

the Charterhouse

Christmas Carol Service 2020

With special thanks to the Drapers' Company and Pegasus Choir

Preacher - The Revd. Canon Ann Clarke
Organist - Brother Graham Matthews
Pegasus Choir conductor - Matthew Altham



My brothers and sisters: in the name of Christ I welcome you to the Charterhouse Christmas Carol service.

We have come together as Christmas draws near to prepare for our celebration of the birth of God's beloved Son. Through the days of Advent we will be following the light of Christ, and now we travel in spirit with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem to acclaim with the multitude of the heavenly host the coming of the Prince of Peace.

Through Scripture and silence, prayer and song, let us hear again the wonderful story of our redemption, and, hearing, let us rejoice and respond with lively faith.

All pray in silence for a while.

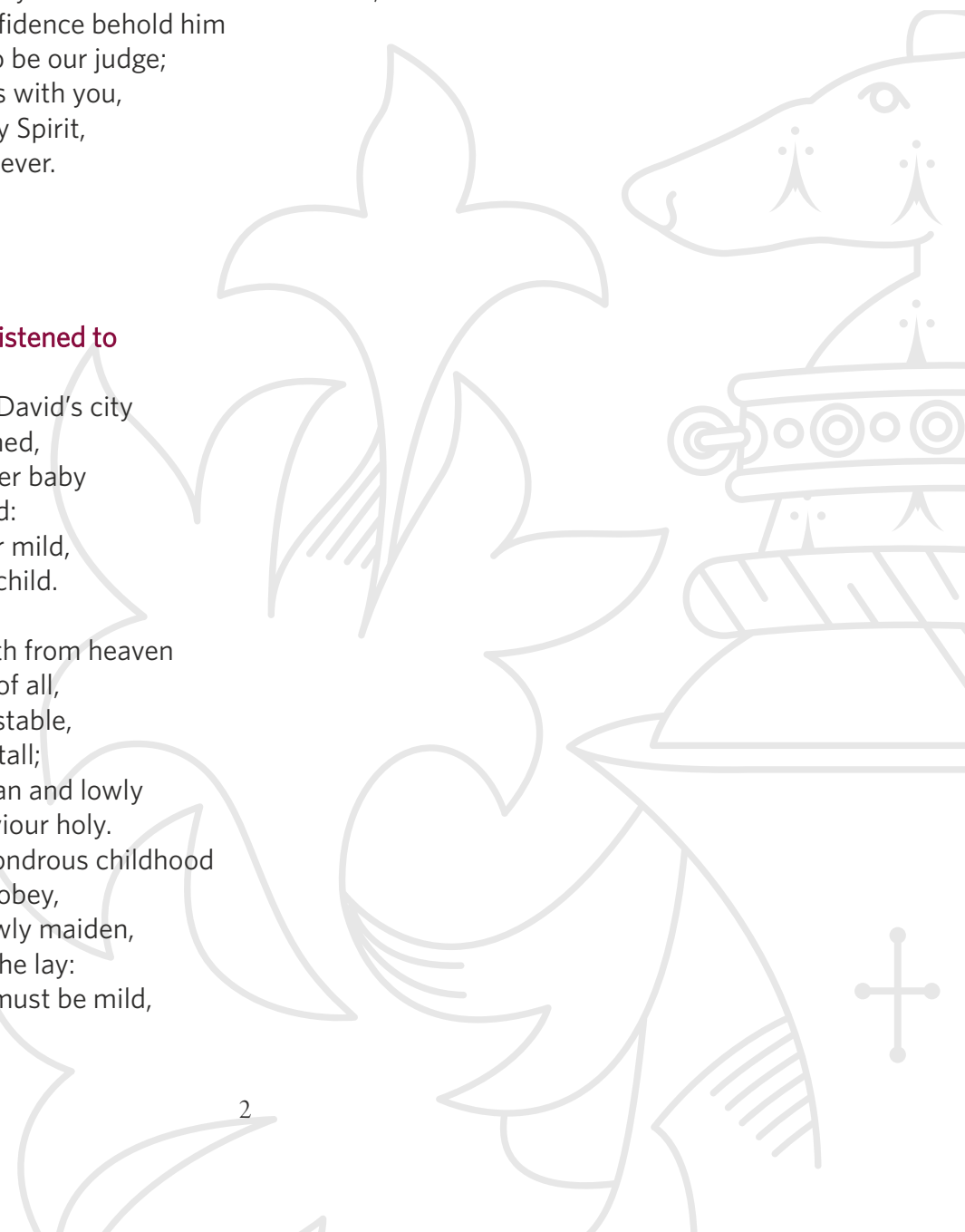
Almighty God,
you make us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
we may with sure confidence behold him
when he shall come to be our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All
Amen.

Opening Carol: **to be listened to**

Soloist: 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
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be mild,
obedient, good as he.



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.

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.

First Reading: Isaiah 9.2,6,7 A Brother

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness -
on them light has shined.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this

Rocking Carol - Czech Traditional

Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;
We will lend a coat of fur,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,

We will rock you, rock you, rock you:
See the fur to keep you warm,
Snugly round your tiny form.
Mary's little baby, sleep, sweetly sleep,
Sleep in comfort, slumber deep;
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you:
We will serve you all we can,
Darling, darling little man.

Second Reading: Micah 5.2-4 A Brother

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."
Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labour gives birth
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites. He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.
And he will be their peace.

Carol To be listened to

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;
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.

Choir: A Hymn to the Virgin – Benjamin Britten

Of one who is so fair and bright
Velut maris stella, [Like a star of the sea]
Brighter than the day is light,
Parens et puella: [Both mother and maiden]
I cry to thee, thou see to me,
Lady, pray thy Son for me,
Tam pia, [so pure]
That I may come to thee.
Maria! [Mary]

All this world was forlorn,
Eva peccatrice, [because of Eve, a sinner]
Till our Lord was yborn,
De te genetrix. [through you, his mother]
With ave it went away,
Darkest night, and comes the day
Salutis; [of salvation]
The well springeth out of thee.
Virtutis. [of virtue]

Lady, flower of everything,
Rosa sine spina, [Rose without thorn]
Thou bare Jesu, heaven's king,
Gratia divina: [by divine grace]
Of all thou bearest the prize,
Lady, queen of paradise
Electa: [chosen]
Maid mild, mother
es effecta. [you are made]



Third Reading: The Master

Christmas was coming—DH Lawrence

Choir: Adam lay ybounden – Boris Ord

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter,
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took.
As clerkes finden,
Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our ladie,
Abeen heav'ne queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gratias!

Fourth Reading: Luke 2.1-20 A Brother

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol : to listen to

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 in 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.

Choir: Sing Lullaby - Herbert Howells

Sing lullaby,
While snow doth gently fall,
Sing lullaby
To Jesus Born in an oxen stall.
Sing lullaby to Jesus
Born now in Bethlehem.
The naked blackthorn's growing
To weave his diadem.
Sing lullaby to Jesus
While thickly snow doth fall.
Sing lullaby to Jesus
The Saviour of all.
Sing lullaby.

Words by F.W. Harvey

Fifth Reading: John 1.1-14 A Brother

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.

Choir: Carol of the Bells – Mykola Leontovych

Hark! How the bells
Sweet silver bells
All seem to say
Throw cares away
Christmas is here
Bringing good cheer
To young and old
Meek and the bold
Ding, dong, ding, dong
That is their song
With joyful ring
All carolling
One seems to hear
Words of good cheer
From ev'rywhere
Filling the air

Oh how they pound
Raising the sound
O'er hill and dale
Telling their tale
Gaily they ring
While people sing
Songs of good cheer
Christmas is here
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas



On, on they send
On without end
Their joyful tone
To ev'ry home
Ding, dong, ding, dong

Carol : to be listened to

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, etc.

See how the shepherds
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear ;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:
O come, let us, etc.

Lo, star-led chieftains,
magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;
we to the Christ-child
bring our hearts' oblations:
O come, let us, etc.



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?
O come, let us, etc.

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God in the highest:"
O come, let us, etc.

Prayer and Blessing

The Word of life which was from the beginning
we proclaim to you.
The darkness is passing away
and the true light is already shining;
the Word of life which was from the beginning.
That which we heard, which we saw with our eyes,
and touched with our own hands, we proclaim to you.
For our fellowship is with the Father,
and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
The Word of life which was from the beginning
we proclaim to you.

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

