

Christmas Carol Service

Online - 2025



**A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS
AND CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS**

Introduction to Service and Candle Liturgy (Revd Mark Rhodes-Smith)

*Opening
Carol*

**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 through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.**

**And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.**

The Bidding Prayer
(Revd Mark Rhodes-Smith)

**The First Lesson,
Genesis 3: 18 to 19**

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

Carol

**Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see
evermore and evermore.**

**Oh, that birth forever blessed
when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race,
and the babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face
evermore and evermore.**

**Let the heights of heav'n adore him,
angel hosts his praises sing,
pow'rs, dominions bow before him
and extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.**

**The Second Lesson,
Genesis 22: 15 to 18**

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

Carol

**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.**

**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.**

**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!**

**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.**

Christ's Birth and Kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

Carol

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear:**

Refrain:

***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**

Refrain:

***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:**

Refrain:

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

The Prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem

Carol

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee 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 wondering 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.**

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

Carol

**The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail,” he said, “thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favour’d lady,”
Gloria!**

**“For known as blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honour thee,
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold:
Most highly favour’d lady,”
Gloria!**

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
“To me be as it pleaseth God,” she said,
“My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.”
Most highly favour’d lady,”
Gloria!**

**Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
Most highly favour’d lady,”
Gloria!**

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

Carol

**Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child;
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight:
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Saviour is born!
Christ, the Saviour is born!**

**Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**The Seventh Lesson,
Luke 2: 8 to 19**

The shepherds go to the manger

Carol

**See, amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on Earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years.**

Chorus:

***Hail, thou ever blessed morn,
Hail redemption's happy dawn,
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.***

**Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies;
He who, throned in height sublime,
Sits among the cherubim.
*Hail...***

**Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
What your joyful news today;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?
*Hail...***

**"As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light:
Angels singing 'Peace On Earth'
Told us of the Saviour's birth."
*Hail...***

**Sacred Infant, all divine,
What a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss
Down to such a world as this.
*Hail...***

**The Eighth Lesson,
Matthew 2: 1 to 12**

The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus and present their gifts

Carol

**Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:**

***Refrain: Come and worship,
Come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.***

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant light:
Refrain.**

**Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen his natal star:
Refrain.**

**All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising,
To th'eternal Three in One:
Refrain.**

**The Ninth Lesson,
John 1: 1 to 14**

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

**In the bleak mid-winter
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 mid-winter
Long ago.**

**Our God, heaven cannot hold
Him
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty —
Jesus Christ.**

**Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;**

**Enough for Him, whom Angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.**

**Angels and Archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But only His Mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.**

**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**

Prayers
(Revd Mark Rhodes-Smith)

Almighty Lord,
 hear our prayer,
 and fulfil your purposes in us,
 as you accomplished your will
 In our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

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 Blessing
(Revd Mark Rhodes-Smith)

*Closing
Carol*

**O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the King of angels;**

**O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**God of God,
Light of Light,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:**

**See how the shepherds
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:**

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God
in the highest:"**

A message from the Churn Churches Online Congregation

If this is the first time you are joining us, welcome!

*We hope you have enjoyed the service and wish you and yours a
Christmas full of blessings.*

*If you would like to join us again, we meet every Sunday at 10:30 for
worship. Come online from 10:00 to chat.*

The service normally lasts 40 minutes to an hour.

Email office@churnchurches.co.uk for joining details