

St Peter & St Paul's Church, Aylesford & Eccles



**Seven Readings and Carols
for Choir and Congregation**

Sunday 19th December 2021, 4pm

Carol

Once in royal David's city (521)

First verse solo

Welcome

Bidding Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father,
who 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 those who 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.**

Choir Carol

Up! Good Christen folk, and listen
Ding-dong ding: Ding-a-dong-a-ding:
Ding-dong ding-dong: Ding-a-dong-ding

Up! Good Christen folk, and listen
How the merry church-bells ring,
And from steeple bid good people
Come adore the new-born King:

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmas-tide,
Bringing gladness, chasing sadness,
Show'ring blessings far and wide,

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
Ex Maria Virgine,
In a stable ('tis no fable),
Christus natus hodie.

Ding-dong ding: Ding-a-dong-a-ding:
Ding-dong ding-dong: Ding-a-dong-ding
George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)

First Reading

Isaiah 9.2, 6-7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Carol

The holly and the ivy (645)

Second Reading

Micah 5:2–4

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of Bethlehem.

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labour has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock In the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth;

Carol

O little town of Bethlehem (508)

Third Reading

Luke 1.26-38

The angel Gabriel visits the virgin Mary.

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Carol

The angel Gabriel from heaven came (634)

Fourth Reading

Luke 2.1-7

Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Choir Carol

Bethlehem Down

“When He is King we will give Him a King’s gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown.
Beautiful robes!”, said the young girl to Joseph,
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight,
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music,
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When His is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary,
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music,
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

Words: Bruce Blunt (1899–1957)

Music: Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Fifth Reading

Luke 2.8-16

Angels tell shepherds of the birth of Jesus.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living
out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, 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, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Carol

While shepherds watched their flocks by night (745)

Sixth Reading

Matthew 2.1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been

born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘but you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.” When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Choir Carol

Star Carol

Sing this night, for a boy is born in Bethlehem,
Christ our Lord in a lowly manger lies;
Bring your gifts, come and worship at his cradle,
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!
*See his star shining bright
in the sky this Christmas night!
Follow me joyfully; Hurry to Bethlehem
and see the son of Mary!*

Angels bright, come from heaven's highest glory,
Bear the news with its message of good cheer:
"Sing, rejoice, for a King is come to save us,
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!"
See his star ...

See, he lies in his mother's tender keeping;
Jesus Christ in her loving arms asleep.
Shepherds poor, come to worship and adore him,
Offer their humble gifts, before the son of Mary.
See his star ...

Let us all pay our homage at the manger,
Sing his praise on this joyful Christmas Night;
Christ is come, bringing promise of salvation;
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!
See his star ...

Words & music: John Rutter (b. 1945). arr. Kenneth Pont

Seventh Reading

John 1.1-14

John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became 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.

Carol

In the bleak mid-winter (326)

Closing Words, Prayers and Blessing

Carol

O come, all ye faithful (479, verses 1, 2, 5 and 6)

Have a
peaceful
and
joyful
Christmas

If you would like to support the ministry of this church, you will find a collection plate and a QR code for mobile phone giving near the door. Your donation will be very much appreciated.

Copyright acknowledgement (where not already indicated above):

Some material included in this service is copyright:
© The Archbishops' Council 2000.

CCLI 417757 and Streaming Plus Licence 159759.

Web: aylesford-church.org.uk

 [stpeterandstpaulschurchaylesford](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterandstpaulschurchaylesford)