



SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

**A Service of  
Lessons and Carols**

**Comfort and Joy**

Sunday 20 December 2020

6.00pm

# Welcome to Southwark Cathedral

Set on the south bank of the River Thames in one of the most vibrant and diverse communities in London, this building has been a constant witness in a place of change.

The first church was built on this site around the year 606. First a convent, then a monastery, it became in 1106 the Augustinian Priory of St Mary Overie. With Westminster Abbey and St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield it is one of the three remaining great monastic churches of London. At the Reformation the Priory became a parish church and it remains so for the people of Bankside. In 1905, as south London was rapidly expanding, the church was consecrated as the cathedral for the new Diocese of Southwark.

As well as a place of constant witness to our faith in Jesus Christ, this church has a momentous and proud history and has had links with many famous and influential characters including St Thomas Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens.

In the 20th century this cathedral was at the heart of the new movement in theology termed 'South Bank Religion'. This movement asked challenging questions of people about faith in the modern age which continue to be

explored at Southwark Cathedral which describes itself as 'inclusive: faithful: radical'.

Whatever has brought you here today, you are most welcome. Become part of the life here if you can; it will change your life as you encounter with us our living God.

## **Music before the service**

Fanfare · Christian Robert

Christum wir sollen loben schon (BWV 611) ·  
Johann Sebastian Bach

Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ (BWV 604) ·  
Johann Sebastian Bach

*We stand for the entrance of the clergy.*

## **Opening Carol**

NEH 34

*Sung by the choir.*

*The first verse is being sung by a soloist.*

*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.*

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.

And through all his wondrous childhood  
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,  
Where like stars his children crowned,  
All in white shall wait around.

*Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander*

*We sit for*

## **First Reading**

Isaiah 40. 1–5

*Read by Sophia Jones, Diocesan Director  
of Communications.*

The prophet Isaiah speaks of the comfort which will  
come to all people.

Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:  
'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Thanks be to God.

## **Bidding**

*Led by The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean.*

My brothers and sisters, in the name of Christ we welcome you. Whether you are with us in the Cathedral or joining us online for this carol service we are delighted that you are with us.

This, the first of our carol services, brings together our Diocese of Southwark. Thank you to those who are reading this evening and thank you to all of you for being with us and for supporting us throughout this difficult year.

We have come together this evening, as Christmas draws near, to prepare for our celebration of the birth of God's beloved Son. Through the days of Advent we have followed the light of Christ, and now we travel in spirit with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem to acclaim with the multitude of the heavenly host the coming of the Prince of Peace. Through Scripture and silence, prayer and song,

let us hear again the wonderful story of our redemption, and, hearing, let us rejoice and respond with lively faith. So as we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church and especially in this diocese and in our parishes and institutions, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world;

for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognize their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace everywhere, as we seek to rebuild what has been lost this year;

for all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, and all who have suffered in any way in this pandemic, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:



**All 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 them that 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.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your birth at Bethlehem  
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:  
accept our heartfelt praise  
as we worship you,  
our Saviour and our eternal God.

**All Amen.**

## **Choir**

Adam lay ybounden · Peter Warlock

## Second Reading

Luke 1. 26–38

*Read by the Revd Lotwina Farodoye, Curate in the Oxted Team Ministry.*

St Luke tells how the angel brings a message of joy to Mary.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month

for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

### *The Lay Clerks sing*

God rest ye merry gentlemen  
Let nothing you dismay  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas Day  
To save us all from Satan's pow'r  
When we were gone astray  
O tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

## **Choir**

The Angel Gabriel · arr. Malcolm Archer

## **Third Reading**

Luke 2. 1-7

*Read by the Revd Jonathan Macy, Team Vicar in the Thamesmead Team Ministry and Chair of the Diocesan Evangelical Union.*

St Luke tells us how joy was brought to Mary and Joseph.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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.

Thanks be to God.

*The Lay Clerks sing*

From God our Heavenly Father  
A blessed 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 of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

## **Fourth Reading**

Luke 2. 8–14

*Read by Anthony Demby, Diocesan Director of Finance.*

The angels sing of comfort and joy.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Thanks be to God.

*The Lay Clerks sing*

The shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoiced much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
The Son of God to find.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

**Choir**

Recitative 'And suddenly there was with the angel',  
Chorus, 'Glory to God' from *Messiah* ·  
Georg Friedrich Händel

## **Fifth Reading**

Luke 2. 15–16

*Read by Indrani Balachandran, Lay Chair of  
Croydon South Deanery.*

St Luke tells how the shepherds rush with joy to the stable.

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.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

*The Lay Clerks sing*

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 down,  
Unto the Lord did pray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

## **Sixth Reading**

Luke 2. 17–20

*Read by the Revd Canon Angela Gbebikan, Vicar of South Beddington and Roundshaw.*

The shepherds' joy knows no bounds.

When the shepherds saw the child with his parents, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Thanks be to God.

*The Lay Clerks sing*



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 of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

*We stand for the final reading.*

## **Seventh Lesson**

John 1. 1–14

*Read by Canon Wendy Robins, Chancellor.*

St John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God.

*We sit for*

## **A Thought for Christmas**

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark

### **Choir**

Ding dong! Merrily on high · arr. Mack Wilberg

*We stand for*

## **Prayer and Blessing**

The Bishop of Southwark

The Lord be with you.

**All and also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of comfort and joy,  
may we know your presence with us today  
and bring your gentle,  
joyful love to others  
this Christmas  
and always.

**All Amen.**

May our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father,  
who loved us and through grace  
gave us eternal comfort and good hope,  
comfort your hearts  
and strengthen them in every good work and word.  
And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be amongst you and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

# Carol

NEH 30

*Sung by the choir.*

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!

God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
Begotten, not created:

Sing, choirs of Angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God  
In the Highest:

*Latin 18<sup>th</sup> century*

*Translated by Frederick Oakeley and others*

## **Voluntary**

Toccata Giocosa (with fanfare composed for  
Sir Stephen Cleobury) · William Mathias

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