



## Order of Service

**Welcome, safety arrangements** – Gary Philipson, BBC Radio Tees

**Opening prayer** – Revd. Elizabeth Bland

**Carol: Once in royal David's city**

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 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.

**Reading: Luke 1:26-38 – The birth of Jesus is foretold**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup> "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."

<sup>38</sup> "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

**Carol: O little town of Bethlehem**

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in the dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together  
proclaim thy 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 wond'ring love;

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him still,  
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast our 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.

**Reading: Luke 2:1-7 – The birth of Jesus**

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.*

*<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

**Carol: Silent night, holy night**

Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child,  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light,  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace:  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

**Reading: Luke 2:8-20 – The shepherds and the angels**

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**Carol: O come, all ye faithful**

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.*

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to his cradle  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze.

We too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:

*O come, let us adore Him...*

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...*

**Reading: John 1:1-5 & v14 – The light of the world**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

<sup>14</sup> *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**Reflection** – Revd. Richard Andrew

**Carol : Hark! The herald angels sing**

Hark! The herald angels sing:  
"Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic hosts proclaim:  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"  
Hark! the herald angels sing:  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the Heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Ris'n 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 newborn King!"

**Prayer and Lord's Prayer** – Revd. Elizabeth Bland

**Blessing** – Revd. Elizabeth Bland

~~~~~

*This event was made possible by the grace of God, by the participation of members of local churches of all denominations, by the kind involvement of Sainsbury's, Fishburn Brass Band, singers from Sedgefield Lyric Singers and Lirica, BBC Radio Tees and PLW Event Management – along with many local volunteers, and with support from the County Durham Community Foundation and donations from local people.*

*Thank you all.*

~~~~~

Church of England locally: [www.upperskerne.org.uk](http://www.upperskerne.org.uk)

Methodist Church locally: [www.westdurhammethodists.org.uk](http://www.westdurhammethodists.org.uk)

Catholic Church locally: <http://www.rcdhn.org.uk>

New Generation Church: [www.newgenerationchurch.co.uk](http://www.newgenerationchurch.co.uk); YPU for young people and [www.kidschurch.co.uk](http://www.kidschurch.co.uk) for children; <https://www.youtube.com/newgenerationchurch>

Sedgefield Area Churches Together