

Family Carol Service
10.30 am 7th December 2025

Welcome:

Thanks in advance.

Lighting of the Advent Candle - 2nd Sunday of Advent:

Last week we lit our first candle which represented Hope. Our second candle represents Peace. (Two volunteers.)

We long for the peace of Christ in the world.

Come Prince of Peace

All sing:

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has power to save us.

Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts.

Shine in the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church

Gathered today.

The second candle is lit and this response is used.

Listen for the voice of the prophet crying out in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord.

Come Prince of Peace.

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him and the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

Christ, shine on the earth today.

Carol :Once in Royal David's City

Once in royal David's city

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.

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 heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1823-1895)

Prayers – (*Raven?*)

As we gather together as the family of God, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church: may it bring the good news of God's love to a needy world;

for the world: may we all recognize our responsibility for its future, and work together for justice and peace;

for all in special need - for those who are sick, lonely, scared or sad: may the peace and light of the Christ-child bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 9: 2-3a, 6-7a (??)

To Us a Child is born

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light.
They lived in a land of shadows,
but now light is shining on them.
You have given them great joy, Lord;
you have made them happy.

A child is born to us!
A son is given to us!
And he will be our ruler.
He will be called, "Wonderful Counsellor,"
"Mighty God," "Eternal Father,"
"Prince of Peace."
His royal power will continue to grow;
his kingdom will always be at peace.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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.**

**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;
yet 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 (1835–1893)

Second Reading: Luke 1:26-32, 34-38 (?? ??)

The Birth of Jesus Is Announced

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!"

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant.

The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"

Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do."

"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol – On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

**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 we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
Then why should we 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 earth 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.”**

Traditional English carol, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Third Reading: Luke 2v1- 5 (??)

Journey to Bethlehem

At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown.

Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Carol: Little Donkey

**Little donkey, little donkey
on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards
with your precious load.**

Been a long time, little donkey

through the winter's night
Don't give up now, little donkey,
Bethlehem's in sight.

Ring out those bells tonight
Bethlehem, Bethlehem
Follow that star tonight
Bethlehem, Bethlehem

Little donkey, little donkey
had a heavy day
Little donkey carry Mary
safely on her way.

Eric Boswell (1921-2009)

Fourth Reading: Luke 2v 6-7 (??)

The Birth of Jesus

While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Carol : Away in a manger

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 you, Lord Jesus! look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
Close by me forever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Fifth Reading: Luke 2v8-20 (??)

The Shepherds and the Angels

There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid,

But the angel said to them, “Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Saviour was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!”

: When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us.”

: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sketch by Richard

Carol: While shepherds watched

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.**

**Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled minds;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
To you and all mankind.**

**To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
And this shall be the sign**

**The heavenly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid**

**Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song**

**All glory be to God on high,
And to the Earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from Heaven to men
Begin and never cease.**

Nahum Tate (1652–1715)

Sixth Reading: Luke 2 21-32 (??)

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

A week later he was named Jesus, the name which the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

They took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah.

When the parents brought the child Jesus into the Temple, Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:

“Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,
and you may let your servant go in peace.
With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:
A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles
and bring glory to your people Israel.”

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol: Joy to the World

**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!
Let men their 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.**

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Seventh Reading: Matthew 2:1-12 (???)

Visitors from the East

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterward, some men who studied the stars came from the East to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard about this, he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, "Where will the Messiah be born?"

"In the town of Bethlehem in Judea," they answered. "For this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶ 'Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
you are by no means the least of the leading cities of Judah;
for from you will come a leader
who will guide my people Israel.'"

So Herod called the visitors from the East to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: "Go and make a careful search for the child; and when you find him, let me know, so that I too may go and worship him."

And so they left, and on their way they saw the same star they had seen in the East. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshiped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him.

Then they returned to their country by another road, since God had warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol: We three Kings

**We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star**

*O Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy Perfect Light*

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown him again
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign**

O Star of wonder...

**Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh
Pray'r and praising, all men raising
Worship him, God most high**

O Star of wonder...

**Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes of life of gathering gloom
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying**

Sealed in the stone-cold tomb

O Star of wonder...

**Glorious now behold him arise
King and God and Sacrifice
Alleluia, Alleluia
Earth to heaven replies.**

***O Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy Perfect Light***

John Henry Hopkins Jr. (1820–1891)

Eighth Reading: Titus 3v4-8 (Mario)

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour was revealed, he saved us. It was not because of any good deeds that we ourselves had done, but because of his own mercy that he saved us, through the Holy Spirit, who gives us new birth and new life by washing us.

God poured out the Holy Spirit abundantly on us through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that by his grace we might be put right with God and come into possession of the eternal life we hope for. This is a true saying.

And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

[Interview with Rachael about the Level Trust](#)

Offertory Carol: See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw

See him lying on a bed of straw:
A draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore
The Prince of glory is his name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to men:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the Prince of glory when he came.*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
show where Jesus in the manger lies;
shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise
to see the Saviour of the world!

*O now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to men:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the Prince of glory when he came.*

Angels, sing the song that you began,
bring God's glory to the heart of man;
sing that Bethl'em's little baby can
be salvation to the soul.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to men:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the Prince of glory when he came.*

Mine are riches from your poverty,
from your innocence eternity;
mine forgiveness by your death for me,
child of sorrow for my joy.

O now carry me to Bethlehem

*to see the Lord appear to men:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the Prince of glory when he came.*

Michael Perry Copyright © 1965 Jubilate Hymns

Closing Responses:

Heavenly Father, for sending Jesus into our fallen world to save us from our sins and show us your love,

We praise and thank you.

For sending prophets and angels, and giving us your Word so that we can know about him.

We praise and thank you.

For giving trust and obedience to Mary and Joseph,

We praise and thank you.

For letting ordinary folk like the shepherds to be the first to greet him, and the important people like the wise-men bow down before him.

We praise and thank you.

For keeping him safe from the threats of Herod,

We praise and thank you.

For giving us the best gift of all time in the form of a baby, your own Son, Jesus Christ,

We praise and thank you - this Christmas time and always.

Amen.

Blessing :

The joy of the angels,
the wonder of the shepherds,
and the peace of the Christ child,
fill your hearts this Christmas time;
and the blessing of God the Father,
God the Son and God the Holy Spirit

be with you now and always. **Amen**

Call the children up to thank them and sing:

We wish you a merry Christmas.

We wish you a Merry Christmas;

We wish you a Merry Christmas;

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Good tidings we bring to you and your kin;

Good tidings for Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Play out song: Winter Wonderland (words by Hilary Barnes)

Sleigh bells ring, are you list'nin'?

At the pole, snow is glist'nin'.

A beautiful sight, we're happy to-night,

Walkin' in the footprints of the Lord!

Gone away are the mistakes,

Here to stay are the re-makes.

We sing a love song, as we go a -long

Walkin' in the footprints of the Lord!

In the Arctic we are on a mission;

learning of the love God has for all.

We are part of God's big expedition

To listen and respond, to hear His call.

God is good; yes, we know it.

Come along, let us show it,

to face unafraid the plans that we made

Walkin' in the footprints of the Lord!

Walkin' in the footprints of the Lord!

Lyrics – Hilary Barnes

**We are here as God's family, to draw closer to God, to live out our faith and welcome
all into the love of God**