

Please stand as the lights are turned off

Matin Responory

I look from afar:
and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

High and low, rich and poor,
one with another,

Go ye out to meet him and say:
Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep.

Tell us, art thou he that should come?
Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come
to reign over thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.

I look from afar:
and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

*Words: translated from the First Responory of Advent Sunday in the Office of Matins (early medieval Roman rite)
Music: Palestrina (c1525-1594), adapted by Stephen Cleobury (b 1948)*

Processional Hymn

Choir only

- 1 Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
and manifest thy virgin-birth:
let every age adoring fall;
such birth befits the God of all.

All

- 2 Begotten of no human will,
but of the Spirit, thou art still
the Word of God, in flesh arrayed,
the Saviour, now to us displayed.
- 3 From God the Father he proceeds,
to God the Father back he speeds;
runs out his course to death and hell,
returns on God's high throne to dwell.

- 4 O equal to thy Father, thou!
 Gird on the fleshly mantle now;
 the weakness of our mortal state
 with deathless might invigorate.
- 5 Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
 and darkness glow with new-born light,
 no more shall night extinguish day,
 where love's bright beams their power display.
- 6 O Jesu, virgin-born, to thee
 Eternal praise and glory be,
 whom with the Father we adore,
 and Holy spirit, evermore. Amen.

*Words: Veni Redemptor gentium, St Ambrose (c340-397) tr J M Neale (1818-1866) and others
 Music: Puer Nobis Nascitur, adapt Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), harm G R Woodward (1848-1934)
 (Ancient & Modern – 32)*

Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. Let us hear, in lessons from Holy Scripture, how the prophets of Israel foretold that God would visit and redeem his waiting people. Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, will bring all men and all things into the glory of God's eternal kingdom. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.

But first, let us pray for the world which God so loves, for those who have not heard the good news of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death; and for the Church in this place and everywhere, that it may be freed from all evil and fear, and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words which Christ himself taught us:

All Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; in 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.

Carol

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
the tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell,
his beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell,
the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and wait awhile:
I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and wait awhile:
under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
this fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

*Words: from Divine Hymns or Spiritual Songs, compiled by Joshua Smith
Music: Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987)*

First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-8 *The Prophet proclaims good news to a people in exile*
read by Mr John Tomalin (Lay Chair, Rutland Deanery Synod)

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Carol

Long ago, prophets knew Christ would come, born a Jew,
come to make all things new; bear his People's burden, freely love and pardon.

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing choirs, sing, sing, sing!

When he comes, when he comes, who will make him welcome?

God in time, God in man, this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man, born himself of woman, God divinely human.

Mary, hail! Though afraid, she believed, she obeyed.

In her womb God is laid: till the time expected, nurtured and protected,

Journey ends! Where afar Bethlem shines, like a star,

stable door stands ajar. Unborn Son of Mary, Saviour, do not tarry!

Words: Fred Pratt Green

Music: Piae Cantiones 1582, arr Malcolm Archer, b 1952

Please stand

Hymn

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| 1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. | 3 Born thy people to deliver; born a child and yet a king; born to reign in us for ever; now thy gracious kingdom bring. |
| 2 Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart. | 4 By thy own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone: By thy all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne. |

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788); Music: Cross of Jesus, John Stainer (1840-1901)
(Ancient & Modern – 30)*

Please sit

Second Lesson

Jeremiah 23:5-6 *The Lord promises to send his people a righteous King
read by Mrs Margaret Pattinson (Churchwarden, Oakham)*

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits, truly my hope is in you.

O Lord of Light, our only hope of glory,
your radiance shines in all who look to you,
come, light the hearts of all in dark and shadow.

O Spring of Joy, rain down upon our spirits,
our thirsty hearts are yearning for your Word,
come, make us whole, be comfort to our hearts.

O Root of Life, implant your seed within us,
and in your advent, draw us all to you,
our hope reborn in dying and in rising.

O Key of Knowledge, guide us in our pilgrimage,
we ever seek, yet unfulfilled remain,
open to us the pathway of your peace.

Come, let us bow before the God who made us,
let ev'ry heart be opened to the Lord,
for we are all the people of his hand.

Here we shall meet the Maker of the heavens,
Creator of the mountains and the seas,
Lord of the stars, and present to us now.

Words: Psalm 95 and 'O' Antiphons, Marty Haugen (b 1950); Music: Marty Haugen

Third Lesson

*Zechariah 9:9-10 The Lord promises that the King will come to Israel in peace
read by Mr David Perril (Team Reader)*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo,
your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on
a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from
Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem; and the battle-bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to
sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Please stand

Hymn

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear:
*Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Men

2 O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave:

Women

3 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight:

7 O come, O come, thou Lord of Might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe:

Men

4 O come, thou Wisdom from above
who ord'rest all things through thy love;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go:

Women

5 O come, Desire of nations, bring
all peoples to their Saviour King;
thou Cornerstone, who makest one,
complete in us thy work begun:

All

6 O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery:

Words: Latin Advent Antiphons tr J M Neale (1818-1866)

Music: Veni Emmanuel, adapted from a French Missal by T Helmore (1811-1890), arr Paul Ledington Wright

Please sit

Fourth Lesson

Haggai 2:6-9 *The Prophet foretells the advent of the desire of all nations
read by Mrs Barbara Clemence (Governor, Oakham Church of England School)*

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendour, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.

Carol

People, look East. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth, and set the table.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Star is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast him who cometh from the East.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

*Words: Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965)
Music: Besançon carol melody, arr Malcolm Archer (b 1952)*

Please stand

Hymn

- 1 Hills of the North, rejoice,
river and mountain-spring,
hark to the advent voice;
valley and lowland, sing.
Christ comes in righteousness and love,
he brings salvation from above.
- 2 Isles of the Southern seas,
sing to the listening earth,
carry on every breeze
hope of a world's new birth:
In Christ shall all be made anew,
his word is sure, his promise true.
- 3 Lands of the East, arise,
he is your brightest morn,
greet him with joyous eyes,
praise shall his path adorn:
Your seers have longed to know their Lord,
to you he comes, the final word.
- 4 Shores of the utmost West,
lands of the setting sun,
welcome the heavenly guest
in whom the dawn has come:
He brings a never-ending light
who triumphed o'er our darkest night
- 5 Shout, as ye journey home,
songs be in every mouth,
lo, from the North they come,
from East and West and South:
In Jesus all shall find their rest,
In him the universe be blest.

*Words: Editors of English Praise 1975, based on Charles E Oakley (1832-1865)
Music: Little Cornard, Martin Shaw (1875-1958)
(Ancient & Modern – 39)*

Please sit

Fifth Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-6 *The Prophet foretells the glory of the Kingdom of God*
read by ???

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

Carol

I sing of a maiden that is makëless:
King of all kingës to her son she ches.

He came all so stillë there his mother was,
as dew in Aprillë that falleth on the grass.

He came all so stillë to his mother's bow'r,
as dew in Aprillë that falleth on the flow'r.

He came all so stillë there his mother lay,
as dew in Aprillë that falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden was never none but she;
well may such a lady Goddës mother be.

Words: 15th century English
Music: Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989)

Please stand

Hymn

- 1 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.
- 2 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy name, the Lord, the mighty one.

- 3 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.
- 4 Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!

Words: from Luke 1.46-55, Timothy Dudley-Smith (b 1926)
Music: Woodlands, Walter Greatorex (1877-1949)
(Ancient & Modern – 394)

Please sit

Sixth Lesson

Luke 1, 26-38 *The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary*
read by ??? (Laudamus)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Carol

O King, and Desire of all nations, thou cornerstone, who has made both one.
Come and save man, whom thou formedst from the clay.
Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Words: from the Latin O Antiphon
Music: John Stainer (1840-1901)

Please stand

Seventh Lesson

Mark 1:1-15 *Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God*
read by Revd Janet Tebby (Team Vicar)

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight"'. John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Vesper Responary & Collect

Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed;
Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord, he will be with you
Stand ye still and ye shall see the salvation of the Lord
Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord, he will be with you
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost
Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord, he will be with you

We wait for thy loving kindness, O Lord
In the midst of thy temple.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly expectation of thy coming, grant that we, who with joy receive thy only-begotten Son as our Redeemer, may without fear behold him when he shall come to be our judge, even thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Music: Palestrina (c1525-1594), adapted by Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

The Blessing

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Hymn

- 1 Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.
- 2 Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at naught and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the Tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.
- 3 Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!
- 4 Yea, Amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) & John Cennick (1718-1755)

Music: Helmsley, melody noted by Thomas Olivers (1725-1799),

included in John Wesley's Select Hymns with Tunes Annext 1765 (Ancient & Modern – 41)

Laudamus – joint choirs of the Oakham Team Ministry
Director of Music: **Kevin Slingsby**; Organist: **Paul Butler**
Team Rector: **Revd Canon Lee Francis-Deqhani**