



The Stratfield Mortimer Benefice
of

St Saviour
Mortimer West End

St Mary and St John
Stratfield Mortimer

St John the Baptist
Padworth

St Mary's Church of England School St John's Church of England School

Diocese of Oxford



From the North Window of the chapel at St Mary's church.

THE FESTIVAL SERVICE
of
CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday 19th December 2021

at 4.00 p.m.

Live streamed on: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

We regret that we cannot gather at St Mary's church this year, but please join together online to hear the Christmas story and share together in this joyful celebration.



WELCOME

Welcome to the annual service of the Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols. Although, again this year, we can't gather at our Parish Church of St Mary's, it's good that we are able to join together online to hear the Christmas story and share together in this joyful celebration.

If you are a visitor or have just moved into the area an especially warm welcome to you and please do make contact by 'phoning the clergy or parish office. You can find out more about the life of the Parishes on the website.

If you would like to explore what might be a next step in the journey of faith please contact one of the clergy on 01189331718.

Please, if you can, donate regularly to support the Church's work, which needs your help to serve our villages, our diocese, our nation and our world in the future. Our doors have been closed due to Covid and with no regular Government or Church of England funding our Parishes have lost significant income. Please see the website to see how to give efficiently.

Finally, may I wish you and your loved ones a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Please do join, if you can, in the celebration of Midnight Mass and/or the Eucharist for Christmas Day.

God bless.

Paul

Paul Chaplin, Vicar



The Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols

The Order of Service

THE GREETING

CAROL

**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.**

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and in company with the whole Church let us make this church, glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this Parish of Stratfield Mortimer and Diocese of Oxford.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and those who feel unloved; the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

**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 those who 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.**

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.

THE FIRST LESSON: THE PROPHET ISAIAH 9: 2, 6-7

Read by a Churchwarden of Padworth - Elizabeth Porter

The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL

**Ding-dong! Merrily on high
in heaven the bells are ringing.
Ding-dong! Verily the sky
is riven with angels singing:
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

**E'en so, here below, below,
let steeple bells be swungen;
and *i-o, i-o, i-o,*
by priest and people sungen!
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

**Pray you, dutifully prime
your matin chime, you ringers;
may you beautifully rhyme
your evetime song, you singers:
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

THE SECOND LESSON: THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE 1: 26-35, 38

Read by a Churchwarden of Stratfield & Mortimer West End - Gwen Adshead

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL

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

**O morning stars, together
proclaim the 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 wondering love.**

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

THIRD LESSON: THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE 2: 1-7

*Read by the Representative of Civic Life - The Chair of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council -
Cllr Mike Dennett*

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her

firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Thanks be to God

CAROL

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.**

FOURTH LESSON: THE GOSPEL OF ST LUKE 2: 8-16

Read by a Chorister - Viv Adler

The Shepherds go to the manger.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Thanks be to God.

CHOIR

While shepherds watch their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

*Sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells,
sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells,
they cheer us on our heavenly way.*

*Sweet chiming bells,
they cheer us on our heavenly way,
sweet chiming bells.*

‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
‘glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.’

Chorus Sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells...

'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

Chorus: Sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells...

'the heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'

Chorus: Sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells,

'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease.'

Chorus: Sweet bells, sweet chiming Christmas bells...

CAROL

**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.*

**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 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 new-born King.*

FIFTH LESSON: THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN 1:1-14

The Gospel is proclaimed by a deacon or priest of the Benefice.

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God.

THE PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Almighty God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE BLESSING

May he who by his Incarnation, gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and
+ the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

CAROL

**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:**

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

**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,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

You will understand that, due to the pandemic and regulations concerning health and safety, only a very limited number of people are able to be in the church building at any one time, but

ALL SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED ON:
[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/6931233940](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940)

CHRISTMAS EVE, 24TH DECEMBER

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE AT 5 p.m.

MIDNIGHT MASS AT 11.30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY

CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST AT 10.00 a.m.

ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHRISTMAS SERVICES CAN BE FOUND AT:

WWW.MORTIMERBENEFICE.ORG.UK

Or telephone the vicarage: 01189331718

