



PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL

Radio Cambridgeshire Service of Carols and Readings for Christmas



Sunday 20th December 2020

c. 9.00 a.m.

(exact time depends on broadcast schedule)

**This service is presented live from Peterborough Cathedral
and sung by Peterborough Cathedral Choir**

Tansy Castledine *Director of Music*
Christopher Strange *Organist*
Imogen Morgan *Organ Scholar*

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.

And through all his wondrous childhood
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.

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 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.

Words: Mrs C. F. Alexander (1818–95)
Tune: Irby

Welcome and Opening Prayer

The Revd Canon Dr Rowan Williams, Precentor, Peterborough Cathedral

The year 2020 has brought great anxiety and uncertainty for many, if not all of us. The timeless Christmas message of 'peace on earth' has never been more needed.

As we celebrate once again the birth of Jesus Christ, God's gift of himself to the world, this service is by way of a small gift from the Cathedral community to the people of Peterborough. Our wonderful Cathedral musicians; they've been working really hard to make it possible for us all to hear the Christmas story once more, and we're delighted to have this chance to share some of that work with you this morning as we welcome you to the Radio Cambridgeshire Carol Service today. We hope everyone listening at home is in good voice and ready to join in!

Although we meet in such challenging circumstances, may the love and peace of the Christ-child be with you, now and always.

Let us pray:

God of comfort and joy,
may we know your presence with us today,
and bring your gentle, joyful love to others,
this Christmastime and always.

Amen.

Choir

Going through the hills on a night all starry
on the way to Bethlehem,
Far away I heard a shepherd boy piping
on the way to Bethlehem.

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy
that Christ the newborn King
is come to bring us peace on earth,
and he's lying cradled there at Bethlehem.'*

'Tell me, shepherd boy piping tunes so merrily
on the way to Bethlehem,
Who will hear your tunes on these hills so lonely
on the way to Bethlehem.'

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy
that Christ the newborn King
is come to bring us peace on earth,
and he's lying cradled there at Bethlehem.'*

'None may hear my pipes on these hills so lonely
on the way to Bethlehem;
But a King will hear me play sweet lullabies
when I get to Bethlehem.'

*Angels in the sky came down from on high,
hovered o'er the manger where the babe was lying*

*cradled in the arms of his mother Mary,
sleeping now at Bethlehem.*

‘Where is this new King, shepherd boy piping merrily,
Is he here at Bethlehem?’

‘I will find him soon by the star shining brightly
in the sky o’er Bethlehem.’

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
‘Dance and sing for joy
that Christ the newborn King
is come to bring us peace on earth,
and he’s lying cradled there at Bethlehem.’*

‘May I come with you, shepherd boy piping merrily,
come with you to Bethlehem?’

Pay my homage too at the new King’s cradle,
is it far to Bethlehem?’

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
‘Dance and sing for joy
that Christ the infant King
is born this night in lowly stable yonder,
born for you at Bethlehem.’*

Words and music by John Rutter (b 1945)

First Reading *St. Luke 2: 1-5*

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.

Thanks be to God.

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 to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835–93)
Tune: Forest Green

Second Reading *St. Luke 2: 6, 7*

While they were there, the time came for Mary 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.

Thanks be to God.

Choir

What sweeter music can we bring than a carol, for to sing
the birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Dark and dull night, fly hence away, and give the honour to this day
That sees December turn to May.

Why does the chilling winter's morn smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly shorn thus on the sudden? Come and see
The cause, why things thus fragrant be: 'Tis he is born, whose quickening birth
Gives life and lustre, public mirth, to heaven and the underearth.
We see him come, and know him ours, who, with his sunshine and his showers,

Turns all the patient ground to flowers. The darling of the world is come,
And fit it is, we find a room to welcome him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart,
Which we will give him; and bequeath this holly, and this ivy wreath,
To do him honour; who's our King, and Lord of all this revelling.

*Words Robert Herrick (1591–1674), abridged and altered
Music: John Rutter (b.1945)*

Third Reading St. Luke 2: 8-14

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!'

Thanks be to God.

Choir

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 bedside till 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.

*Words: American, 19th century
Tune: Cradle Song arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)*

Fourth Reading *St. Luke 2: 15-20*

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.

Thanks be to God.

The Prayers

Let us pray to Jesus our Saviour.
Christ, born in a stable,
give courage to all who are homeless.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, for whom the angels sang,
give the song of the kingdom to all who weep.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, worshipped by the shepherds,
give peace on earth to all who are oppressed.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt,
give humility and wisdom to all who govern.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Jesus, Saviour, child of Mary,
you know us and love us,
you share our lives
and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

As we look for his coming in glory,
we pray as Jesus taught us:

**All: 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 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.**

Choir

Nowell.

Who is there that singeth so, *Nowell?*

I am here, Sir Christèmas.

Welcome, my Lord Sir Christèmas!

Welcome to all, both more and less, come near. *Nowell.*

Dieu vous garde, beaux sieurs, tidings I you bring:

A maid hath borne a child full young,
which causeth you to sing: *Nowell.*

Christ is now born of a pure maid;

In an ox stall he is laid,

Wherefore sing we at a braid: *Nowell.*

Buvez bien, buvez bien par toute la compagnie.

Make good cheer and be right merry,

And sing with us now joyfully: *Nowell.*

Nowell!

Words: Anon (c1500)
Music: William Mathias (1934–92)

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.

Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
joyful all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies,
with th'angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

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 new-born King.

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707–88)
Tune: Mendelssohn*

Organ Voluntary

In dulci jubilo (BWV 729)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)