will hear it.

## **Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11**

Kate Beare, St Mary's Choir

*Please stand*

## **Carol     Silent Night**

*All*            **Silent Night! Holy night!**  
**All is calm, all is bright,**  
**round yon virgin and her child,**  
**holy infant, so tender and mild.**  
**sleep in heavenly peace,**  
**sleep in heavenly peace.**

*Solo*           **Silent Night! Holy night!**  
**Shepherds quail at the sight;**  
**glories stream from heaven afar,**  
**heavenly hosts sing alleluia!**  
**Christ the Saviour is born,**  
**Christ the Saviour is born.**

*All*            **Silent Night! Holy night!**  
**Son of God, love's pure light;**  
**radiant beams thy holy face**  
**with the dawn of saving grace,**  
**Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,**  
**Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

*Please sit*

## **Fourth Lesson**

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Virgin Mary.

## **Luke 1: 26-38**

Christine Coughlan,  
Mothers' Union

## **Choir     A Lullaby for Love**

## **Pike**

*Refrain:*  
*Small sleeping God,*  
*Slain weeping God,*  
*Born in the night:*  
*Fill us with light.*

Laid with beasts' food you are our food;  
Fed on this earth give us new birth.  
Shepherds are near, Magi come near,  
Rich and the poor cross heaven's door.

### *Refrain*

What shall we sing? Can we all sing?  
God is right here in each shed tear.  
Seeing this love, sharing this love:  
Here is God's power – midnight's dark hour.

### *Refrain*

Pondering heart, wondering heart.  
Birth and a death, first and last breath.  
Christmas is here! Jesus is here!  
Every depth plumb – Your Kingdom come!

### *Refrain*

## **Fifth Lesson**

St. Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

## **Matthew 1: 18-23**

Chris Knight,  
Friends of St Mary's

## **Choir Gaudete**

*(Men's Voices)*

Gaudete, gaudete!	Rejoice, rejoice!
Christus est natus	Christ is born
Ex Maria virgine,	Of the Virgin Mary -
gaudete!	Rejoice!

Tempus adest gratiæ	The time of grace has come -
Hoc quod optabamus,	What we have wished for;
Carmina lætitiæ	Songs of joy
Devote reddamus.	Let us give back faithfully.

Deus homo factus est	God has become man,
Natura mirante,	With nature marvelling,
Mundus renovatus est	The world has been renewed
A Christo regnante.	By the reigning Christ.

Ergo nostra concio	Therefore, let our preaching
Psallat iam in lustro;	Now sing in brightness
Benedicat Domino:	Let it bless the Lord:
Salus Regi nostro.	Greeting to our King.

*Please stand*

## Carol

## God Rest you Merry Gentlemen

God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
let nothing you dismay,  
for Jesus Christ our Saviour  
was born on Christmas Day,  
to save us all from Satan's power  
when we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
comfort and joy!*

*O tidings of comfort and joy!*

From God our heavenly Father  
a blessed angel came,  
and unto certain shepherds  
brought tidings of the same,  
how that in Bethlehem was born  
the son of God by name:

*O tidings of .....*

The shepherds at those tidings  
rejoicèd much in mind,  
and left their flocks a-feeding,  
in tempest, storm and wind,  
and went to Bethlehem straightway  
this blessed babe to find.

*O tidings of .....*

But when to Bethlehem they came,  
whereat this infant lay,  
they found him in a manger,  
where oxen feed on hay;  
his mother Mary kneeling,  
unto the Lord did pray:

*O tidings of .....*

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
all you within this place,  
and with true love and brotherhood  
each other now embrace;  
this holy tide of Christmas  
all other doth efface:

*O tidings of .....*

## **Sixth Lesson**

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

## **Luke 2: 1-16**

Hazel Colebrooke,  
Tinies

### **Choir    On Christmas Night**

**arr. Ledger**

On Christmas night all Christians sing,  
to hear the news the angels bring.  
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?  
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.  
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.  
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."

## **Seventh Lesson**

The wise men are led by a star to Jesus.

## **Matthew 2: 1-11**

Vivian Falk  
Prayer Team

## **Choir      There Stood in Heaven a Linden Tree**

**Rebecca Applin**

There stood in heaven a linden tree  
but though 'twas honey laden  
the angels cried 'no bloom shall be  
like that of one fair maiden'.

Sped Gabriel on winged feet  
and passed through bolted portals  
in Nazareth a maid to greet  
blessed o'er other mortals

'Hail Mary!' cried the angel mild,  
'of womankind the fairest;  
a maiden ay shalt thou be styled  
although a babe thou bearest.'

'So be it!' God's handmaid gan cry  
'according to thy telling'.  
To heaven the angel then did fly  
to his celestial dwelling.

*Please stand*

## **Carol              Good King Wenceslas**

*All*              **Good King Wenceslas last looked out  
on the Feast of Stephen,  
when the snow lay round about,  
deep, and crisp, and even:  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
though the frost was cruel,  
when a poor man came in sight,  
gath'ring winter fuel.**

*Low*              **'Hither page, and stand by me,  
Voices              if thou know'st it, telling,  
yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?'  
*High*              **'Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Voices              underneath the mountain,  
right against the forest fence,  
by Saint Agnes' fountain.'****

**Low** 'Bring me flesh and bring me wine,  
bring me pine-logs hither:  
thou and I will see him dine,  
when we bear them thither.'

**All** Page and monarch, forth they went,  
forth they went together;  
through the rude wind's wild lament  
and the bitter weather.

**High** 'Sire, the night is darker now,  
and the wind blows stronger;  
fails my heart, I know not how;  
I can go no longer.'

**Low** 'Mark my footsteps, good my page;  
tread thou in them boldly:  
thou shalt find the winter's rage  
freeze thy blood less coldly.'

**All** In his master's steps he trod,  
where the snow lay dinted;  
heat was in the very sod  
which the saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christians all, be sure,  
wealth or rank possessing,  
ye who now will bless the poor,  
shall yourselves find blessing.

*Please sit*

## **Eighth Lesson**

The humility and glory of the Incarnation

## **Philippians 2: 5-11**

A member of the Guides

## **Tomorrow shall be my dancing day Gardner**

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:  
I would my true love did so chance  
to see the legend of my play,  
to call my true love to my dance:

*Sing O my love,  
O my love, my love, my love;  
this have I done for my true love.*

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
of her I took fleshly substance;  
thus was I knit to man's nature,  
to call my true love to my dance:

*Sing O my love...*

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,  
so very poor, this was my chance,  
betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,  
to call my true love to my dance:

*Sing O my love...*

Then afterwards baptised I was;  
the Holy Ghost on me did glance,  
my Father's voice heard from above,  
to call my true love to my dance:

*Sing O my love...*

*Please stand*

## **Ninth Lesson**

St. John unfolds the great mystery  
of the Incarnation.

## **John 1: 1-14**

Rev'd Jeremy Trew,  
Rector

## **Carol    O come, all ye faithful**

**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,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.*

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
'Glory to God in the highest.'

*O come, let us adore him...*

## Blessing

### Carol     Hark! The herald angels sing

Hark! The herald angels sing  
glory to the newborn 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 newborn king!*

Christ, by highest heav'n 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.

*Hark, the herald angels sing ...*

**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.**

***Hark, the herald angels sing:  
Glory to the newborn king!***

**Voluntary      Trumpet Tune      Johnson**

*Please remain standing while the choir and clergy leave*

*There will be a retiring collection in aid of church funds.*

If you would prefer to  
give to today's collection  
electronically, please use  
this QR code.  
Many thanks.



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