



**A CHRISTMAS CAROL FESTIVAL
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
20 DECEMBER 2009 AT 6.30 PM**

NOTICES:

OFFERING:

ORGAN PRELUDE:

Noel "Je suis L'Archange de Dieu"

Louis d'Aquin
(1694-1772)

PROLOGUE:

"Mary, the Mother of our Lord"

Allan Bryson

All stand as the Choir enters the Church from the Narthex

Minister:

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart. Let us proceed in the name of the Lord.
Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN:

64 "Of the Father's love begotten" (Divinum Mysterium)
Verse 1 CHOIR ONLY

The service proceeds without announcement, all standing for the hymns or as directed. May the Lord give you great joy as we hear the truth about the birth of Jesus and its significance for our lives from here to eternity.

All sit for the Introduction, Bidding Prayer and Lord's Prayer: Minister:

Welcome. We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of hymns and carols. As we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world; for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognize their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace everywhere; for all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Minister: Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Silence is kept.

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned: **All: forgive and heal us.**

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus. Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned: **All: forgive and heal us.**

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty in a manger. Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.
We have sinned: **All: forgive and heal us.**

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem. Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.
We have sinned: **All: forgive and heal us.**

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus the King. Forgive our reluctance to seek you.
We have sinned: **All: forgive and heal us.**

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw *us* to himself, and cleanse *us* from all *our* sins that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

MOTET: "Hail, true Body, born of Mary"
Words at hymn 302 Music David William Alexander
Sung by the Choir

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2,6,7
The prophecy of the Messiah's birth

CAROL: "The blessed son of God"
Words Miles Coverdale after Martin Luther.
Music Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Sung by the Choir

1. The blessed son of God only In a crib full poor did lie; With our poor flesh and our poor blood Was clothed that ever-lasting good. <i>Kyrie eleison</i>	2. The Lord Christ Jesu, God's son dear, Was a guest and a stranger here; Us for to bring from misery, That we might live eternally. <i>Kyrie eleison</i>	3. All this did he for us freely, For to declare his great mercy; All Christendom be merry therefore, And give him thanks for evermore. <i>Kyrie eleison</i>
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COLLECT:
Lord our God, on the first day of creation you made the light that scatters all darkness. Let Christ, the light of lights, hidden from all eternity, shine at last on your people and free us from the darkness of sin. Fill our lives with joy as we go out to welcome your Son at his coming. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN: 58 "Long ago, prophets knew" (Personent Hodie)
Music arranged by Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

SECOND READING: Luke 1:26-38
The Annunciation to Mary

CAROL: "The Linden Tree Carol"
Words and music old German. Music arranged by Reginald Jacques
Sung by the Choir

1. There stood in heav'n a linden tree, But, tho' t'was honey laden, All angels cried, 'No bloom shall be Like that of one fair maiden'.	2. Sped Gabriel on winged feet, And pass'd through bolted portals In Nazareth, a maid to greet, Blest o'er all other mortals.	3. Hail Mary! quoth the angel mild, 'Of woman-kind the fairest: The Virgin ay shalt thou be styled, A babe although thou bearest.'
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COLLECT:
Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised Saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

HYMN: 45 "Away in a manger" (Away in a manger)

THIRD READING: Luke 2:1-7
The birth of Jesus

A hallowed day has dawned upon us. Come and worship the Lord:

All: for a great light has shone on the earth.

Hear the words of the book of Wisdom: When peaceful silence lay over all and night was in the midst of her swift course, from your royal throne, O God, down from the heavens, leapt your almighty Word.

Hear the words of Saint John: God's love for us was revealed when God sent his only Son into the world so that we could have life through him.

All: Thanks be to God.

CAROL: "Infant holy, Infant lowly"
Words and music Polish.
Sung by the Choir

Music arranged by David Willcocks (1919-)

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| 1. | Infant holy, Infant lowly,
For his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, Little knowing
Christ the Babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging Angels singing,
Nowells ringing, Tidings bringing,
Christ the Babe is Lord of all. | 2. | Flocks were sleeping,
Shepherds keeping Vigil till the morning new;
Saw the glory, Heard the story,
Tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, Greet the morrow,
Christ the Babe was born for you! |
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Minister: Let us pray that God our Father will bless all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, and may also come to share his life in glory.

God our Father, on this night your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation; bless the crib, which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth; may all who see it be strengthened in faith and receive the fullness of life he came to bring; who lives and reigns for ever.

All: Amen.

Holy Jesus, to deliver us from the power of darkness you humbled yourself to be born among us and were laid in a manger. Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, and bring us at last to the joyful vision of your beauty, for you are now alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

HYMN: 74 "What child is this?" (Greensleeves)

FOURTH READING: Luke 2.8-16
The shepherds go to the manger

CAROL: "Je suis L'Archange de Dieu"
Words and music from *Les Noël's Bressans*
Sung by the Choir

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| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| I, the Angel am of God!
(O simple people hearken!)
In this place ye oft have trod
Your music now awaken!
Christ is born on earth this day!
Lift your voices! Tune your lay!
He is come, come, come!
See Him lie, lie, lie! He is come!
See Him lie! O so comly, Brothers!
Fairer than all others. | Leave your flocks, my brothers all,
Sing in happy chorus!
Jesus in that quiet stall
Soon will be before us!
Come and see, with eyes of faith,
Jesus now is born on earth!
That ye may, may, may,
Sing in joy, joy, joy!
That ye may, Sing in joy,
That <i>amazing</i> wonder
In the manger yonder! | Shepherds tho' He be so poor,
Lying there so lowly,
Ye may happily adore
Christ is here before ye!
He is Prince of all the skies!
Majesty within Him lies!
Born as King, King, King,
See Him here, here, here!
Born as King, See Him here!
And, in <i>asking</i> of Him,
We but prove we love Him! |

COLLECT:

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God. **Amen.**

HYMN: 76 "While shepherds watched their flocks by night" (Winchester Old)
Descant Allan Gray (1855-1935)

FIFTH READING: Matthew 2:1-11
Wise men are led by the star to Jesus

CAROL: "Torches"
Words Galician. Music John Joubert
Sung by the Choir

1.	2.	3.
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, Roro, 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.

COLLECT:
Creator of the heavens, who led the Magi by a star to worship the Christ-child: guide and sustain us, that we may find our journey's end in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All stand for the Gospel of Christmas Day

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:
Alleluia, alleluia. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. **Alleluia.**

SIXTH READING: John 1:1-14
The Incarnation of the Word of God
This is the Gospel of the Lord, **praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

HYMN: 62 "O come, all ye faithful" (Adeste Fideles)
Composer unknown; arranged by David Willcocks
Verse 5 sung by the Choir alone
Verses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 sung by the Choir and Congregation

All sit
EPILOGUE: "This little babe" Saint Robert Southwell (1561-1595)

COLLECT:
God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING:
May the Father, who has loved the eternal Son from before the foundation of the world, shed that love upon you his children. **Amen.** May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace. **Amen.** May the Holy Spirit, by whose overshadowing Mary became the Godbearer, give you grace to carry the good news of Christ. **Amen.** And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

RECESSIONAL HYMN: 53 "Hark! The herald angels sing"
Descant by David Willcocks Felix Mendelssohn

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "Now thank we all our God" J S Bach

"Except that ye be as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"
(Jesus Christ – Mark 10:15)
"In the period that we live, one can hardly hear the voice of God, except in the voice of a child..." (Ramakrishna)

Please take this Order of Service with you to assist in your Christmas devotions.
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