

St Michael's and All Angels, Galleywood

Service of the Word

December 24th 2023 – Christmas Eve!

“The Lord's Faithfulness”

Welcome and Introduction

Today we remember Jesus and the story of his birth;
Jesus is our King.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world;
Jesus is our Way.

With Jesus even dark places are light;
Jesus is the Truth.

In Jesus we shall live for ever;
Jesus is our Life.

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

A Prayer Remembering Mary's Role

God our Father, the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son.

Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy.

Help us, whom you call to serve you, to share like her in your great work of bringing to our world your love and healing.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

MP764: While Shepherds Watched

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around.

'Fear not' said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

'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.

'The heavenly babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
And in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high
And on the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'

Nahum Tate

MP597: Silent 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 in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glory streams 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 the holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at your birth
Jesus, Lord at your birth

Melody: Franz Gruber

MP589: See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw

See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw,
A draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore;
The Prince of glory is His name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,
To see the Lord appear to men;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The Prince of glory when He came.*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
Show where Jesus in the manger lies;
Shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise
To see the Saviour of the world.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,
To see the Lord appear to men;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The Prince of glory when He came.*

Angels, sing the song that you began,
Bring God's glory to the heart of man;

Sing that Beth'lem's little baby can
Be salvation to the soul.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,
To see the Lord appear to men;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The Prince of glory when He came.*

Mine are riches, from Your poverty,
From Your innocence, eternity;
Mine, forgiveness by Your death for me,
Child of sorrow for my joy.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,
To see the Lord appear to men;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The Prince of glory when He came.*

Michael Perry

Confession

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness
to stand in your presence as your children. We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.
Forgive our disobedience to your will. We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty in a manger.
Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways. We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.
Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision. We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The wise men followed the star
to find Jesus the King.
Forgive our reluctance to seek you. We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

Absolution

May God who loved the world so much that he sent his Son to be our Saviour, forgive us our sins and make us holy to serve him in the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Collect

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory;

Bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Mission Update: – Jane: Christmas Greetings from our Mission Partners

MP47: Away in a Manger

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 forever and love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Psalm 89:1 – 8. Our faithful God!

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all
generations.

² I will declare that your love stands firm forever,
that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant,

⁴ "I will establish your line forever
and make your throne firm through all generations."

⁵ The heavens praise your wonders, Lord,
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

⁶ For who in the skies above can compare with the Lord?
Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings?

⁷ In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared;
he is more awesome than all who surround him.

⁸ Who is like you, Lord God Almighty?

You, Lord, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.

Luke 1:26 – 38. The Birth Of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel
Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be
married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The
virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said,

"Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind
of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be

afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. ³¹ You will conceive
and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² 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, ³³ and he will reign over
Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

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

³⁵ 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. ³⁶ 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.³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail.”

³⁸ “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Sermon – Jane

MP1087: What a Faithful God!

Lord, I come before your throne of grace;
I find rest in your presence
And fulness of joy.
In worship and wonder
I behold your face,
Singing what a faithful God have I.

*What a faithful God have I,
What a faithful God.
What a faithful God have I,
Faithful in every way.*

Lord of mercy, you have heard my cry;
Through the storm you’re the beacon,
My song in the night.
In the shelter of your wings,
Hear my heart’s reply,
Singing what a faithful God have I.

*What a faithful God have I,
What a faithful God.
What a faithful God have I,
Faithful in every way.*

Lord all sovereign, granting peace from heaven,
Let me comfort those who suffer
With the comfort you have given.
I will tell of your great love for as long as I live,
Singing what a faithful God have I.

*What a faithful God have I,
What a faithful God.
What a faithful God have I,
Faithful in every way.*

Robert and Dawn Critchley

Thanksgiving for Offerings

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God the Father, God almighty, by whose plan
Earth and heaven sprang to being, all created things began.

We believe in Christ the Saviour, Son of God in human frame,
Virgin-born, the child of Mary upon whom the Spirit came.

Christ, who on the cross forsaken, like a lamb to slaughter led,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, he descended to the dead.

We believe in Jesus risen, heaven's king to rule and reign,
To the Father's side ascended 'till as judge he comes again.

We believe in God the Spirit; in one Church, below, above:
Saints of God in one communion, one in holiness and love.

So by faith, our sins forgiven, Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
We shall rise with him in glory to the life that knows no end.

Amen

Intercessions – David

The Lord's Prayer

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

MP644: The First Nowell

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

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

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.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

This star drew nigh to the north-west;
Over Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

Then entered in those wise men three
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

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.

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

Closing Prayer and Blessing

Jesus, Son of Mary, Son of God,
we have joined the worship of the angels;
may we never lose that heavenly vision.
Like the shepherds, we have rejoiced at the news of your birth;
help us to proclaim that message in word and deed, to your praise
and glory.

Amen

The Lord bless you and watch over you, the Lord make his face
shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you
and give you peace;
Today, tomorrow and always.

Amen