

West Downland Benefice

Zoom Church



Boxing Day 2021
The Feast of Stephen

Music Past 3 o'clock
Mike Ananin, Judith Orpen & Anoushka Wilson

Carol
sung by St Martin's Voices
Joy to the world! The Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns!
Your sweetest songs employ
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders, of his love.

Opening Prayer

**Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.
Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Poem 'Christmas On The Edge' Malcolm Guite

Christmas sets the centre on the edge;
The edge of town, the outhouse of the inn,
The fringe of empire, far from privilege
And power, on the edge and outer spin
Of turning worlds, a margin of small stars
That edge a galaxy itself light years
From some unguessed at cosmic origin.
Christmas sets the centre at the edge.

And from this day our world is re-aligned
A tiny seed unfolding in the womb
Becomes the source from which we all unfold
And flower into being. We are healed,
The end begins, the tomb becomes a womb,
For now in him all things are re-aligned.

Confession and Absolution

As we kneel with the shepherds before the new born Christ-child,
we open our hearts in penitence and faith.

You were born for our salvation:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

You came as Saviour to bring wholeness and peace:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

You come to bring light into the darkness of our lives:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive *us our* sins
and make *us* holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Carol

de Chazal family

Good King Wenceslas 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,
gathering winter fuel.

“Hither page, and stand by me,
if thou know’st it, telling,
yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?”
“Sire, he lives a good league hence,
underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence,
by Saint Agnes’ fountain.”

“Bring me food and bring me wine,
bring me pine logs hither,
You and I will see him dine,
when we bear them thither.”
Page and monarch,
forth they went, forth they went together,
Through the rude wind’s wild lament
and the bitter weather.

“Sire, the night is darker now,
and the storm blows stronger,
Fails my heart, I know not how;
I can go no longer.”

“Mark my footsteps, my good page,
tread thou in them boldly,
Thou shalt find the winter’s rage
freeze your blood less coldly.”

In his master’s steps he trod,
where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
wealth or rank possessing,
You who now will bless the poor
shall yourselves find blessing.

Animated Retelling of Bible Reading

Acts 7: 51 – end

Reflection

Collect

Gracious Father,
who gave the first martyr Stephen
grace to pray for those who took up stones against him:
grant that in all our sufferings for the truth
we may learn to love even our enemies
and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt,
looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us,
Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Carol

sung by St Martin’s Voices

In the bleak mid-winter
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.

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.

Prayers

Christ, for whom there was no room in the inn,
give courage to all who are homeless;
in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Christ, who fled into Egypt,
give comfort to all refugees;
in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Christ, who fasted in the desert,
give relief to all who are hungry;
in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Christ, who hung in agony on the cross,
give strength to all who suffer;
in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Lord of the Church
hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.

Silence

The Lord's Prayer

We bring our prayers, silent and spoken, together in the prayer that Jesus taught us

OUR Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy Name;

Thy kingdom come;

Thy will be done; in 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.

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and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

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and wonders of his love,

and wonders, wonders, of his love.

Blessing

May the spirit of Christmas which is Peace ...

The gladness of Christmas which is Hope ...

And the heart of Christmas which is Love ...

Be ours this day and always. **Amen.**

We open the door, or look out of the window

To a troubled world

peace from Christ.

To a searching world

love from Christ.

To a waiting world

hope from Christ. Amen.

Music

Sans Day Carol

Mike Ananin, Judith Orpen & Anoushka Wilson

As our service ends please turn your microphone on so that you can chat.

When you are ready to leave please remember to wave good-bye