

Christ Church, Ipswich

Thursday 25th December 2025 at 10.45

Christmas Day Family Worship

Minister: Neil

Organist: Stephen

Happy Christmas! Let us worship God together:

Call to worship

Dear God,
we thank you for this Christmas Day.
We gather here to remember your birth in this world as a child to a mother.
We are here to reflect on your birth
and its relevance to us and to the world in which we are living in.
As we praise the baby Jesus
and pray and meditate upon the humble beginnings of our saviour,
accept our praises and prayers.
We pray that by remembering your birth
we continue to bring joy and peace to the people;
hope and revival to the Church;
love and justice to the world.
In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

The Lighting of the Christmas candle

We light this Christmas Candle to remind us that
Jesus is the light of the world.

**A boy has been born for us, a son given to us.
Glory to God in highest heaven!
Peace upon earth amongst people of goodwill!**

R&S 160 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:

*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 See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:

4 Lo, star-led chieftains,
magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
we to the Christ-child
bring our hearts' oblations:

5 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
'Glory to God
in the highest':

6 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;
Word of the Father
now in flesh appearing:

Latin 18th cent, possibly John F. Wade (c1711-86)
tr. Frederick Oakeley, altd.

A prayer of Adoration

Anthems of joy ring out this
 Day of Christmas celebration.
 Our voices swell the heavenly
 Realms in wondrous eternal
 Adoration.
 The Light of the world shines
 In humble earthly surroundings.
 On this special day we shout:
 Nowell! Nowell! Jesus Christ is born!

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

Loving God,
 we thank you for this special day and all it speaks of –
 your promise of old to send a Messiah to your people,
 the fulfilment of that promise through the coming of Jesus,
 the realisation of those long years of expectation,
 the glad tidings proclaimed by the angels,
 the wonder and mystery of that first Christmas.

We thank you for this season's power to move, inspire and challenge,
 to gladden the hardest of hearts and most broken of spirits,
 to stir our minds and capture our imagination.

We thank you for the special things we associate with Christmas -
 the spreading of goodwill, the sharing of friendship,
 the longing for peace and the expressing of love.

But above all we thank you for the truth behind this day -
 the message that you have come to us,
 that you love us,
 that you share our humanity,
 and that you want us to share in your abundant life.

Loving God,
 accept our praise, receive our thanksgiving,
 and may the wonder of the gospel come alive in our hearts today,
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

An opportunity for children to show us their Christmas gifts

R&S 158 Christians, awake, salute the happy morn

1 Christians, awake, salute the happy morn,
whereon the Saviour of the world was born.
Rise to adore the mystery of love
which hosts of angels chanted from above;
with them the joyful tidings first begun
of God incarnate and the Virgin's Son.

2 Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,
who heard the angelic herald's voice—'Behold!
I bring good tidings of a Saviour's birth
to you and all the nations upon earth.
This day hath God fulfilled his promised word,
this day is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord'.

3 He spake, and straightway the celestial choir
in hymns of joy unknown before conspire.
The praises of redeeming love they sang
and heaven's whole orb with hallelujahs rang.
God's highest glory was their anthem still,
peace upon earth, from each to each good will.

4 Then Bethl'em straight th'enlightened
shepherds sought
to see the wonder God for us had wrought.
They saw their Saviour as the angel said,
the swaddled infant in the manger laid.
They to their flocks and praising God return
with joyful hearts that did within them burn.

5 Like Mary let us ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving humankind.
Trace we the babe who has retrieved our loss
from his poor manger to his bitter cross.
Follow we him who has our cause maintained
and earth's first heavenly state shall be regained.

6 Then may we hope, th' angelic thrones among
to sing, redeemed, a glad triumphal song.
He that was born upon this joyful day
around us all his glory shall display;
saved by his love, incessant we shall sing
eternal praise to heaven's almighty King.

John Byrom (1692-1763) altd.*

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1-20

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. **3** This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **4** All went to their own towns to be registered. **5** Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. **6** He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. **7** While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. **8** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

9 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **10** Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **11** But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: **12** to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **13** This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' **14** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

15 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

16 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' **17** So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. **18** When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; **19** and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **20** But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. **21** The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Family Talk

Prayer

Like Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem,
be with us as we journey from place to place this Christmas,
and as we journey in our hearts towards you.

Like the stable that became a place of warmth and safety,
be with us as we enjoy the warmth of others' company,
and as we open our hearts to you.

Like the shepherds who responded with joy and excitement,
be with us in all the excitement of Christmas,
and fill our hearts with excitement for you.

Like the baby in the manger, bringing hope to all,
Encourage us to look for hope this Christmas,
and help us to bring hope and light to others. **Amen.**

A Moment for reflection as Stephen plays the organ

R&S 135

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing.

2 Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let thorns infest the ground,
or sins and sorrows grow;
wherever pain and death are found
he makes his blessings flow.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) altd.

Our prayers of intercession

Today, in all the demands,
we pray for those who are facing a Christmas
without someone they love.
God of goodness,
hear us and be with us.

Today, in all the delights,
we pray for those who are facing a Christmas
alone.
God of goodness,
hear us and be with us.

Today, in all the celebration,
we pray for those who are facing conflicts.
God of goodness,
hear us and be with us.

Today, in all the time at tables,
we pray for those who are hungry.
God of goodness,
hear us and be with us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

R&S 159

Hark! the herald angels sing

1 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 us to dwell,
 Jesus, our Immanuel:

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 we no more may die,
 born to raise the things of earth,
 born to give us second birth:

Charles Wesley (1707-88) altd.*

The Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
 the wonder of the shepherds,
 the perseverance of the wise men,
 the obedience of Joseph,
 the love of Mary
 and the peace of the Christ child
 fill your hearts this Christmas.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
 Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
 be upon you and those you love,
 this day and always. **Amen.**

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the love of God
 and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 be with us all,
 for evermore. Amen.**