

St Michaels and All Angels, Galleywood, December 17th, 2023

Service of the Word: The Nativity – Good News

Welcome and introduction

We celebrate Jesus

Born to be our Saviour

We celebrate Jesus

He is Christ the Lord

Lighting the third Advent candle (remembering John the Baptist)

Lord Jesus, light of the world,

**John told the people to prepare,
for you were very near.**

**As Christmas grows closer day by day,
help us to be ready to welcome you now. Amen.**

Carol: Joy to the World (Number 11)

Joy to the world! the Lord has come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing!

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns;
Let us our songs employ.
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
The wonders of his love,
The wonders of his love,
The wonders, the wonders of his love.

Confession and absolution

Let us be still before the Lord
Rest quietly in his presence
(Pause)

Let us bring before the Lord
the words that may have hurt
and all those left unsaid;
the anger we have felt
and resentment we have fed.
Let us be still before the Lord
Rest quietly in his presence
(Pause)

The Lord is slow to anger
willing to forgive
full of Grace.
Draw near to him
rest quietly in his presence

The Collect of the day is said

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Bible reading: Isaiah 61: 1-4 (Jane Harpur)

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,^[a]
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,

a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendour.
⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Carol: Silent Night, Holy Night (Number 13)

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!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!

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.

Nativity

Talk (David)

Carol: O little town of Bethlehem (Number 1)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy 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 all 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.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out 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 Immanuel!

Thanksgiving for our offering

Gracious God, use this money and all that we have for the building up of your work in this church and the wider world, for your glory. **Amen.**

Affirmation of faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers (Ruth)

The Lord's prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

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.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. Amen.

Notices and family news

Carol: It came upon a midnight clear (Number 14)

It came upon the midnight clear,

That glorious song of old,

From angels bending near the earth

To touch their harps of gold:

'Peace on the earth, goodwill to men

From heaven's all gracious King!'

The world in solemn stillness lay

To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,

With peaceful wings unfurled,

And still their heavenly music floats

O'er all the weary world:

Above its sad and lowly plains

They bend on hovering wing,

And ever o'er its Babel sounds

The blessed angels sing.

Yet with woes of sin and strife

The world has suffered long,

Beneath the angel-strain have rolled

Two thousand years of wrong;

And man, at war with man, hears not

The love-song which they bring:

O hush the noise, ye men of strife,

And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And all the world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Conclusion and blessing

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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