A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 22 December 2021
at 5.30 pm

Friday 24 December 2021
at 4.00 pm
(livestreamed)
York Minster offers this service of Lessons and Carols to the City and the County.
The traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols originated at Truro Cathedral in
the early twentieth century and was later adapted by Eric Milner-White (later Dean
of York) whilst Dean of King’s College, Cambridge, in 1918.

The nine readings from the Bible alternate with carols (sung by the choir) and
congregational hymns to provide a series of reflections on the birth of Our Lord and
Saviour Jesus Christ. The readings take us on a journey through time and unfold
the story of God’s promise to save his people. They begin with the story of the fall
of humanity, as told in the book Genesis. There then follow passages from the Old
Testament Prophets which look forward to the coming of God’s Messiah or ‘chosen
one’. The final five lessons are from the New Testament and tell the story of the birth
of Jesus, the Son of God.

The service is sung by the Choir of York Minster, directed by Robert Sharpe,
Director of Music. The organ is played by Ben Morris, Assistant Director of Music,
and Asher Oliver, Assistant Organist.

At the end of the service a collection will be taken to support the mission and
ministry of York Minster. UK taxpayers are encouraged to use the Gift Aid
envelopes provided.

Please do not use sound or video recorders or cameras, and please ensure that mobile
telephones are switched off.
Organ music before the service

Toccata in F (BuxWV 156)  
Dietrich Buxtehude

Les Bergers ♦ Desseins éternels  
Olivier Messiaen

Es ist ein’ Ros’ entsprungen  
Johannes Brahms

Before the service begins, the Choir and Clergy processions move from the South Quire Aisle to the West End of the Minster.

Please stand.
The Choir sings the first two verses; please join in at the third verse.

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 only

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.

All

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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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;
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

Words C F Alexander (1818–85)
Tune IRBY, H J Gauntlett (1805–76)

Please remain standing.
The Bidding

The Dean says:

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas time our care and delight to prepare ourselves 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.

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; and let us make this Cathedral Church glad with our carols of praise.

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, within the dominions of Our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, and within this City and Diocese of York.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, 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 man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself has 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.

Please sit.

Carol

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.

Then why should men 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.

When sin departs before his grace,
than life and health come in its place;
angels and men with joy may sing,
all for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night:
‘Glory to God and peace to men,
now and evermore. Amen.’

Words Traditional
The First Lesson

God declares the consequences of human sin.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 3.8–15

Thanks be to God.

Carol

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green: the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought: I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile: under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive; which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Words From Divine Hymns or Spiritual Songs, New Hampshire (1784)
Music Elizabeth Poston (1905–87)
The Second Lesson

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his descendants the nations of the world will be blessed.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Thanks be to God.

Genesis 22.15–18a

Carol

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

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal, and Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all, and Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be, and the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly, holly, holly! And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!

Now the holly bears a berry as blood is it red, and Mary bore Jesus who rose from the dead, and Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be, and the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly, holly, holly! And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!

Words English traditional ♦ Music John Rutter (b. 1945)
Hymn

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!

2. From God our heav'nly Father
a blessèd 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 . . .

3. The shepherds at these tidings
rejoicèd much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding
in tempest, storm and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway
this blessèd Babe to find.
O tidings . . .

4. 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 . . .

5. Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true love and brotherhood
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
all other doth efface:
O tidings . . .

Words Traditional
Tune God rest you merry, traditional English

Please sit.
The Third Lesson

*Isaiah proclaims the lasting rule of a king from the line of David.*

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9.2, 6–7a

 Thanks be to God.

Carol

*When* Christ was born of Mary free
in Bethlehem that fair city,
angels did sing with mirth and glee,
‘In excelsis Gloria!’

Herdsmen beheld these angels bright,
To them appeared with great light,
And said, ‘God’s son is born this night,
In excelsis Gloria!’

This King is come to save all kind,
Even in scripture as we find,
Therefore this song we have in mind,
‘In excelsis Gloria!’

Then, dear Lord, for thy great grace,
Grant us in bliss to see thy face,
Where we may sing to thee solace.
‘In excelsis Gloria!’

*Words* 15th century, anonymous
*Music* Christopher Gower

This piece, commissioned by the Chapter of York for this service, receives its first performances at these services.
The Fourth Lesson

The prophet declares that Christ's rule will bring peace.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11.1–9a

Thanks be to God.

Carol

A branch of strength and counsel from David's line shall grow; to bring to earth God's wisdom; from whom his peace will flow. The earth shall be full of peace as the waters cover the sea.

2. Great David's heir shall govern with knowledge, counsel, might; God's Spirit shall his spirit be; God's justice his delight. The earth shall be full of peace as the waters cover the sea.

3. The lamb and wolf and ox and bear—together they shall be in peace and grace and plenty, from fear and need set free. The earth shall be full of peace as the waters cover the sea.

4. With innocence of childhood the world will be remade; no terror, hurt or danger, no cause to be afraid. The earth shall be full of peace as the waters cover the sea.
5. The prophet seeks salvation,
   A time of truth and right;
When God shall be our all in all,
   God’s Spirit be our light
*The earth shall be full of peace
   as the waters cover the sea.*

*Words* Jonathan Draper (*b.* 1952), based on Isaiah 11. 1–11

*Please stand.*

**Hymn**

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 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.

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

*Words* Phillips Brooks (1835–93)
*Tune* Forest Green, R Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

*Please sit.*
The Fifth Lesson

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.

And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1.26–38a

Thanks be to God.
Carol

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 through-out the world will ever say:  
‘Most highly favoured lady.’ Gloria!

Words Basque carol, para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924)  
Music Basque traditional carol arr Edgar Pettman (1865–1943)

The Sixth Lesson

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 2.1–7a
Carol

I sing of a maiden that is makeles,
King of all kinges to her son she ches.

He came also stille ther his moder was
as dew in Apryle, that fallyth on the gras.

He came also stille to his moders bower
as dew in Apryle that falleth on the flower

He came also stille ther his moder lay
as dew in Apryle, that falleth on the spray.

Moder and maiden was never none but she:
well may such a lady Godes moder be.

Words Anonymous English ♦ Music Richard Shephard

Please stand.

Hymn

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

2. ‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty 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
a 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 swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.’

5. Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

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

Words Nahum Tate (1652–1715), after Luke 2.8–14
Tune WINCHESTER OLD, Thomas Este’s Psalter (1592)
The Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

All this time this song is best:
‘Verbum caro factum est.’

This night there is a child y-born that sprang out of Jesse’s thorn;
we must sing and say thereforn:
All this time this song is best:
‘Verbum caro factum est.’

Jesus is the childes name, and Mary mild is his dame;
all our sorrow shall turn to game:
All this time this song is best:
‘Verbum caro factum est.’
It fell upon high midnight: the starres shone both fair and bright; the angels sang with all their might. 

*All this time this song is best:*

'Verum caro factum est.'

Now kneel we down on our knee, and pray we to the Trinity our help, our succour for to be.

*All this time this song is best:*

'Verum caro factum est.'

Words Sixteenth-century text incorporating John 1.14 (*The Word was made flesh*)

Music William Walton (1902–83)

**The Eighth Lesson**

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Matthew 2.1–12

Thanks be to God.
Carol

In the bleak mid-winter
frosty wind made moan,
et 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.

2. 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.

3. Enough for him, whom cherubim
    worship night and day,
a breast full of milk,
    and a manger full of hay:
the ox and ass and camel which adore.

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 I can I give him—give my heart.


Please stand. An organ fanfare heralds the Christmas Gospel.
The Ninth Lesson

*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 any thing 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 gave he 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.

*John 1.1–14*

**Please remain standing.**

**Carol**

_Hodie Christus natus est:_  
Today Christ is born:

_hodie Salvator apparuit:_  
today the Saviour appeared:

_hodie in terra canunt Angeli,:_  
today on Earth the Angels sing,  
_Archangels rejoice:_

_hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:_  
today the righteous rejoice, saying:

_Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia._  
Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia.


**Please remain standing.**
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!*  

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...*  

3. See how the shepherds  
 summoned to his cradle,  
 leaving their flocks, draw nigh  
 with lowly fear;  
 we too will thither  
 bend our joyful footsteps:  
*O come, let us adore him...*  

4. Lo, star-led chieftains,  
 magi, Christ adoring,  
 offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
 we to the Christ-child  
 bring our hearts’ oblations:  
*O come, let us adore him...*  

(sung by the choir alone)  

5. Child, for us sinners  
 poor and in the manger,  
 fain we embrace thee  
 with love and awe;  
 who would not love thee,  
 loving us so dearly?  
*O come, let us adore him...*  

6. 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,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*  

*Words* Latin hymn, translated by Frederick Oakeley (1802–80)  
*Tune* ADESTE FIDELES, attributed to J F Wade (1711–86)  

*Please remain standing.*
The Collect of Christmas Eve

_The Archbishop says:_

**ALMIGHTY God,**
you make us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ.
Grant that, as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer,
we may with sure confidence
behold him when he shall come to be our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
_Amen._

The Blessing

_The Archbishop says:_

**M**ay the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children.
_Amen._

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.
_Amen._

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the Godbearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.
_Amen._

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.
_Amen._
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.

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.

Words Charles Wesley (1707–88)
Tune MENDELSSOHN, F Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809–47)

Organ Voluntaries

In dulci jubilo, bwv 729
    J S Bach

Festival Toccata on ‘In dulci jubilo’
    Samuel Kemp

Festival Toccata by Samuel Kemp, which receives its first performances at these services, is the winning entry in Category 2 of the Grand Organ Composers’ Competition.
In the unlikely event, that we need to evacuate the building, the exit routes are:
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