



St John the Baptist, Catford



Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday 19th December 2021, 4pm

Order of Service

¶ *The opening carol is sung by the choir in the narthex:*

Choir: **Jesus Christ the Apple Tree**
Text: Rev. Richard Hutchins (1698 – 1781)
Music: Elizabeth Poston (1905 – 1987)

Welcome and prayer

¶ *All stand. The first verse is sung from the narthex:*

Soloist: 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.

¶ *Ministers process into the church*

**All: 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.**

**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 feels for all our sadness,
and he shares in all our gladness.**

**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;
there his children gather round
bright like stars, with glory crowned.**

Music: H.J. Gauntlett (1805 – 1876)
Final Descant & Harmony D. Willcocks (1919 – 2015)

Bidding by the Rector

¶ *All sit*

The First Lesson

Genesis 3. 1-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life to Paradise.

Choir: **Adam lay ybounden**

Music: Roy Massey (b. 1934)

¶ *All stand*

All: God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay!
for Jesus Christ our saviour
was born on Christmas Day,
to save us all from Satan's power
when we had gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;*

O tidings of comfort and joy!

From God our heavenly 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:

The shepherds at those tidings
rejoiced in heart and 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
where-at 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 people in this place!
and with true love and brotherhood
each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
all others doth deface:

¶ *All sit*

Music: English trad.

Final Descant: Alexander Ling (b.1994)

The Second Lesson

Isaiah 9. 2 – 7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.

Choir: **This is the truth sent from above**

Music: English traditional arr. R.V. Williams (1872 – 1958)

¶ All stand

All:

Unto us is born a son,

King of choirs supernal:
see on earth his life begun,
of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
comes on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know
be cradled in a manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
and grievously bewilder,
so he gave the word to slay,
and slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild
is the Christmas story:
and O that Mary's gentle child
might lead us up to glory!

O and A and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Let the merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino.

Text: Pia cantiones (1582)

Music: arr. D. Willcocks (1919 – 2015)

¶ All sit

The Third Lesson

Reading: **Luke 2. 1-7**

S^t Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

Choir: **Lullay my Liking**

Text: Middle English XV

Music: Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

All:

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 to-night.

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 to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels,
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

Music: arr. R.V. Williams (1872 – 1958)

¶ All sit

Final Descant & Harmony: Matthew T. Hall (b.1994)

The Fourth Lesson

Reading: **Luke 2. 8-20**

The shepherds go to the manger

Choir: **Bethlehem Down**

Music: Peter Warlock (1894 – 1930)

¶ All stand

All : 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 minds;
"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
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign."

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 to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from Heaven to men
begin and never cease."

Text: Nabum Tate (1652 - 1715)

Final Descant & Harmony: J. Stone (b.1994)

¶ *All sit*

The Fifth Lesson

Reading: **Matthew 2. 1-12**

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

Choir: **There shall a star from Jacob come forth**

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

¶ *All stand*

All:

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts, we traverse far
Field and fountain
Moor and mountain
Following yonder star:

*Oh, star of wonder, star of might
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading
Still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light*

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold we bring to crown him again -
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign:

Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a deity nigh:
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship God on high:

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume -
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold Him arise,
King, and God, and Sacrifice;
Heav'n sings Allelujah:
Allelujah the earth replies:

Music: John Henry Hopkins Jr. (1820 – 1891)

Final Descant & Harmony: J. Stone (b.1994)

¶ All Stand for the Gospel according to S^t John

The Sixth Lesson

Reading: **John 1. 1-14**

S^t John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

¶ All sit

Choir: **O magnum mysterium**

Francis Poulenc (1899 - 1963)

¶ All stand

All: **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: *O come...***

**Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God in the highest: *O come...***

Arrangement and descant: David Willcocks (1919 – 2015)

¶ Remain standing for the prayers

Blessing

Choir: **Tomorrow shall be my dancing day**

John Gardner (1917 – 2011)

Dismissal

All: 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 th' angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."
*Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"*

Christ, by highest heav'n adored:
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see;
hail, th'incarnate Deity:
pleased, as man, with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Hark!...*

Hail! the heav'n born Prince of peace!
Hail! the Son 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. *Hark!...*

*Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)
David Willcocks (1919 – 2015)*

Voluntary: **Festival Toccata**
Percy Fletcher (1879 – 1932)

St John the Baptist Church, Catford and Downham Team Ministry
The Revd Peter Organ *Team Rector*
St John's Church Choir
Jack Stone *Organist & Director of Music*

Christmas services at St John's
Friday 24th December Crib Service: 16.00 & Midnight Mass: 23.00
Saturday 25th December Christmas Day Mass: 10.00
www.stjohnscatford.co.uk