

The people walking
in darkness have
seen a great light;
they lived in a land
of deep darkness
but a light has
dawned on them.

Isaiah 9:2



Arminghall Christmas Service

13th December 2020

Opening Carol

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 tonight.

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 today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Welcome, Lighting of the Advent Candle, and Prayer

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:2,6-7

Darkness and Light

²The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

⁶For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his
shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the greatness of his government and
peace

there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and for ever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

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, heaven cannot hold him
nor earth sustain;
heaven 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.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air;
but only his mother
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.

Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds and the angels

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom
his favour rests.'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the

Lord has told us about.'

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Matthew 2:1-12

The magi are led by the star to Jesus

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi ^[a] from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.'

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ 'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for out of you will come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.'" ^[b]

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and

worship him.'

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

While shepherds watch 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;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men;
Begin and never cease".

John 1:1-14

The Word Became Flesh

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 mankind. 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.

Talk

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, let us, adore him...

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...

Blessing

Carols for singing in the churchyard

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.

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.

Jesus 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 for 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;
when like stars, his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

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

Joy to the earth—the Saviour reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy

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

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 we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.

*Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new born King.*