

Reading – Micah 5.2-4 – The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem

The Calypso carol

1. See him lying in a bed of straw:
A draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore –
The prince of glory is his name.

*Oh now carry me to Bethlehem to see
the Lord of love again:
Just as poor as was the stable then, the
Prince of glory when he came!*

2. Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
Show where Jesus in the manger lies;
Shepherds, swiftly from your stupor
rise
To see the Saviour of the world!

Oh now carry me to Bethlehem...

3. Angels, sing again the song you
sang,
Sing the glory of God's gracious plan;
Sing that Bethl'em's little baby can
Be the salvation of the soul.

Oh now carry me to Bethlehem...

4. Mine are riches from your poverty;
From your innocence, eternity;
Mine, forgiveness by your death for
me,
Child of sorrow for my joy.

Oh now carry me to Bethlehem...

Reading – Luke 1.26-38 – The Angel Gabriel greets the virgin Mary

Choir – Gaudete (Piae Cantiones of 1582)

Reading – Matthew 1.18-23 – The birth of Emmanuel foretold

It came upon the midnight clear

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;
An 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.

Reading – Luke 2 v 1-7 – The Birth of Jesus

Unto us a boy is born

1. Unto us a boy is born!
The King of all creation,
Came he to a world forlorn,
The Lord of ev'ry nation,
The Lord of every nation.

2. Cradled in a stall was he
With sleepy cows and asses;
But the very beasts could see
That he the world surpasses,
That he the world surpasses.

3. Now may Mary's son, who came
So long ago to love us,
Lead us all with hearts aflame
Unto the joys above us,
Unto the joys above us.

4. Alpha and Omega he!
Now let the organ thunder,
While the choir with peals of glee
Shall rend the air asunder,
Shall rend the air asunder.

Reading – Luke 2.8-20 – The Shepherds go to the manger

Choir— The Shepherds' Farewell (Berlioz)

Reflection

Poem - Shepherd leave your flock (Christine Woolgar)

In the bleak midwinter

1. 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.

2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

3. 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.

4. Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air,

Reading – John 1.1-14 – The incarnation of the Word of God

Hark the Herald Angels

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!

But only his mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

5. 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.

Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
‘Glory to the new-born King.’

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 men no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
‘Glory to the new-born King.’

Blessing

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CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

ST ANDREW, NORTH SWINDON
21 DECEMBER 2025



Once in Royal David’s City

1. solo

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.

3. And through all His wondrous
childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly mother
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;
Where like stars His children
crowned,
All in white shall wait around.

Welcome and bidding prayers

Reading – Isaiah 11 v 1-9 – The prophecy of the Messiah’s kingdom
of peace

Joy to the World

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2. Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;

While fields and floods, rocks hills and
plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.