

A FESTIVAL OF NINE
**Lessons
& Carols**

A CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF
NINE LESSONS
AND CAROLS &
900TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
**St Nicholas' Church,
Marston**

Sunday 18th December 2022 6pm

*Music will be sung from the different centuries of St Nicholas' Church in Marston.
See programme notes at the back for translations of texts and more information about
the music.*

*With the church in darkness a single candle is lit, and a solo voice sings and as other
voices join other candles are lit, as the choir and minister process in.*

Opening Hymn

Choir (from 12th C): Hodie Christus est natus

Music: GREGORIAN CHANT

Bidding Prayer

The Minister says

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and 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.

Therefore 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, which has been present here for 900 years, once again glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and fellowship within the Church he came to build, and especially in this village of Marston and diocese of Oxford.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

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 in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath 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.**

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.**

Carol (from 12th C): O Come, O come, Emmanuel

*Music: FROM A FRENCH MISSAL
Words: J M NEALE Arranged: NOEL TREDINNICK Descant: DAVID ILIFF*

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.

O come, true 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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

First Lesson: Genesis 3.8-15, 17–19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

Choir (from 17th C): Remember, O thou man

Music: THOMAS RAVENSCROFT

Second Lesson: Genesis 22.15–18

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

Carol (from 17th C): Sussex Carol (Carol for Choirs booklet no. 35)

Music: ENGLISH TRADITIONAL MELODY

Third Lesson: Isaiah 9.2, 6–7

The prophet foretells the coming of the saviour.

Choir (from 13th C): In dulci jubilo

Arranged: BARTHOLOMEW GESIUS

Carol (from 17th C): Once in royal David's city (Carols for Choirs no.31)

Verse 1 solo, verse 2 choir

Melody: HENRY JOHN GAUNTLETT

Harmonised: HENRY JOHN GAUNTLETT and ARTHUR HENRY MANN

Descant: DAVID WILLCOCKS

Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 11.1–4a, 6–9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

Choir (from 20th C): Today the virgin

Music: JOHN TAVENER

Words: MOTHER THEKLA

Fifth Lesson: Luke 1.26–35, 38
The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Quartet (from 13th C): Angelus ad Virgenem

From: DUBLIN TROUPER

Carol: This Child

Words & music: GRAHAM KENDRICK
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This child secretly comes in the night
Oh this Child, hiding a heavenly light
Oh this Child, coming to us like a stranger
This heavenly Child

*This Child, heaven come down now
To be with us here
Heavenly love and mercy appear
Softly in awe and wonder come near
Oh this heavenly Child*

This Child, rising on us like the sun
Oh this child, given to light everyone
Oh this Child, guiding our feet on the pathway
To peace on earth
This Child ...

This Child, raising the humble and poor
Oh this Child, making the proud ones to fall
This Child, filling the hungry with good things
This heavenly Child
*This Child ...
This Child ...*

Sixth Lesson: Luke 2.1, 3–7
St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

Quartet (from 15th C): Noel

Music: ANTOINE BUSNOIS

Carol: O little town of Bethlehem (Carol for Choirs booklet no. 29)

ENGLISH TRADITIONAL MELODY
arranged by RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
Descant: THOMAS ARMSTRONG

Seventh Lesson: Luke 2.8–16
The shepherds go to the manger.

Choir (from 17th C): O magnum mysterium

Music: WILLIAM BYRD

Carol (from 18th C): Silent Night

Music: FRANZ GRUBR
Words: JOSEPH MOHR Translation: ANON
Arrangement: NEIL BARKER

Eighth Lesson: Matthew 2.1–11
The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Quartet & Choir (from 16th C): Coventry Carol

Words from: PAGEANT OF THE SHEARMEN AND TAILORS

Ninth Lesson: John 1.1–14
St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Invitational Prayer – *Director of Music*

Choir (from 21st C): My Lord has come

Words & Music: WILL TODD

Carol: O come, all ye faithful (Carol for Choirs booklet no. 28) – v1, 2, 3 & 6 only

ADESTE FIDELES
Translated by FREDERICK OAKLEY
Melody: JOHN FRANCIS WADE
Arranged by DAVID WILLCOCKS

The Collects

The Minister says
The Lord be with you.
All **And with thy spirit.**
Then all shall kneel.

Let us pray.

Almighty God,
to whose glory we celebrate the 900th anniversary of this house of prayer:
we praise you for the many blessings you have given to those who worship you
here:
and we pray that all who seek you in this place may find you,
and, being filled with the Holy Spirit, may become a living temple acceptable
to you;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All Amen.

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.

All Amen.

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 upon
you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Carol: Hark! The herald angels sing (Carol for Choirs booklet no. 15)

Music: FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Descant: DAVID WILLCOCKS

Words: CHARLES WESLEY & OTHERS

The congregation remain standing whilst the Minister recesses.

*Mulled wine and mince pies and other refreshments will be served at the end of
service.*

Please do take one of our free 'Follow the Star' booklets - 12 days of Reflections for Christmas & the New Year.



Please see our website for all our activities: StNicholasMarston.org.uk



Exploring Faith and Confirmation Courses

WHO IS GOD? WHAT IS CHURCH?

WHAT'S MY FAITH ABOUT?

Fridays 7-8pm at the Vicarage for 9-18yrs

8-9pm on Zoom (Meeting ID: 879 4461 5840. Passcode: FAITH) for 18+

Starting again on Friday 6th January – for more information please email Skye - vicar@stnicholasmarston.org.uk or call her on 01865 202988 or have a chat with her at the end of this service

Music at St Nicholas

If you have enjoyed the music this evening and you sing or play an instrument then please do speak to Neil, our director of music if you might be interested in joining one of our choirs or music groups – musicdirector@stnicholasmarston.org.uk



PROGRAMME NOTES

Translations

Hodie Christus est natus - (Today Christ is born: today the Saviour has appeared: today the angels sing on earth, the archangels rejoice: today the righteous exult saying: Glory to God in the highest, alleluia)

In dulci iubilo

In dulci iubilo

Cantate Domino!

Nostri cordid Gaudium

Est in praesepio

Et fulget ut lux solis

In matris gremio

Alpha est et O !

In sweet joy

Sing to the Lord!

Joy to our hearts

He is in the manger

And shines like the light of the sun

In his mother's lap

Alpha and Omega!

O Iesu parvule

Requiro solumte

Meumque sis solamen

O puer optime !

Commune per levamen

O princeps gloriae !

Trahe me post te!

O tiny Jesus

I only ask you

To be my comfort

O wonderful child

Have mercy on me

O Prince of glory

Draw me to you]

O Patris caritas!

O Nati lenitas!

Nos omnes cadebamus

Per nostra crimina

Per hunc recuperamus

Caelorum gaudia.

Simus hic eia!

O Father's love

O newborn's gentleness

We have all fallen

By our sins

But you have gained for us

Heavenly joy

O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia?

No suquam qualia

Ad angelos, canentes

Iucunda cantica

Et cymbalis ludentes

In Regis curia

Simus hic eia!

Where are the joys?

If they be not here

Where there are angels singing

Beautiful songs

And they are ringing cymbals

In the heavenly court of the King

O that we were there!

Angelus ad Virgenem

Gabriel sent from the king of heaven, to the sweet Maiden, brought her news and greeted her courteously. 'Hail be thou who art full of grace. For God's son, the Light of Heaven, for love of man he will become man, and take human form from thee, fair Maiden, to free mankind of sin and the devil's power.

O magnum mysterium

O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praeseptio.
O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.
Ave Maria, gratia plena: Dominus
tecum.
O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born
Lord
lying in a manger!
O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
Hail Mary, full of grace: the Lord is
with you.
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.

Quartet

We are pleased to have ‘Spare Parts’ - our quartet for this evening who are : Ruth Newman, (S) Jackie Wheatley, (A) Stephen Pegg (B) and Robert Fletcher (T). They have been singing together for nearly 40 years and from the outset have sung for all kinds of charitable purposes. This year was actually a high water mark when they put on a concert in the summer with some friends and relations for an audience in the Holywell Room raised £10,000 for Unicef Ukraine.

A note on the carols sung tonight - by Robert Fletcher.

Neil and I thought that, a really nice way of marking the 900th anniversary of the Church would be to hear a carol from each of the centuries of its existence, as close as possible to the way in which it would have been heard in that century. While the concept appealed, there were certain limitations to the idea.

For at least the first four centuries, the only people singing in the church as it was then would probably have been men or boys. We couldn't, in conscience, exclude female members of our choir and quartet.

It is by no means easy to guess how early songs would have been sung, even when we have clearly notated compositions. Even then, the words sung were often imperfectly attached to the notes, dynamics or tempos were never added, and accidentals (sharps and flats) were not added to the notation. Singers were expected to know the pieces by heart. Much is therefore conjecture.

Another constraint is that carols, it seems, went in and out of fashion and some centuries have more, and more appealing Christmas songs to choose from.

Finally, it is sometimes rather hard to date the songs. Early songs often appear in later collections, and we know their true date from other references (see, for example Angelus ad Virginem).

Polyphony, or harmonisations for four voices as we know it today, was not a regular feature until the sixteenth century. Early harmonisations were typically for three voices (a high voice for a boy, with two adult men providing tenor and a bass parts. These often sound rather odd or strange to a 21st century ear – the main line would have been accompanied by using an interval of a fourth (today we harmonise with thirds or fifths.) This can be clearly heard in the version of Angelus ad Virginem, for example. Songs often feel a little unresolved, and have unexpected clashes. (One version of the Coventry Carol pitches an F natural in the tenor part against an F sharp in the soprano in the last line. This actually sounds rather appropriate though given the context).

Let's turn now to the carols and the centuries.

13th Century

As it turned out, the first century – the 13th - is well represented. We start the Service with an 'O Antiphon' – Hodie Christus Natus Est. This would certainly have been well known in the 13th century, as it dates from the ninth century or even earlier. O Antiphons (so-called because they mostly begin with 'O') were used in Cistercian monastic establishments, as intonations sung by different members of Abbey communities at different points in the run-up to Christmas. Hodie was sung by the Lord Abbot on 24th and 25th December. It was used again by Benjamin Britten in the 20th century as the introduction and conclusion of his 'Ceremony of Carols.' Also from the 13th century is the song: 'Angelus ad Virginem'. It is mentioned in The Miller's Tale in Chaucer's 14thC Canterbury Tales (as being sung in Oxford by a poor student with the name of Nicholas!). The Quartet will sing the first verse in Middle English ('Gabriel fram heveneking'), followed by two verses of a three part arrangement dating from the 14th century.

14th Century

The 14th Century gives us 'Veni veni Emmanuel'. The text is again from O Antiphons, but the tune is French, was found in a fifteenth century source, and may be older. Some think the neat fit of text with tune is evidence of the fact that the two originally went together.

15th Century

The 15th Century is represented by a short refrain by Antoine Busnois: 'Noel' – a song which appears to have lost its verses. Busnois was French, but very well known in Europe, so it is quite possible his song was known to the clerics of Marston. This song is typical of the 15C style.

One carol we could not quite fit to any specific century, but thought we should include anyway is 'In Dulci Jubilo'. It has origins in Germany in the 13th century, but has been multiply arranged since, including Michael Praetorius, JS Bach and a well-known English version by Robert Lucas de Pearsall. We will sing verses from the earliest known 16th C version by Bartholemaus Gesius.

16th Century

The 16th century gives us the Coventry Carol, otherwise known as ‘Lully Lulla Thy Little Tiny Child’. It is commonly called thus as it featured in a mystery play performed each year in Coventry. The source is the Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors, presented by medieval guilds. Its performance concludes the pageant, as women tried to quiet their children to prevent detection by Herod’s men.

‘I lolle my chyld wondursly swete. And in my narmis I do hyt keep. Becawse than yt schuld not crye’.

17th Century

The 17th century was a golden one for English choral music, and so it was easy to find something from then. We chose William Byrd’s O Magnum Mysterium. It was written in 1607. Later in the century, the Cromwellian regime forbade carols and dancing at Christmas, with the exception of ‘While Shepherds watched’. The congregation can help with: ‘On Christmas Night All Christians Sing’ which probably dates from this century too.

18th Century

Congregational carols were virtually unknown before the 18th Century but we celebrate this century with a congregational carol dating from this period: ‘Silent Night’, (Stille Nacht) - well known now, but originating in Germany. Hark the Herald Angels Sing is also of 18C provenance.

19th Century

In the 19th century we had an embarrassment of riches. Many of our present day and best known carols made an appearance in this century, and the congregation will enjoy ‘Once in Royal David’s City’, and ‘O Little Town of Bethlehem’.

20th Century

For the 20th century, we also had plenty of choice, but were driven by the need for something to match the liturgical story, and something celebratory and upbeat. We settled on John Tavener’s ‘Today the Virgin’. This is a big sound. Interestingly it also harks back to carols of earlier centuries with a bass drone, a repeated plainchant-like refrain, and fourths in the harmonisation.

21st Century

We finish liturgically and chronologically with Will Todd’s ‘My Lord has come’, performed by the ensemble. It also features an underpinning drone, and is otherwise intense and dramatic. It features many suspensions, like a good deal of early music, but is otherwise very modern.