

**St Mary the Virgin Church
Great Brickhill**



The Crib on the font – Christmas Day 2019

**NINE LESSONS & CAROLS
WEDNESDAY 16th DECEMBER 2020**

With thanks to:-

The Rector, Revd John Waller

Organist and Choir Master, Jerry Breslin

The members of the choir:

Sopranos:- Amanda Hallam, Andrea Spurdle

Altos:- Juliet Bennett, Kay Leeming

Tenors:- Jeremy Hopkinson, Andrew Smith

Bass:- James Northen (soloist)

Those who decorated the church:-

Rosie Dawson

Helle Hopkinson

Betty Kinsey

Julia Turner

Gill Wilson

A recording of the service can be found via the following link:-

<https://youtu.be/IN35oDz9Hdc>

PROCESSIONAL CAROL:

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

All join in singing the last four verses:-

Solo

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.

Choir

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.

All

**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 prayers and the Lord's Prayer – The Rector

FIRST LESSON (Genesis 3: 8-15) *Jeremy Hopkinson*

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

Adam and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Thanks be to God.

HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID (How)

A recording from the Benefice Choir CD "Songs from the Choir Stalls (2014)

SECOND LESSON (Genesis 22: 15-18) *Andrew Smith*

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

Adam The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said, "I swear by myself", declares the Lord, "that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.

Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

Thanks be to God.

CAROL - O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

**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 to-night.**

**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 to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!**

THIRD LESSON (Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7) *James Northen*

Christ's birth and kingdom foretold by Isaiah

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, the light has dawned.

For unto us a child is born, unto 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. Of the increase 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 and for ever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Thanks be to God.

COVENTRY CAROL (Anon)

A recording from the Benefice Choir CD "Songs from the Choir Stalls (2014)

FOURTH LESSON (Micah 5: 2-5a) *Andrea Spurdle*

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times."

Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labour gives birth,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.
And he will be their peace.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL - SILENT NIGHT

**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**

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

FIFTH LESSON (Luke 1: 26 - 38) *Phillipa Cook*

The Angel Gabriel Salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, with a message for a girl betrothed to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David; the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel went in and said to her, 'Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' But she was deeply troubled by what he said and wondered what this greeting could mean.

Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God; you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name 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 ancestor David, and he will be king over Israel for ever; his reign shall never end.' 'How can this be?' said Mary. 'I am still a virgin.'

The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason the holy child to be born will be called the Son of God. Moreover your kinswoman Elizabeth has herself conceived a son in her old age; and she who was said to be barren is now in her sixth month, for God's promises can never fail.'

'I am the Lord's servant' said Mary 'May it be as you have said.' Then the angel left her.

Thanks be to God.

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
Off-spring 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.**

SIXTH LESSON (Luke 2: 1 - 7) *Julia Turner*

St Luke tells the story of the Birth of Jesus

In those days a decree was issued by the emperor Augustus for a census to be taken throughout the Roman world. Everyone made his way to his own town to be registered.

Joseph went up to Judea from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to register in the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house of David by descent; and with him went Mary, his betrothed, who was expecting her child.

While they were there, the time came for her to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn.

immediately followed by:-

SEVENTH LESSON (Luke 2: 8 - 16) *Julia Turner*

The shepherds go to the manger

Now in this same district there were shepherds, out in the fields, keeping watch through the night over their flock. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone round them.

They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid; I bring you good news, news of great joy for the whole nation. Today there has been born to you in the city of David a Saviour, he is Christ the Lord. This will be the sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.'

Suddenly there was with the angel a great company of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:

'Glory to God in highest heaven, and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

After the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Come, let us go straight to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.' They went in haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL - AWAY IN A MANGER

**Away in a manger No crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus Lay down His sweet head
The stars in the sky Look 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 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**

EIGHTH LESSON (Matthew 2: 1-11) *Jerry Breslin*

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

Jesus was born at Bethlehem in Judea during the reign of Herod. After his birth Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the new-born king of the Jews? We observed the rising of his star, and we have come to pay him homage.'

King Herod was greatly perturbed when he heard this and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together the chief priests and scribes of the Jews, and asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

'At Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet wrote: 'Bethlehem in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a ruler to be the shepherd of my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the Magi to meet him secretly, and ascertained from them the exact time when the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, and said, 'Go and make a careful search for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, so that I may go myself and pay him homage.'

After hearing what the king had to say they set out; there before them was the star they had seen rising, and it went ahead of them until it stopped above the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at the sight of it and entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother and bowed down and worshipped him; they opened their treasure chests and presented gifts to him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Thanks be to God.

CHOIR CAROL - Three Kings (soloist James Northen)

NINTH LESSON (John 1: 1-14) *Revd John Waller*

St John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God.

(Some of the lights will be extinguished at the start of the singing of the next carol)

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, 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, 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, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea Lord we greet Thee born this happy morning
Jesu to Thee be glory given
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

The service will conclude with a recording of:-

"A Gaelic Blessing" (Rutter) from the Benefice Choir CD "Songs from the Choir Stalls (2014) as the Choir recess to the Vestry.