

A FESTIVAL
OF NINE
LESSONS
& CAROLS

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL: ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

The choir will sing verses 1 & 2

Please stand for verse 3...

**And through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.**

**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 feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in 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;
when like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.**

THE BIDDING

Beloved in Christ, at this Christmas-tide let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious redemption brought us by this Holy Child. But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity within the Church he came to build, and especially in this town of Halesworth, the Blyth Valley Parishes and Diocese of Saint Edmundsbury and Ipswich. And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the homeless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, those affected and distressed by the war, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love. Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in 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.**

May the almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of angels bring us all. **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING - GENESIS 3. 8-15

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head

CAROL: GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay!
for Jesus Christ our saviour
was born upon this day,
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were 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:

O tidings ...

The shepherds at those tidings
rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding,
in tempest, storm and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway
this blessed babe to find.

O tidings ...

But when to Bethlehem they came,
whereat this infant lay;
they found him in a manger
where oxen feed on hay,
his mother Mary kneeling,
unto the Lord did pray:

O tidings ...

Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place!
And when true love and brotherhood
each other now embrace,
this holy tide of Christmas
all others doth deface:

O tidings ...

THE SECOND READING - GENESIS 22. 15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.

WE REMAIN SEATED AS THE CHOIR SINGS

CAROL: SILENT NIGHT (*sung seated*)

**Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!**

**Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.**

THE THIRD READING - ISAIAH 9. 2b, 6-8

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

WE REMAIN SEATED AS THE CHOIR SINGS

THE FOURTH READING - ISAIAH 11.

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown

CAROL: THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

The holly and the ivy

**When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown,**

*O the rising of the sun,
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.*

**The holly bears a blossom
As white as the lily flower,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
To be our sweet saviour:**

O the rising of the sun

**The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good:**

O the rising of the sun

**The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn:**

O the rising of the sun

**The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.**

O the rising of the sun

**The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown,**

O the rising of the sun,

THE FIFTH READING - ST LUKE 1.26-38

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

CAROL:THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME

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!*

'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!*

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!*

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!*

THE SIXTH READING - ST MATTHEW 1. 18-23

St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

CAROL: ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT ALL CHRISTIANS SING

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring;
On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
When from our sin He set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night;
All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen."

CAROL: AWAY IN A MANGER

(sung seated)

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 thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

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

THE SEVENTH READING - ST LUKE 2. 8-16

The shepherds go to the manger

CAROL: WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS

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);
‘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 swathing bands,
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:

‘All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease.’

THE EIGHTH READING - ST MATTHEW 2. 1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

CAROL: WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE

All: We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Everyone Refrain:

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

Men: Born a King on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. *(Refrain)*

Women: Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, all men raising,
worship him, God most high. *(Refrain)*

Choir: Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *(Refrain)*

All: Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Heaven sings: 'Alleluia',
'Alleluia', the earth replies. *(Refrain)*

THE NINTH READING - ST JOHN 1. 1-14

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

CAROL: O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

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!*

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

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:
O come...

THE COLLECT

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

Let us bless the living God: he was born of the Virgin Mary, revealed in his glory, worshipped by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed in throughout the world, exalted in the highest heavens. Blessed be God our strength and our salvation now and for ever. **Amen.**

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, bestow upon you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God almighty; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CAROL: 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 ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the 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, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.

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.

There is a collection plate in front of the font as you leave, it costs thousands of pounds every year to keep St. Mary's open, thank you for your donation. No cash, no problem! - Contactless giving available or scan the QR code below.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed this evening from our clergy, readers, choir, musicians and to you for coming!

This is **your town church**, and **your church family**. You are **ALWAYS** welcome at any service, concert, event or just to spend time here in peace and quiet.

From us all here at St. Mary's, we wish you a blessed Christmas & a peaceful New Year



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It's time for
Christingle
again.

**St. Mary's Church
Halesworth**

Christmas Eve

4.30pm

ALL ARE WELCOME

ST MARY'S CHURCH

HALESWORTH

CHRISTMAS EVE

11.30pm

MIDNIGHT MASS

HOLY COMMUNION

