

The Church of Ireland
Portarlinton Union of Parishes

CAROL SERVICE

December 2020

*recorded in the
Church of St John the Evangelist,
Monasterevin*

*Available to view online at
<https://youtu.be/UszLJ5Qo7BI>*

MUSIC BEFORE THE SERVICE

The angel Gabriel, from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame...
Basque traditional carol melody, arranged C. Edgar Pettman (1865–1943)

The Rector says

BIDDING PRAYERS

I welcome you, on behalf of...

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate this 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 carols and listening to music.

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:

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who 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.**

Before each reading

Reader: God's word is a lantern to our feet

All: **and a light for our path.**

LUKE 1:26–38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ances-

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, thou Wisdom from above
who ord'rest all things through thy love;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in her ways to go:

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:

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave:

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;

THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

tor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ³⁴Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' ³⁵The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.' ³⁸Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

HYMN 135

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery:

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:

O come, Desire of Nations, bring
all peoples to their Saviour King;
thou Cornerstone, who makest one,
complete in us thy work begun:

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

18th-century Latin (or earlier)
based on The Advent Antiphons from 9th century (or earlier)
tr. John Mason Neale (1816–66) and others altd.

Veni Emmanuel
Melody from a 15th-century Frency Franciscan processional
pub. by Thomas Helmore (1811–90) in *Hymnal Noted* (1856)

Reader: God's word is a lantern to our feet

All: and a light for our path.

LUKE 1:39–49

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord:
unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name:
make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might:
powers and dominions lay their glory by;

Reader: God's word is a lantern to our feet

All: and a light for our path.

LUKE 2:1–7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was de-

SECOND READING

THE VISIT OF MARY TO ELIZABETH

would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

⁴⁶And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, -

⁴⁸for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.'

HYMN 712

TELL OUT MY SOUL, THE GREATNESS OF THE LORD

proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word:
firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926)

based on the Canticle 'Magnificat' (Luke 1:46-55)

Woodlands 10 10 10 10

Walter Grotz (1877-1949)

THIRD READING

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

scended from the house and family of David.

⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head:
the stars in the bright sky looked down where
he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from on
high,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Reader: God's word is a lantern to our feet
All: **and a light for our path.**

LUKE 2:8–20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on

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 mind),

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender
care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

attrib. *W. J. Kirkpatrick* (1838–1921) altd.
v. 3 *Charles H. Gabriel* (1892)
Cradle Song 11 11 11 11
Melody by *W. J. Kirkpatrick* (1838–1921)

FOURTH READING
THE SHEPHERDS

earth peace among those whom he favours!'
¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

'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:

‘The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and in a manger laid.’

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels, praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

Reader: God’s word is a lantern to our feet
All: **and a light for our path.**

LUKE 2:22–40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord’), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, ‘a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.’

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹‘Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

‘All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace!
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to earth
begin, and never cease.’

Nahum Tate (1652–1715) altd.
based on Luke 2:8–14

Winchester Old 86 86 (CM)
Melody from T. Este’s *Psalms* (1592)
harmony adpt. from Este (1592)
and Ravenscroft (1621)

FIFTH READING

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.’

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

IN THE BLEAK MID-WINTER

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, heav'n cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
 heav'n 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;

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All: **and a light for our path.**

TITUS 2:11–14, 3:3–7

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

^{3:3}For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions

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 his mother only 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.

Christina Rossetti (1830–93)

*Cranham
 Gustav Holst (1874–1934)*

FINAL READING

THE GRACE OF GOD HAS APPEARED

FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL

and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another. ⁴But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

HARK THE HERALD-ANGELS SING

Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all you 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 heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail th'incarnate Deity!

Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
all things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with his joy and peace:
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel:

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 man no more may die;
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth:

*Charles Wesley (1707-88) and others
based on Luke 2:1-20*

*Christmas (Mendelssohn) 77 77 D with Refrain
From a chorus in*

*Felix Mendelssohn's Festgesang (1840)
adpt. 1855 W. H. Cummings (1831-1915)*

THE BLESSING