



All Saints' Church
Oakham

Town Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

a Carol Service for the
whole of Oakham

with Laudamus, Oakham Team Choir

followed by wine & mince pies

Thursday 21st December – 7:30pm

WELCOME to this Carol Service which seeks to bring the whole Town together in this Season of Peace and Goodwill

The Bidding Prayer which begins the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols is almost 100 years old. Written by the Dean of Kings College, Cambridge in 1918, it captures the essence of why we sing carols and read the lessons that speak of the birth of Jesus. We meet in this Parish Church that sits in the centre of our Town which itself is at the heart of our County. These are very special places for us – Parish, Town and County – we know them well, we love and cherish them. Yet the prayer asks us to in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem. We are encouraged to leave all the things we know and give us security in order to travel to the very place where the whole history of the world was transformed by the birth of this child.

At the same time the prayer is deeply connected with this community in which we live and which this church seeks to serve. It rejoices the heart of God that we begin by praying for the vulnerable at the heart of our town, thinking particularly of the sick, and disadvantaged. As Churches and voluntary organisations we commit ourselves to caring for those who are often forgotten amidst all the festivities.

Representatives of our civic life and the other churches in the town are joining in the reading of the lessons and I am grateful to Mr Kevin Slingsby, the Director of Music, and the choir for their considerable efforts in drawing this service together. Please stay for refreshments afterwards.

Canon Lee Francis-Dehqani
Vicar of Oakham

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols celebrates the birth of Jesus, and the nine lessons from Genesis, the Prophets and the Gospels tell the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus, while the readings are interspersed with Christmas carols and hymns for choir and congregation. The format of the service is based on an order drawn up by Edward White Benson, then Bishop of Truro, for Christmas Eve 1880. It has since been adapted and used by churches all over the world, but most famously, and in the form now most commonly used, by Eric Milner-White, Dean of King's College, Cambridge for the College's first service in 1918.

Once in Royal David's City was written by Cecil Frances Alexander as a hymn for children in 1848, and was set to music by Henry John Gauntlett. The last verse is arranged with descant by David Willcocks.

Adam Lay Ybounden is a 15th century macaronic English text of unknown authorship, which relates to the events of Genesis chapter 3. In medieval theology, Adam was supposed to have remained in bonds with the other patriarchs from the time of his death until the crucifixion of Christ (the '4000 winters'). The second verse narrates the Fall of Man following Adam's temptation by Eve and the serpent. The third verse suggests the subsequent redemption of man by the birth of Jesus Christ by Mary, who was to become the Queen of Heaven as a result, and the song concludes on a positive note hinting at Thomas Aquinas' concept of the 'felix culpa' (blessed fault). The text has been set to music by numerous composers in modern times, and Boris Ord's version is probably best known.

Unto Us is Born a Son is the English translation by George Ratcliffe Woodward of the medieval Latin carol 'Puer nobis nascitur', first published in the 1582 Finnish song book 'Piae Cantiones'. Tonight's arrangement is by David Willcocks.

Torches is a setting of a Spanish carol from Galicia, Villancico de Navidad, written in 1951 by the British composer of South African descent, John Joubert.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear was written by Edmund Sears, pastor of the Unitarian Church in Wayland, Massachusetts in 1849, and is usually sung in the UK to the tune Noel, adapted from a traditional English melody arranged by Arthur Sullivan.

O Little Town of Bethlehem was written by Phillips Brooks after a visit to Bethlehem in 1865. It was set to music by his organist, Lewis Redner, the tune it is usually sung to in the USA. It has also been set to music by a number of other composers, but the traditional hymn tune Forest Green that we use tonight was adapted by Ralph Vaughan Williams from an English Folk Ballad. The setting for verse 3 is by Philip Ledger.

The tune of **Ding Dong Merrily on High** first appeared as a secular dance tune known under the title *Branle de l'Official* in a dance book written by Jehan Tabourot (1519–1593). The lyrics are from English composer George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848–1934), and the carol was first published in 1924 in his *The Cambridge Carol-Book*, when Charles Wood harmonised the tune. Woodward took an interest in church bell ringing, which no doubt aided him in writing it. The macaronic style is characteristic of Woodward's delight in archaic poetry. The carol is particularly noted for the Latin refrain *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!* (*Glory! Hosanna in the highest!*), where the sung vowel sound 'o' of 'Gloria' is fluidly sustained through a lengthy rising and falling melismatic melodic sequence.

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen is an English traditional carol dating from the mid 18th century, here arranged by David Willcocks.

O Holy Night is a well-known carol composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847 to the French poem 'Minuit, chrétiens' (Midnight, Christians) by Placide Cappeau. In both the French original and the familiar English version by John Sullivan Dwight, the text reflects on the birth of Jesus and mankind's redemption.

A Little Child there is yborn is an anonymous 15th century text which has been set to music by a number of composers, but tonight is heard in the setting by Malcolm Archer, Director of Chapel Music at Winchester College, and formerly of St Paul's Cathedral, and displays typical rhythmic spice with its alternating 4/4 and 7/8 time signatures.

While Shepherds Watched was written by England's Poet Laureate, Nahum Tate and appeared in Tate and Brady's 1700 supplement to their Psalms of David. At the time it was the only Christmas hymn authorised to be sung by the Anglican Church, and has been set to many different tunes. It first appeared set to 'Winchester Old', the 'traditional' tune, in 1861.

In the Bleak Midwinter is based on a poem by the English poet Christina Rossetti written before 1872 and published posthumously in her Poetic Works in 1904. It became a Christmas carol after it appeared in The English Hymnal in 1906 with a setting by Holst. Harold Darke's anthem setting of 1909 that we hear tonight was named the best Christmas carol in a poll of some of the world's leading choirmasters and choral experts in 2008.

We Three Kings was published in Reverend John Henry Hopkins, Jr's *Carols, Hymns and Songs* in 1863, with both lyrics and music by him, although it featured in an elaborate holiday pageant which he organised for the students of the General Theological Seminary in New York City in 1857 while serving as their music director. Tonight's arrangement by Paul Leddington-Wright (principal conductor for BBC's Songs of Praise) features flamboyant interludes between the verses.

O Come All Ye Faithful is a translation of the original Latin words 'Adeste Fideles' (also the name of the tune), verses 1, 2, 6 & 7 (verse 7 is reserved for Christmas Day) being the earliest, translated by Frederick Oakeley, and verses 3, 4 & 5 being added in the 18th century, translated by William Thomas Brooke. The descant arrangement to verse 6 is by David Willcocks, as is the fanfare introduction, written for brass and arranged for organ by David Houlder.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing was written Charles Wesley and first appeared in 1739. The tune commonly used today is not the original one, but is an arrangement by William H Cummings of music from Felix Mendelssohn's secular cantata 'Festgesang', written to commemorate Gutenberg's invention of the printing press! The last verse arrangement and fanfare introduction are by David Willcocks, arr David Houlder.

Please stand and join in from verse 3

Processional Hymn

Solo:

1. 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:

2. 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.

All:

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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;
when like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

*Words: C. F. Alexander; Music: H. J. Gauntlett; harmonised, A. H. Mann
descant, David Willcocks; Oxford University Press*

Please remain standing

Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas-tide our care and delight
to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels:
in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem
and see this thing which is come to pass,
and the Babe lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture
the tale of the loving purposes of God
from the first days of our disobedience
unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child;
and let us make this church glad with our carols of praise:

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world;
for peace and goodwill over all the earth;
for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build.

And let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless,
the cold, the hungry and the oppressed;
the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn;
the lonely and the unloved;
the aged and the little children;
and all who know not the loving kindness of God.

Lastly let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us,
but upon another shore and in a greater light,
that multitude which no man can number,
whose hope was in the Word made flesh,
and with whom we for evermore are one.
These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven,
in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

**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.**

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. **Amen.**

Please sit

Carol

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 lady abeen heavenè queen.

Blessed be the time that apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen: Deo gracias!

Words: anon, 15th century Music: Boris Ord (1897-1961)

First Lesson

Reader: Mr Derek Cullen (Laudamus & Oakham Church Choir)

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Genesis 3

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Please stand

Hymn

1. Unto us is born a Son,
king of quires supernal:
see on earth his life begun,
of lords the Lord eternal,
of lords the Lord eternal.

2. Christ, from heav'n descending low,
comes on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know,
becradled in the manger,
becradled in the manger.

Men:

3. This did Herod sore affray,
and grievously bewilder,
so he gave the word to slay,
and slew the little childer,
and slew the little childer.

Ladies:

4. Of his love and mercy mild
this the Christmas story;
and O that Mary's gentle Child
might lead us up to glory,
might lead us up to glory!

All:

5. O and A, and A and O,
cum cantibus in choro,
let our merry organ go,
benedicamus Domino,
benedicamus Domino.

Words: tr. G R Woodward; Music: from Piaae Cantiones 1582; Arranged, David Willcocks

Please sit

Second Lesson

Reader: Mr Andrew Boyce

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Genesis 22

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice."

Carol

Torches, torches, run with torches,
all the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;
come and sing your song to him!

Ah, Roro, Roro, my baby,
ah, Rora, my love, Roro;
sleep you well, my heart's own darling,
while we sing you our Roro.

Sing, my friends, and make you merry,
joy and mirth and joy again;
lo, he lives, the King of heaven,
now and evermore. Amen.

*Words: from the Galician, trans J B Trend;
Music: John Joubert (b 1927)*

Third Lesson

Reader: Mrs Clare Kavanagh (Kavanagh's Tea Room)

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah. *Isaiah 9*

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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 onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Please stand

Hymn

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, good-will to men,
from heaven's all gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing;
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and man, at war with man, hears not
the love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
and hear the angels sing!

4. For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet bards foretold,
when, with the ever-circling years,
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and the whole world give back the song
which now the angels sing

Words: E H Sears; English traditional melody; arranged, Arthur Sullivan

Please sit

Fourth Lesson

Reader: Mr John Donald (Oakham Baptist Church)

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown. *Isaiah 11*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Please stand

Hymn

1. 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.

2. 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 wond'ring love.

3. *(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.

4. *(All)* 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 Music: English trad arr Vaughan Williams, v3 Philip Ledger, v4 Thomas Armstrong

Please sit

Fifth Lesson

Reader: Police Officer

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary. St Luke 1

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 forever, 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

Ding dong! merrily on high
in heaven the bells are ringing;
ding dong! verily the sky
is riven with angel singing:
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

E'en so here below, below,
let steeple bells be swungen,
and iö, iö, iö,
by priest and people sungen:
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

Pray you, dutifully prime
your matin chime, ye ringers;
may you beautifully rime
your evetime song, ye singers:
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

Words, G. R. Woodward; Music, 16th century French melody Harmonised, Charles Wood; Oxford University Press

Please stand

Hymn

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay,
for Jesus Christ our Saviour
was born on Christmas day,
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

2. From God our heavenly Father
a blessèd angel came,
and unto certain shepherds
brought tidings of the same,
how that in Bethlehem was born:
the Son of God by name:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

3. The shepherds at those tidings
rejoicèd much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding
in tempest, storm, and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway
this blessèd Babe to find:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

4. *(Choir)* But when to Bethlehem they came,
whereat this infant lay,
they found him in a manger,
where oxen feed on hay;
his mother Mary kneeling
unto the Lord did pray:
(All) O tidings of comfort and joy

5. *(All)* Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true love and brotherhood
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
all others doth deface:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Words & Music: English Traditional; Arranged, David Willcocks

Sixth Lesson

Reader: Miss Sophia Needham (Oakham Church of England Primary School)

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus. St Luke 2

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.

Carol

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;
long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth.
a thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night, when Christ was born!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
with glowing hearts by his cradle we stand;
so, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
here came the wise men from the Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
in all our trials born to be our friend;
he knows our need, he guardeth us from danger;
behold your King! Before the Lowly bend!

Words: John Sullivan Dwight; Music: Adolphe Adam

Seventh Lesson

Reader: Mrs Denise McDonald (Tiny Tots, Oakham Church)

The shepherds go to the manger. St Luke 2

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.

Carol

A little child there is yborn,
eia, eia, susanni,
and he sprang out of Jesse’s thorn,
alleluia, alleluia,
to save all us that were forlorn.

Now Jesus is the childes name,
eia, eia, susanni,
and Mary mild she is the dame,
alleluia, alleluia,
and so our sorrow is turned to game.

It fell upon the high midnight,
eia, eia, susanni,
the stars they shone both fair and bright,
alleluia, alleluia,
the angels sang with all their might.

Three kings there came with their presents,
eia, eia, susanni,
of myrrh and gold and frankincense,
alleluia, alleluia,
as clerkes sing in their sequence.

Now sit we down upon our knees,
eia, eia, susanni,
and pray we to the Trinity,
alleluia, alleluia,
our help, our succour for to be,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Words: anon 15th century Music: Malcolm Archer (b 1952)

Please stand

Hymn

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.
2. 'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.
3. 'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:
4. 'The heavenly Babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'
5. Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:
6. 'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease.

Words: Nahum Tate; Music Winchester Old

Please sit

Eighth Lesson

Reader: Mr Peter Davis (Director of Music, Oakham School)

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus. St Matthew 2

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Carol

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone.
Snow had fallen snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter
long ago.

Our God, Heav'n cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain.
Heav'n and earth shall flee away,
when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter,
a stable place suffic'd,
the Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim,
worship night and day,
a breast full of milk,
and a manger full of hay.
Enough for him, whom angels,
fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel,
which adore.

What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give him,
give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894); Music: Harold Darke (1888-1976)

Please stand

Carol for Choir and Congregation

All

1. We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:

All (each time)

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

Men

2. Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
king forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign:

Ladies

3. Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh:
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
worship him, God most high:

Men

4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone cold tomb.

All

5. Glorious now,, behold him arise,
King, and God, and sacrifice!
Heav'n sings alleluia,
alleluia the earth replies:

Words & melody: John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891), arr Paul Leddington Wright (b 1951)

Ninth Lesson

Reader: Revd Charlotte Osborn (Curate, Oakham Team Ministry)

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation. St John I

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 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 one 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.

Hymn

1. 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.*
2. God of God,
Light of Light,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created.
3. See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:
4. Lo! star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
we to the Christ Child
bring our hearts' oblations:
5. 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?
6. Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
'Glory to God
in the highest'!

Words: *Adeste Fideles*, translated F Oakeley, W T Brooke & others;
Music: J F Wade, verse 6 arrangement, Phillip Ledger; fanfare introduction, David Willcocks

Collect & Blessing

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray. O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

May he who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn

1. 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!'*

2. 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!

3. 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.

*Words, C Wesley, G Whitefield & M Madan;
Music, J L F Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, verse 3 arrangement & fanfare introduction, David Willcocks*

Organ

Fantasia on Adeste, Fideles – *David Blackwell*

*There will be a retiring collection in aid of the work of the Parish Church.
Please join us for wine and mince pies after the service.*

All Saints Church Oakham

Christmas Eve

4:00pm **Crib Service**

The creation and blessing of our Crib

11:30pm **Midnight Mass**

Candlelit choral celebration of the first communion of Christmas

Christmas Day

8:00am **Holy Communion**

Traditional said service with sermon

10:00am **Holy Communion**

Sung service with carols and sermon





Laudamus – *Joint Choir of the Oakham Team Ministry*
Paul Butler – *Organist*
Kevin Slingsby – *Director of Music*
Revd Canon Lee Francis-Dehqani – *Team Rector*

www.oakhamteam.org.uk