

ORDER OF SERVICE - 24 DECEMBER 2023

GREYFRIARS·KIRK



WELCOME
TO WORSHIP

MINISTRY TEAM

Sue MacGregor
Gillian Couper
Prof. Bert Kerrigan KC



Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

Conducted by Sue MacGregor,
Probationer Minister in the Presbytery of Edinburgh & West Lothian

With Elders, Friends, and the Choir of Greyfriars Kirk

Organist and Choirmaster: Dr Caroline Cradock

Organ: Chorale prelude on 'Wachet auf!'

J. S. Bach

Call to Worship

Hymn 315 (verses 1 and 2, choir only; verses 3 and 4, all):

Irby

1. 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.
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 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.*
4. *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,
When, like stars, his children crowned all in white shall wait around.*

Cecil Frances Alexander

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Choir: Adam lay ybounden

Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond; four thousand winter thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple, an apple that he took. as clerkës finden written In their book.
Ne had the apple, the apple taken been, ne had never our Lady a-been heavené queen.
Blessed be the time that apple taken was! Therefore we moun singen *Deo gratias!*

anon. c. 1400

Boris Ord

Lesson 1: Genesis 1: 1 – 5 and 26 - 28

(New Revised Standard Version)

Reader: Laura Dunlop KC (Elder)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Hymn 273:*Veni Emmanuel*

1. *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.*
2. *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.*
3. *O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.*
4. *O come, thou key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.*
5. *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.*

18th c. antiphon, tr. John Mason Neale

Lesson 2: Isaiah 9: 2 and 6 – 7

(New King James Version)

Reader: Catherine Alexander (Elder)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Hymn 285:

Gabriel's Message

1. *The Angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail, ' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary, most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!*
2. *'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honour thee,
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold; most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!*
3. *Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, 'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said.
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name': most highly favoured lady. Gloria!*
4. *Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say, 'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!*

Basque carol, *adapted* Sabine Baring-Gould

Lesson 3: Luke 1: 26 – 33

(Good News Translation)

Reader: Helene van der Ploeg

(CEO, Grassmarket Community Project)

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!" Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"

Choir: Sans Day Carol

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk,
and Mary bore Jesus, who was wrapped up in silk.
And Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be,
and the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!

Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass,
and Mary bore Jesus, who died on the cross.

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal,
and Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all.

Now the holly bears a berry, as blood it is red,
then trust we our Saviour, who rose from the dead.

Cornish traditional

arr. John Rutter

Lesson 4: Luke 2: 1 – 7

(New Revised Standard Version)

Reader: Colin McLeod

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.

Hymn 304:

Forest Green

1. *O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see you lie!
Above your deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in your streets is shining the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in you tonight.*
2. *O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.*
3. *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.*
4. *O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in; be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.*

Phillips Brooks

Lesson 5: Luke 2: 8-20

Reader: Isobel Hutchings (Elder)

(Contemporary English Version)

That night in the fields near Bethlehem some shepherds were guarding their sheep. All at once an angel came down to them from the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord's glory flashed around them. The shepherds were frightened. But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Saviour was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay." Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God. They said: "Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God." After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay. When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised. But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant. As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said.

Hymn 296:

Winchester Old

1. *While humble shepherds watched their flocks in Bethlehem's plains by night,
an angel sent from heaven appeared, and filled the plains with light.*
2. *'Fear not' he said, for sudden dread had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind.*
3. *'To you in David's town, this day, is born, of David's line,
the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord; and this shall be the sign:*
4. *'The heavenly Babe you there shall find to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling-bands, and in a manger laid.'*
5. *Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God; and thus addressed their joyful song:*
6. *'All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
good will is shown from heaven above and never more shall cease.'*

Luke 2: 8 - 14

Lesson 6: Matthew 2: 1 – 12

Reader: Leslie Munro (Elder)

(Rev William Smith's 'Gospels in Braid Scots')

Noo, whan Jesus was born i' Bethlehem-Judah, i' the days o' King Herod, lo ! Wyss Men cam frae the East tae Jerusalem. And quo' they, "Whaur is he bidin that is ca'd King o' the Jews ? for i' the East we saw his starn, and are come forrit to worship him." But the King, hearin, was sair pitten-aboot ; and a' Jerusalem wi' him. And, gatherin a' the heigh-priests and writers o' the nation, he wad ken o' them "whaur the Messiah soud be born ?" And quo' they, "In Bethlehem-Judah ; for sae it is pitten doon by the prophet ;

'And thou, Bethlehem , land o' Judah, nane the least amang Judah's princes !
for oot o' thee sal come a Ruler, wha sal tend my folk o' Isra' ! ' "

Than, Herod, convenin the Wyss Men privately, faund oot mair strickly o' the comin o' the starn ; and bad them gang to Bethlehem ; and quo' he, "Gang, and seek ye oot the wee bairn ; and whan ye ken, fesh me word again, that I as weel may come and worship." Eftir hearing the King, they gaed awa' ; and lo ! the starn whilk they saw i' the East gaed on afore them, till it stood whaur the wee bairn was. And whan they saw the starn, they were blythe wi' unco blythness. And comin intil the hoose, they saw the wee bairn, and his mither Mary ; and loutin doon, worshipp't him. And openin' oot their gear, they offer't till him gifts – gowd, and frankincense, and myrrh. And bein warned in a dream no to gang back till Herod, they airtit their way to their ain kintra anither gate.

Choir: Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber

Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber, holy angels guard thy bed;
heav'nly blessings without number softly falling on thy head.

Lulla, lulla, lulla, lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

May we see the lowly cradle where the newborn Saviour lay;
ox's manger for his cradle; for his bedding, straw and hay.

Lulla, lulla, lulla, lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

Holy Child, may we revere thee, trust and love thee all our days,
then go dwell for ever near thee, see thy face and sing thy praise.

Lulla, lulla, lulla, lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

Isaac Watts (adapted)

Chris Hutchings

Lesson 7: John 1: 1 – 14

(New International Version)

Reader: Gillian Couper

(Parish Associate)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Address

Choir: Torches

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.

Galician, tr. J.B. Trend

John Joubert

Hymn 306:

Adeste Fideles

(during which, **The Collection for Christian Aid Appeals**)

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.*

Latin, 18th c. tr. Frederick Oakeley

Pastoral Prayer: prayers for the community and the world

Rebecca Grant (Elder)

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

Prayer for Christmas Eve

Leader: All embracing God, bound in mystery, but made clear in the stable that was lit up by a star:
this special night is radiant with the brilliance of your message of love and good will to all.

All: *As we go from this place, may we take that light with us to guide us in the days to come.*

Blessing

Organ: Toccata on 'Mendelssohn'

David Willcocks

NOTES

Forthcoming Services:

Tomorrow	10.30 am: Christmas Worship
Sunday 31 December	10.30 am: Morning Worship
Sunday 7 January	10.30 am: Morning Worship 12.30 pm: Gaelic Service

After the service, all are warmly invited to join the congregation at the west end of the Kirk (under the organ) for mulled wine or apple juice, with home-made mince pies.