

**The Joyful Celebration  
of  
Christmas Day 2018**

**CHRISTMAS DAY 2018**

**ORGAN PRELUDE**

*The people stand for the entrance of the Bible.*

## THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

God of Surprising Generosity and Unexpected Grace,  
we have come to open our souls and our lives  
to the divine birth.

**And in this sacred moment,  
we ask for your gentle presence  
to captivate and challenge us. Amen**

### PROCESSIONAL HYMN 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 with lowly fear;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:

4.  
Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens  
of heaven above;  
glory to God  
in the highest:

5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning,  
Jesu, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing:

*Music: Composer probably J F Wade 1711-1786. arr. David Willcocks 1919-2015  
Words: Latin, tr. F Oakeley 1802-1880 & others*

### LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

God of glory,  
your splendour shines from a manger in Bethlehem,  
where the Light of the world is humbly born  
into the darkness of human night.  
Open our eyes to Christ's presence in the shadows of our world,

so that we, like him, may become beacons of your justice,  
and defenders of all for whom there is no room. **Amen**

#### WELCOME

In the name of the Prince of Peace, I offer this greeting:  
Peace be with you. **And also with you.**

*Please pass a sign of the peace to those immediately around you.*

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

in an ordinary little town and among ordinary folk; in a land under occupation where threat of violence dogged the lives of the people; between one minute and the next God touched the earth - as so often in the past, in blessing or in warning - but this time God stayed, seeking among humankind those who would grow with and through the beloved one, Jesus, to become partners with God in establishing the Kingdom that is to come.

Draw us into the mystery of Your love. Join our voices with the heavenly host, that we may sing your glory on high.

**Glory to God in highest heaven,  
and peace on earth to all God's people.**

Today, O God of light,  
Your loving kindness dawns,  
Your tender compassion shines upon us,  
for in Jesus, born of human flesh,  
You reveal your gracious gift of our birth to life eternal.  
Fill us with wonder on this holy day

**Glory to God in highest heaven,  
and peace on earth to all God's people.**

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Christmas, with all of its signs and wonders,  
is easy to dismiss as both too much and too little at once:  
too much because angels are just too hard to fathom;  
too little because the promised peace seems out of reach.  
But if we dare to believe in the presence of peace,  
how might we be transformed,  
and how might we transform our world?

Perhaps we don't dare to believe in the presence of peace  
because it will ask us to change,  
to shift our priorities  
from grasping to letting go.

The world is too full of shepherds who refuse to leave their routine,  
who cling to the comfortable hillside of the familiar  
instead of following the lead of transformation.  
God forgive us when we miss the big news -  
and our part in it -  
because we are too focused on our little lives.

#### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

We are forgiven.  
This is good news.  
No heralds required;  
we can hear it whispered to our hearts  
which are open and ready to change.  
We have not missed the good tidings

that are meant for us:  
joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
**Thanks be to God. Amen**

**CAROL** Ding dong, merrily on high      Music: French traditional arr. Charles Wood 1866-1926  
Words: G R Woodward 1848-1934

A WORD WITH THE CHILDREN

### THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

FIRST READING      Isaiah 9: 2-7

In this is the word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**CAROL**      Silent night      Music: Franz Xaver Gruber 1787-1863 arr. Bob Chilcott b.  
1955

Words: Joseph Mohr 1792-1848

*Please stand for the gospel*

A reading from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
according to Luke:  
**Glory to you, Lord.**

GOSPEL      Luke 2: 1-20

The gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

HYMN      Away in a manger  
1919-2015      Music: Melody by W.J. Kirkpatrick 1838-1921. Arr. David Willcocks

Words: Anonymous

HOMILY

### THE RESPONSE TO GOD IN WORD AND ACTION

HYMN      O little town of Bethlehem

Music: English traditional melody harmonised by Ralph  
Vaughan Williams 1872-1958. Vs. 4 descant: Thomas Armstrong  
Words: Phillips Brooks 1835-1893

*During the singing of this hymn the offering for the Christmas Bowl  
will be received.*

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let this Christmas offering confirm  
our trust that peace has come into the world.  
Let these offerings, and us with them,  
be the incarnation of justice and equity  
and the light of truth and hope

in a world of shadows.  
We once walked in darkness,  
but we have seen the light.  
So let our shine for others. **Amen**

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we worship with joy this season  
and celebrate the coming of the promised Saviour,  
we remember those for whom to worship is a risk and a danger,  
those for whom to meet with others brings unwelcome attention,  
the people of the churches of Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Pakistan,  
and in other places where they are in a distrusted minority.  
We pray also for other minority groups of whatever persuasion or religion,  
who treasure traditions or a culture that is different from their fellow citizens.

**Where people walk in shadows,  
let there be light.**

We pray for those at this time whom nation and place and culture can no longer sustain:  
when war destroys all that's familiar;  
when hatred between clans and races cause people to leave home and district;  
when the greed of others despoils the fields and the forests  
and removes their livelihood.

**Where people walk in shadows,  
let there be light.**

So many, O Lord, roam the world, seeking a place to rest.  
We pray that frontiers will be opened, and welcome may be offered  
and that the generosity of nations will continue in spite of the scale of the need.  
May all of these know something of the love that came down at Christmas,  
bringing hope where hope is gone.

**Where people walk in shadows,  
let there be light.**

In Your good time, O Lord, reveal to all the world  
the light no darkness can extinguish.  
We ask this through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

*(From Scots Worship: Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, David D Ogston)*

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

#### THE BENEDICTION

May the joy of the angels, the humility of the shepherds,  
and the peace of the Christ-child  
be God's gift to you and to all people this Christmas, and always.  
Christ, God with us, be our source of peace and hope.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with you all, now and forever. Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN Hark! the herald angels sing

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1.<br>Hark! The herald angels sing<br>Glory to the newborn King;<br>Peace on earth and mercy mild,<br>God and sinners reconciled:<br>Joyful all ye nations rise,<br>Join the triumph of the skies,<br>With th'angelic host proclaim<br>Christ is born in Bethlehem. | 2.<br>Christ, by highest heav'n<br>adored,<br>Christ, the everlasting Lord,<br>Late in time behold him come<br>Offspring of a virgin's womb:<br>Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,<br>Hail th' incarnate Deity!<br>Pleased as man with man to<br>dwell,<br>Jesus our Emmanuel. |
| <i>Refrain:</i><br><i>Hark! the herald angels sing</i><br><i>Glory to the newborn King.</i>   |  |

3.  
Hail the heav'n 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.

*Music: Felix Mendelssohn 1809-1847, adapted by W.H. Cummings 1831-1915*  
*arr. David Willcocks*  
*Words: Charles Wesley 1707-1788 and others*

POSTLUDE	Carillon-Sortie	Henri Mulet	1878-1967
	Ministers	Sandy Boyce	
	Organist & Choir Director:	Greg Elsdon	
	Assistant Organist:	Peter Kelsall	
	Trumpet:	Christopher Bridge	
		Geoff Bradley	
		Orson Paine	
	Horn:	Natalie Williams	
	Trombone:	David Winnal	
		Cassie Pope	
	Percussion:	Andrew Wiering	



