

ORDER OF SERVICE - 25 DECEMBER 2023

GREYFRIARS·KIRK



WELCOME
TO WORSHIP

MINISTRY TEAM

Sue MacGregor
Gillian Couper
Prof Bert Kerrigan KC



GREYFRIARS

life in all its fullness / beatha na lànachd

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Monday 25 December 2023 – Christmas Day

You are very warmly welcomed to all our services at Greyfriars.

They are available on our YouTube channel for viewing at any time at bit.ly/greyfriarstv.

Organ: Pifa (Pastoral Symphony) from *Messiah*

G. F. Handel

Introit: A great and mighty wonder, a full and holy cure!
The Virgin bears the infant, with virgin honour pure.
Repeat the hymn again! 'To God on high be glory, and peace on earth to men!'
The Word becomes incarnate, and yet remains on high!
And cherubim sing anthems to shepherds from the sky.
While thus they sing your Monarch, those bright angelic bands,
rejoice, ye vales and mountains; ye oceans, clap your hands.
Since all he comes to ransom, by all be He adored,
the Infant born in Bethl'em, the Saviour and the Lord.
And idol forms shall perish, and error shall decay,
and Christ shall wield his sceptre, our Lord and God for ay.

St. Germanus, tr. J. M. Neale

Michael Praetorius

Call to Worship: Sue MacGregor

Hymn 306:

Adeste Fideles

1. *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, Christ the Lord.*
2. *God of God, Light of light, lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created; O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*
3. *Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
'Glory to God in the highest': O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*
4. *Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory given:
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

Latin, 18th c.

The Lighting of the Christmas Candle

Leader 1: Today we celebrate the gift of the Incarnation, Emmanuel, God with us. We celebrate the birth of Christ who is the Light of the World – a Light no darkness can extinguish. Christ's Light can enter any darkness and as members of the Body of Christ, we live in the Light of Christ!

All: *"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)*

Leader 2: Jesus, the Son of God, was born of Mary, to become human, one of us. He lived among us, experiencing our joys and hopes, our struggles and challenges. He came to bring us out of the darkness to which we had fallen and into God's wonderful, eternal Light.

(The Christ Candle is Lit)

Leader 1: Ever living God, as we light this fifth candle, the Christ Candle, we celebrate the birth of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Light of the World. As His light shines in our hearts and homes, may we remember the true meaning of Christmas – the gift of Your love and grace. Thank You for the hope, peace, joy, and love that this Advent season has brought into our lives. We welcome the birth of Jesus with open hearts and gratitude.

All: *Light of light, you have come among us. Help us who live by your light to shine as lights in your world. Glory to God in the highest.* *Amen*

Prayers for Christmas Day: Gillian Couper

Leader: When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem they found there was no room.

All: *We confess that in the midst of all our anxieties, we have not made room in our hearts for others.*

Leader: We know that, paralysed by fear, prejudice or apathy, we have not made room in our homes for the stranger. We confess that, forgetting the welcome we have been shown, we have not made room in your church for those who are different from us.

All: *We confess that in the busyness of Christmas time we have not made room in our lives for you.*
(Silence)

Leader: Ever-living God, forgive us and renew us. Use this time to break open our hearts, throw open the doors, open our eyes to your presence and open our arms wide to welcome you. We rejoice that you come to us, in vulnerability, again and again, to show us how much we are loved.

All: *We are forgiven; we are freed, we are beloved; we are blessed.*
Thanks be to God! *Amen*

The Word of God

Luke 2: 1 - 20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

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

When 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.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Anthem:

Mary had a baby, Yes, Lord! Mary had a baby, Yes, my Lord!

Mary had a baby, Yes, Lord! The people keep a-comin' an' the train done gone.

What did she name him? Yes, Lord! What did she name him? Yes, my Lord!

What did she name him? Yes, Lord! The people keep a-comin' an' the train done gone.

Named him Jesus, Yes, Lord! Named him Jesus, Yes, my Lord!

Named him Jesus, Yes, Lord! The people keep a-comin' an' the train done gone.

Mary had a baby, Yes, Lord! Mary had a baby, Yes, my Lord!

Mary had a baby, Yes, Lord! The people keep a-comin' an' the train done gone.

Negro Spiritual

arr. Stephen Doughty

Reflection

Sue MacGregor

Hymn 320:

Antioch

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.

Isaac Watts

Pastoral Prayer: Sue MacGregor

The Lord's Prayer: 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

Hymn 301:

Mendelssohn

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 hosts 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, hail the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
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 man 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'.

Charles Wesley

Blessing

Organ: Variations on 'In dulci jubilo'

Denis Bédard