



**We invite
you to a**

Carels by Candlelight

SERVICE at

St Nicholas Church, Sighthill

Sunday, 11th December 2022

at 7:00pm



Mulled wine, mince
pies, tea /coffee and
biscuits after the
service

Singing led by

Bristo Community Concert Band

Leader 1: Before the world began, all was darkness. Before our lives began, all was silence. Before the coming of the Lord, darkness covers the earth; silence surrounds our hearts. Come, Lord, to our world. Come, Lord, to our lives. Lighten our darkness; speak in the silence. So it begins... Out of the darkness and all the doom-dimmed places of the world, down from dread's hills and over the unforgiving plains the people are coming, carrying their burdens of guilt and regret, suffering and dissatisfaction. Out onto the broad roads under a starlit sky they are making their way slowly, haltingly, from their remembered yesterdays and all the superstitions of their past, towards the leading light; the cosmic sign, going ahead of them toward its resting place above a plain village in a small country, thick with the rumours of a terrible, godly nativity. And listen! They are singing...

Advent Carol: 'O Come, O come, Immanuel'

1. O come O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

Chorus

**Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel
Shall come to thee O Israel**

2. 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
3. O come Thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go
4. O come Desire of nations bind
All peoples in one heart and mind
Bid envy strife and quarrels cease
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace

CCLI Song # 31982

Leader 1: Listen! It is quiet in the village. There are only the sounds of animals under the great, silent sky, and all the people gathering there are silent, too: they are listening, for the beginning of the rumour. It is like a whisper out of the stars' background, high and pure, born of the essence of a thousand ancient hopes gathering on angel's wings, fluttering about the heart of a young country girl. Listen!

Reading 1 - 'Luke 1:26-38' (The annunciation) NIV

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called[a] the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Carol 2: 'Hark the herald angels sing'

1. Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled
Joyful all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With th'angelic hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
2. Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of the Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail th'incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with men to dwell
Jesus our Emmanuel
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace
Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n 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 newborn King

Leader 1: And in the village the quietness is broken by the piercing cries of birth, and the stars' silence split by one baby's cry, enough to rend the lanes of heaven. And look, it is happening, now, in the slow, stony corner of a too-worldly empire...:

Reading 2 - Luke 2:1-7 (the birth of Jesus)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own town to register. So, Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Carol 3 – The virgin Mary had a baby boy

1. The Virgin Mary had a baby boy
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy
And they said that His name was Jesus

Chorus

**He come from the glory
He come from the glorious kingdom
He come from the glory
He come from the glorious kingdom
Oh yes believer oh yes believer
He come from the glory
He come from the glorious kingdom**

2. The angels sang when the baby was born
The angels sang when the baby was born
The angels sang when the baby was born
And proclaimed Him the Saviour Jesus
3. The wise men saw where the baby was born
The wise men saw where the baby was born
The wise men saw where the baby was born
And they saw that His name was Jesus

CCLI Song # 4756091

Leader 2: Now, now it is happening. Now we begin to see the child, hear the rumour, we who these years later are of the same people gathering under the night sky to witness: can't you see them? All around they gather, behind the farm buildings and on the dusty lanes running up the hillsides, along the highways and the motorways and the airwaves where the rumour will travel across the ages and empires, we are all, all of us gathering - and it is as if

we can hear the ancient song of a mother singing an end to barrenness and injustice...listen....

Reading 3 - Luke 1:46-55 (Mary's song)

And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is His name. His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and His descendants forever, just as He promised our ancestors."

Carol 4 - 'Away in a manger'

1. Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay
2. 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 cradle 'til morning is nigh
3. Be near me Lord Jesus I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me I pray
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there

CCLI Song # 38583

Leader 2: And have you noticed, how, in the ancient story, we are all of us represented, at the nativity of God on the earth? There are the shepherds, the great unwashed of the world, given their own sign and running to see before the moment slips through their greasy, criminal fingers. There are astrologers, kings to some, the exotic foreigners and pedlars of wisdom, drawn by what they understand towards the world's chief mystery. There are the faithful friends, Elisabeth, Zechariah, the bemused father, Joseph, the waiting hopeful believers Simeon and Anna - enough of a mix for us all to find a place, drawn from the good and not-so good of the world.

Carol 5 - 'In the bleak midwinter'

1. In the bleak midwinter
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 midwinter
Long ago

2. 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 midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ

3. 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

4. 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 can I give Him
Give my heart

CCLI Song # 294736

Leader 2: See, then, what gathers around at the nativity, where the rumour begins of God on the earth, and listen to the sound of singing-for-joy and whining-for-fear and crying-for-the-lost. Already the rumour is growing, but changing, too, like a bright spring bubbling over sand picking up dust and agonies on its course. But still, we gather at the beginning, and there's cheerful! there's light, at last! There's a bit of goodness, god-ness, in our god-less world, in need of some good, and it is - in the scheme of things - all the goodness we need.

Carol 6 - 'Silent night'

1. Silent night holy night
All is calm I'm singin' all is bright
'Round yon virgin mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Oh sleep in heavenly peace

2. Silent night holy night
Shepherds quake oh at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia
Christ the Saviour is born
Christ the Saviour is born
3. Silent night holy night
Son of God oh 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

CCLI Song # 4629513

Leader 1: The centuries have passed, and with them empires, authorities and wisdoms have come and gone. Great men have made their plans and brought them about, or failed and fallen. New truth has vied with old ideas, and women have washed away their tears and son's blood in a thousand rivers. The fate of this one or that one seems like nothing more than a tiny drop in an ocean of uncertainty and the clashing dreams of the ages. But then there is the rumour, the nativity of God on the earth, handed on and handed on - sometimes in great shouts and noise, sometimes almost in silence - coming at us over the boundless centuries, and doing its ancient work in our hearts and enterprises.

Leader 1: And never again, after the rumour, will the fate of one be insignificant, though still a tiny drop; for the rumour begins with one, tiny, baby-cry, and grows into one, great heart-cry of love, and becomes one rending agony-cry for all the pains and terrors of the world, and you and I, and everyone, stand there watching and listening as the Bethlehem rumour is almost quelled at the silence of Golgotha. Listen, the One who was given is dying, and he is dying for you, dying for you..

Jesus' voice: "It is cold here.
Who are all these people I do not know gathering around watching?
It does not matter. They need me to die.
For some, it is for pain - for them my refrain;
'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'
For some it is for comfort. For them my report;
'Father into your hands I commit my spirit'.
Others feel guilty this day. For them I say;
'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.
Where have they come from, and what have they seen?
I wish I could tell them there is nothing to fear.
On the road I travel they will be, have been;
and I can see Bethlehem from here."

Reading 4 - John 1:1-14 (The Word)

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.

Reflection

Carol 7: O Little town of Bethlehem

1. 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
2. O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And peace upon the earth
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love
3. How silently how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n
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 in us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel

CCLI Song # 1741697

Carol 8 – BCCB Special...

Prayer/ Leader 1

In this season of expectation
We prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah

Into the bustle of our lives
and the hard to find moments of solitude
We prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah

Into our homes and situations
along with friends and families
We prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah

Into our hearts, and those often hidden parts of our lives
We prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah

For beneath the surface of your story
is an inescapable fact
You entered this world
as vulnerable as any one of us
in order to nail that vulnerability to the cross.

Our fears, our insecurities and our sins
all that can separate us from God
exchanged by your Grace for Love.
We cannot comprehend the reasoning
only marvel that Salvation comes to us
through a baby born in a stable,
and reaches out to a world in need.

In this season of anticipation

We prepare to welcome you, Christ Jesus, Messiah

So come, come one, come all – Come all ye faithful

Joyful and triumphant. Come and behold him

Born the King of kings... We rise to sing together...

Carol 9 - 'O come all ye faithful'

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

Chorus

O come let us adore Him

O come let us adore Him

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
3. Sing choirs of angels
Sing in exultation
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above
Glory to God
In the highest
4. Yea Lord we greet Thee
Born this happy morning
Jesus to Thee be glory given
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing

CCLI Song # 4758525

We wish you a Merry Christmas

Benediction