



Saint Thomas's Church

(Congregation Established 1874)

A Service of Lessons & Carols for the Epiphany

January 10, 2021
at 4:00 pm



*The Altar flowers are given to the honour and glory of almighty God:
They were given in loving memory of Sarah and Harold Millar, by their granddaughter
Charis Kelso;*

*In memory of Robert Gordon and Kathryn Wilma Alice Gordon, grandparents of Bruce
Gordon McEachern, and their daughter Kathryn Alice Agnes Gordon Tulk;*

and

*In memory of Marigrace and John David Campbell Ross, and Robert Thorne Bodie, by
Robert Ross.*

PRELUDE: *Les Mages, Olivier Messiaen*

INTROIT: Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light, *J.S. Bach*

Break forth, O beauteous heav'nly light, and usher in the morning. Ye shepherds, shrink not with affright, but hear the angel's warning. This child, now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be, the power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

HYMN 95 – Lo! the pilgrim magi

- 1 Lo! the pilgrim magi
Leave their royal halls,
And with eager footsteps
Speed to Bethlehem's walls;
As they onward journey,
Faith, which firmly rests,
Built on hope unswerving,
Triumphs in their breasts.
- 2 O what joy and gladness
Filled each heart, from far
When, to guide their footsteps,
Shone that radiant star;
O'er that home so holy,
Pouring down its ray,
Where the cradled Infant
With his mother lay.
- 3 Costly pomp and splendour
Earthly kings array
He, a mightier Monarch,
Hath a nobler sway;
Straw may be his pallet,
Mean his garb may be,
Yet with power transcendent
He all hearts can free.

- 4 At his crib they worship,
Kneeling on the floor,
And their God there present,
In that Babe adore;
To our God and Saviour
We, as Gentiles true,
Give our hearts o'erflowing,
Give our tribute due:
- 5 Bringing of our substance,
Gold unto our King;
Pure and chastened bodies
To our Christ we bring;
Unto him, like incense,
Vow and prayer address;
So with meetest offerings,
Him our God confess.
- 6 Glory to the Father,
Fount of Light alone;
Who unto the Gentiles,
Made his glory known.
Equal praise and glory,
Blessèd Son, to thee
And to thee, blest Spirit,
Evermore shall be.

WHITWORTH
Walter MacNutt 1910-96
Former Organist & Choirmaster, 1954-1977

Charles Coffin 1676-1749
Tr John David Chambers 1805-93

BIDDING PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Dearly beloved, we are gathered to celebrate with joy the appearance of God's glory in the world through the birth of Jesus, who is *Emmanuel*, God with us; to reflect upon the visit of the magi bringing homage to their King at his birth; and, to hear the prophetic words of Anna and Simeon revealing the Christ child as a light to lighten all people. As we rejoice in this, the Word made flesh, who called us out of darkness into light, so we pray that his love and faithfulness may be known in all the world.

We pray for the unity and mission of Christ's Church, and for all who minister the gospel of Christ, we pray for the world, that we may have reverence for the natural order and respect for every person, made in the image and likeness of God, and we pray for those who stand in need, for the lonely, the fearful, the sick and the bereaved, and for all who have no one to pray for them.

May God our Father take us and use us in his service; may he open our eyes to see his glory, and equip us to bless his people, now and at all times.

And now as our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us we are bold to say:

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.*

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*

FIRST LESSON— Luke 2:8–20

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!” When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The word of the Lord
R / *Thanks be to God*

CAROL

‘The Blessèd Son of God’

Ralph Vaughan Williams

The blessèd Son of God only In a crib full poor did lie; With our poor flesh and our poor blood Was clothed that everlasting good. Kyrieleison. The Lord Christ Jesu, God's son dear, Was a guest and a stranger here; Us for to bring from misery, That we might live eternally. Kyrieleison. All this did he for us freely, For to declare his great mercy; All Christendom be merry therefore, And give him thanks for evermore. Kyrieleison.

(Miles Coverdale, after Martin Luther)

SECOND LESSON— Matthew 2:1–12

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.’” Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

The word of the Lord
R / *Thanks be to God*

CAROL

Here is the little door

Herbert Howells

Here is the little door, lift up the latch, oh lift! We need not wander more but enter with our gift; Our gift of finest gold, Gold that was never bought nor sold; Myrrh to be strewn about His bed; Incense in clouds about His head; All for the Child that stirs not in His sleep, but holy slumber holds with ass and sheep. Bend low about His bed, for each He has a gift; See how His eyes awake, lift up your hands, O lift! For gold, He gives a keen - edged sword (Defend with it thy little Lord!) For incense, smoke of battle red, Myrrh for the honoured happy dead; Gifts for His children, terrible and sweet, Touched by such tiny hands and Oh such tiny feet. (Frances Chesterton)

THIRD LESSON— Matthew 2:13–18

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.”

The word of the Lord
R / *Thanks be to God*

HYMN 356 - Brightest and best of the sons of the morning

- 1 Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid:
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
- 2 Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.
- 3 Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
Odours of Edom and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
- 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favour secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

- 5 Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid:
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

STELLA ORIENTIS
Healey Willan 1880-1968

Reginald Heber 1783-1826

FOURTH LESSON— Luke 2:21–32

And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel.”

The word of the Lord
R / *Thanks be to God*

CAROL

‘O God, who by the leading of a star’

Thomas Attwood

O God, Who by the leading of a star, didst manifest Thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know Thee now by faith may after this life have the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIFTH LESSON—John 1.29-34

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.’ I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness, “I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

The word of the Lord
R / *Thanks be to God*

HYMN 96 - Songs of thankfulness and praise

- 1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,
Jesu, Lord, to thee we raise,
Manifested by the star
To the sages from afar;
Branch of royal David's stem
In thy birth at Bethlehem;
Anthems be to thee address,
God in Man made manifest.
- 2 Manifest at Jordan's stream,
Prophet, Priest, and King supreme;
And at Cana wedding-guest
In thy Godhead manifest;
Manifest in power divine,
Changing water into wine;
Anthems be to thee address,
God in Man made manifest.

- 3 Manifest in making whole
Palsied limbs and fainting soul;
Manifest in valiant fight,
Quelling all the devil's might;
Manifest in gracious will,
Ever bringing good from ill;
Anthems be to thee address,
God in Man made manifest.
- 4 Sun and moon shall darkened be,
Stars shall fall, the heavens shall flee;
Christ will then like lightning shine,
All will see his glorious sign;
All will then the trumpet hear,
All will see the judge appear;
Thou by all wilt be confest,
God in Man made manifest.
- 5 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,
Mirrored in thy holy Word;
May we imitate thee now,
And be pure, as pure art thou;
That we like to thee may be
At thy great Epiphany;
And may praise thee, ever blest,
God in Man made manifest.

SIXTH LESSON—John 2.1-11

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.” So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.” This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The word of the Lord

R / *Thanks be to God*

CAROL

‘O magnum mysterium’

Tomas Luis de Victoria

How great and wonderful a mystery that beasts should behold the new-born LORD lying in their stall!. Blessèd is the Virgin whose body was counted worthy to bear the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Alleluia! Alleluia!

CONCLUDING PRAYER AND BLESSING

The Lord be with you
R / *And with thy spirit.*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world. Grant that thy people, illumined by thy Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you forever. *Amen.*

HYMN 750 – The first Nowell

- 1 The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, a-keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.*

- 2 They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
- 3 And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.

- 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
- 5 Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in his presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
- 6 Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his Blood mankind hath bought.

THE FIRST NOWELL

Old English Carol, c. 17th Cent

POSTLUDE: *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern, Dietrich Buxtehude*