



ST JOHN'S
DOWNSHIRE HILL

Carols by Candlelight

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CAROL: 'Once in Royal David's City'

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.

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.

FIRST READING: Genesis 3:1-20

In which God announces the consequences of human rebellion, while also promising hope through one of their offspring.

Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?''

The woman said to the snake, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die."''

'You will not certainly die,' the snake said to the woman. 'For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'

He answered, 'I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.'

And he said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?'

The man said, 'The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.'

Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?'

The woman said, 'The snake deceived me, and I ate.'

So the Lord God said to the snake, 'Because you have done this,

'Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.

And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.'

To the woman he said,

'I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labour you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you.'

To Adam he said, 'Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from
the tree about which I commanded you, "You must not eat from it,"

'Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.'

Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

ST JOHN'S SINGERS (duet): 'Glory in the darkest place'

OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF SILENT NIGHT,

Immanuel, come hear our cry;
Our grief is strong, our burdens great;
The night is long and hope is faint.

You came to set the captives free,
A Morning Star of joy and peace;
Why does this darkness feel so deep?
Lord, help our weary spirits see...

*Glory, glory, glory in the darkest place;
Glory, glory, glory, let Your mercy reign.*

Out of the depths of silent night,
A Savior born, a mother's sigh;
The darkness trembled at this star,
a beam of hope for troubled hearts.

You came to make Your blessings known,
And bear our curse of death alone;
You came to share our suffering
So in our sorrow we could sing...
*Glory, glory, glory in the darkest place;
Glory, glory, glory, let Your mercy reign (x2)*

Ohh...

CAROL: 'O come O come Emmanuel'

O COME, O COME EMMANUEL

And ransom captive Israel
Who mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

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.

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times did'st give the Law,
In cloud, and majesty and awe.

SECOND READING: Isaiah 9:1-7

In which 750 years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah prophesies that a king would be born, who would be called God and who would bring eternal peace.

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honour Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan –

The people walking in darkness

have seen a great light;

on those living in the land of deep darkness

a light has dawned.

You have enlarged the nation

and increased their joy;

they rejoice before you

as people rejoice at the harvest,

as warriors rejoice

when dividing the plunder.

For as in the day of Midian's defeat,

you have shattered

the yoke that burdens them,

the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor.

Every warrior's boot used in battle

and every garment rolled in blood

will be destined for burning,

will be fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born,

to us a son is given,

and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and for ever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

CAROL: 'O Little town of Bethlehem'

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 wond'ring
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 today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!

THIRD READING: Micah 5:1-5

In which Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, also looked forward to the birth of the divine king. He would be born in obscurity, but as an adult, win salvation for his people.

Marshal your troops now, city of troops,
for a siege is laid against us.

They will strike Israel's ruler
on the cheek with a rod.

'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.'

Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labour bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

And he will be our peace
when the Assyrians invade our land
and march through our fortresses.

We will raise against them seven shepherds,
even eight commanders,

CAROL: 'O come all ye faithful'

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, (x3)
Christ the Lord!

God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, Begotten, not created

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God In the highest:

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born for our salvation,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing:

FOURTH READING: Matthew 1:18-25

In which Joseph, a descendent of King David, discovers that his bride-to-be is pregnant, but upon receiving a message about the child's origins decides to adopt him as his own.

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: his mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us').

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

ST JOHN'S SINGERS: 'Noel'

LOVE INCARNATE, LOVE DIVINE

Star and angels gave the sign.
Bow to babe on bended knee,
The Savior of humanity.
Unto us a Child is born,
He shall reign forevermore.

Noel, Noel! (we sing Noel)
Come and see what God has done.
Noel, Noel! (we sing Noel)
The story of amazing love!
The light of the world given for us,
Noel.

Son of God and Son of man,
There before the world began.
Born to suffer, born to save,
Born to raise us from the grave.
Christ the everlasting Lord,
He shall reign forevermore!

Noel, Noel! (we sing Noel)
Come and see what God has done.
Noel, Noel! (we sing Noel)
The story of amazing love!
The light of the world given for us.

Noel, Noel. (x2)
Sing we all Noel.

Unto us a child is born
he shall reign forevermore.

CAROL: 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night'

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT, ALL SEATED ON THE GROUND,

The angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around.

'Fear not', said he for mighty dread had seized their troubled
mind –

'Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind.

'To you in David's town this day is born of David's line

The saviour, who is Christ the Lord and this shall be the sign:

'The heav'nly babe you there shall find to human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands and in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high, and on the earth be peace!

Goodwill henceforth from heav'n to men begin and never cease.'

FIFTH READING: Luke 2:1-20

In which Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, the town of King David, because he belonged to the house and line of David, and there Mary's child is born. The angels announce to some shepherds that a Saviour has been born; he is the 'Christ the Lord'.

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

CAROL: 'GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN'

GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN,

Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

From God our heav'nly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:

Continued overleaf...

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding,
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
This blessed babe to find:

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:

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within the place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
doth bring redeeming grace O tidings....

English traditional carol, arranged by D. Willcocks

SIXTH READING: John 1:1-14

In which John presents Jesus: God incarnate, the eternal Word made flesh.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

ST JOHN'S SINGERS: 'O Holy Night'

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 and hear the angel voices,
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.

Drawn by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
Led by the star, its light so sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wise men from far distant land.

The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials, born to be our friend.

He knows our need, and guards us all from danger,
Behold your King! Before the Christ child bend.
Behold your King! Before the Christ child bend!

Fall on your knees and hear the angel voices,
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.

Placide Cappeau (1808-1877), Tr. John S Dwight (1813-1893)

ADDRESS: Rev'd Tom Watts, Senior Minister

CAROL: 'Hark the herald angels sing'

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.

Hail the heav'n-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.

CLOSING PRAYER & NEXT STEPS

POSTLUDE



**You are warmly invited to join us for
our other Christmas services:**

All Age Carol Service *

Sunday 17th December at 10:30am

All Age Nativity Service *

Sunday 24th December at 4:00pm

Midnight Service

Sunday 24th December at 11:15pm

All Age Christmas Day Celebration *

Monday 25th December at 10:00am

Services marked with a * are particularly suitable for younger children.

Please note that there are *no evening services* at 6:00pm on
Sundays 17th & 31st December, and no 10:30am service on Sunday 24th
December

Our regular services resume on Sunday 7th January
at 10:30am and 6:00pm

Details of all our services and events can be found on our website: www.sjdh.org

Please see overleaf for details of our '*Christianity Explored*' course.

Christianity Explored course

Christianity Explored is an opportunity to investigate the heart of the Christian faith. It is a short, informal, video-based course looking at Mark's gospel – an eye-witness account of Jesus' life. No question is off limits and there is plenty of time for discussion. It is free and will run in the new year for eight Thursday evenings 8:00-9:30pm starting 25th January (with a break for half term on 15th February).

To register or find out more, contact Tom Watts (tom@sjdh.org) or Corinne Brixton (corinne@sjdh.org).