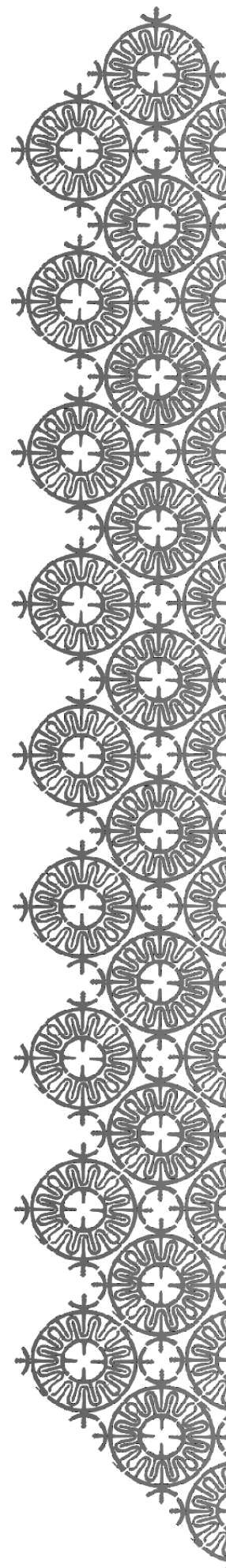
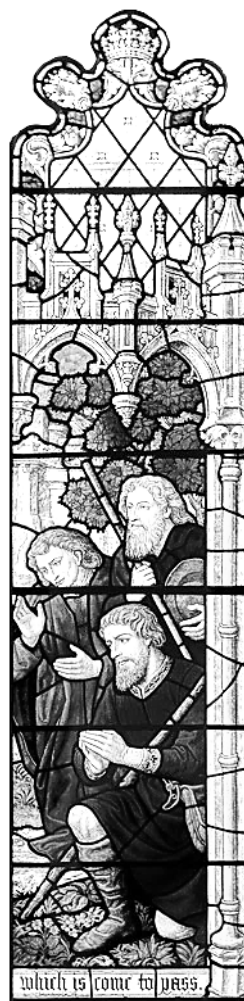
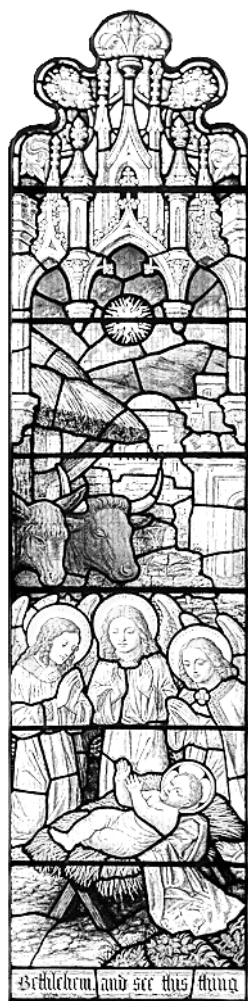


Rochester
CATHEDRAL

A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

December 2020





Growing in Christ since AD604

Welcome to Rochester Cathedral – a place of Christian worship since AD604.

Many thanks to the Rochester Cathedral Choir and the Music Department for their preparations and hard work for this and all the other services and broadcasts during Advent and Christmas.

**On behalf of the Chapter and staff of Rochester Cathedral,
we wish you a very Happy Christmas.**

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ORDER OF SERVICE

Carol

Solo 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.

Choir 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.**

**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.**

The Bidding Prayer

leading into

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 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.

May the almighty God bless us with his grace;
Christ give us the joys of everlasting life,
and unto the fellowship of the citizens above
may the King of angels bring us all.

All **Amen.**

Choir

Verbum caro factum est
Et habitavit in nobis
et vidimus gloriam ejus
gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre
plenum gratiae et Veritatis

*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. (KJV)*

Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)

John 1.14

The First Lesson: Genesis 3.8-15

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head

Carol

Of the Father's heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha: from that Fountain
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.

By his word was all created;
He commanded and 'twas done;
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
All that breathes beneath the sun,
Evermore and evermore.

He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
Evermore and evermore.

O how blest that wondrous birthday,
When the Maid the curse retrieved,
Brought to birth mankind's salvation,
By the Holy Ghost conceived;
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
In her loving arms received,
Evermore and evermore.

**This is he, whom seer and sibyl
Sang in ages long gone by;
This is he of old revealed
In the page of prophecy;
Lo! he comes, the promised Saviour;
Let the world his praises cry!
*Evermore and evermore.***

**Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises.
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
Let your joyous anthems ring,
Every tongue his name confessing,
Countless voices answering,
*Evermore and evermore.***

*Divinum Mysterium ~ Melody from Piaae Cantiones
Theoderici Petri Nylandensis 1582
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)*

*Latin, Prudentius (348-413)
tr. R.F. Davis (1866-1937)*

The Second Lesson: Isaiah 9.2, 6-7
Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

Choir

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealèd,
and all flesh shall see it together;
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Isaiah 40:5

The Third Lesson: Isaiah 11.1-4a, 5-9

The peaceful Kingdom

Carol

**The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail', said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favoured lady.'**

Gloria!

**'For know, a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;
Most highly favoured lady.'**

Gloria!

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name':
Most highly favoured lady.**

Gloria!

**Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
'Most highly favoured lady.'**

Gloria!

*Gabriel's message ~ Basque trad carol,
arr. Charles Edgar Pettman (1866-1943)*

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

The Fourth Lesson: Luke 1.26-38

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

Choir

Nova! Nova! [News! News!]

“Ave” fit ex “Eva” [‘Ave’ has been made from ‘Eve’!]

Gabriel of high degree,
He came down from Trinity
to Nazareth in Galilee.

He met a maiden in a place,
He kneeled down afore her face.
He said : ‘Hail, Mary, full of grace!’

When the maid heard tell of this
She was full sore abashed I-wys
And wened that she had done a miss.

Then said the angel: ‘Dread not you,
You shall conceive in all vertue
A child whose name shall be Jesu’

It is not yet six months agone
since Elizabeth conceived John,
as it was prophesied before.’

Then said the maiden verily:
I am your servant right truly:
ecce ancilla Domini. [Lo, the handmaid of the Lord.]

Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

Traditional English 15th century

The Fifth Lesson: Matthew 1.18-23
St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus

Carol

**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 to-night.**

**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.**

Choir 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.**

*Forest Green ~ English Traditional Melody
arr R Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) descant Thomas Armstrong (1898-1994)*

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

The Sixth Lesson: Luke 2.8-16
The shepherds go to the manger

Choir

Small wonder the star,
small wonder the light,
the angels in chorus,
the shepherds in fright;
but stable and manger for God -
no small wonder!

Small wonder the kings,
small wonder they bore
the gold and the incense,
the myrrh, to adore;
but God gives his life on a cross -
no small wonder!

Small wonder the love,
small wonder the grace,
the power, the glory,
the light of his face;
but all to redeem my poor heart -
no small wonder!

Paul Edwards (b.1955)

Paul Wigmore (b.1925)

The Seventh Lesson: Matthew 2.1-11
The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus

Carol

Silent night, holy night.

**All is calm, all is bright,
round yon virgin mother and child;
holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace.
sleep in heavenly peace.**

Silent night, holy night.

**Shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing alleluia:
Christ the Saviour is born.
Christ the Saviour is born.**

Silent night, holy night.

**Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at thy birth**

Stille nacht ~ Franz Grüber (1787-1863)

Tr. J. F. Young (1820-1885)

The Eighth Lesson:

From 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

'There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest.

'But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time;

'the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.

'And therefore, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!'

Carol

**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 the 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 the 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.***

*Mendelssohn ~ Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and others

The Ninth Lesson: John 1.1-14
St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

Choir

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum
ut animalia viderent
Dominum natum jacentem
in praesepio!
Beata Virgo, cuius viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Christum.

*O great mystery,
and wondrous sacrament,
that animals should see the
new-born Lord, lying in a manger.
lying in their manger!
Blessed Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

A Christmas Responsory

The Blessing

Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with peace and goodwill
and make you partakers of the divine nature;
and the blessing of God almighty,
✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All

Amen.

Carol

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 adore him, 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 adore him, 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 adore him, etc

Adeste Fideles ~ J.F. Wade (1711-1786)
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

Latin, 18th century
tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880)

Organ Voluntary: Finale from Symphony No.1 Op.14
– Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

The Cathedral Church of Christ
and the Blessed Virgin Mary

