

**The Cockfield Benefice
St Peter's Church, Cockfield**



**Carol Service
22 December 2022**

Welcome

The Gathering

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.*

God of God,
Light of Light,
lo, he abhors the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created:

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest:

*Attributed to John Francis Wade (1711-1786)
trans. Frederick Oakley (1802-1880) and others*

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of carols.

As we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom,
and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world;

for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognize their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace everywhere;

for all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself 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.**

Please sit for:

**The First Reading: Isaiah 9.2,6,7
The Prophecy of the Messiah's birth**

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

⁶ For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;

authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand for:

The Carol: 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 You, Lord Jesus,
look down from the sky
And stay by my side,
until morning is nigh

Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask You to stay
Close by me forever,

and love me I pray
Bless all the dear children
in Your tender care
And fit us for heaven,
to live with You there

Williams James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)

Arr Colin Mawby

Collect

Lord our God, on the first day of creation
you made the light that scatters all darkness.
Let Christ, the light of all lights,
hidden from all eternity,
shine at last on your people
and free us from the darkness of sin.
Fill our lives with joy
as we go out to welcome your Son at his coming.
We ask this in the name of Jesus our Lord.

All Amen.

Please sit for:

The Second Reading: Luke 1.26-38

The Annunciation to Mary

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ³⁴Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' ³⁵The angel

said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.' ³⁸Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand for:

The Carol: God's surprise

Who would think that what was needed
to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army,
proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision,
that a child might lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

Shepherds watch and wise men wonder,
monarchs scorn and angels sing;
such a place as none would reckon
hosts a holy, helpless thing.
Stable beasts and by-passed strangers
watch a baby laid in hay:
God surprises earth with heaven
coming here on Christmas Day.

Centuries of skill and science
span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether,
with such progress, we improve.
While the human lot we ponder,
lest our hopes and humour fray.

God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

Graham Maule (b. 1958)
© 1987, 2002, WGRG, Iona Community

Collect

Heavenly Father,
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised Saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Please sit for:

The Third Reading: Luke 2.1-7

The birth of Jesus

2In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand for:

The Carol: 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 heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly 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.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)
trans. John Freeman Young (1820-1885)

Collect

Holy Jesus,
to deliver us from the power of darkness
you humbled yourself to be born among us
and were laid in a manger.
Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,
and bring us at last to the joyful vision of your beauty,
for you are now alive and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

All Amen.

Please sit for:

The Fourth Reading: Luke 2.8-16

The Shepherds go to the manger

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields,
keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the
Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone

around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand for:

The Carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak mid-winter
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-winter, long ago.
Our God, heav'n cannot hold him
nor earth sustain;
heav'n and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign.
In the bleak mid-winter
a stable-place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim
worship night and day,
a breastful of milk,
and a mangerful of hay:
enough for him, whom angels
fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air;
but only his mother
in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him,
poor as I am am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man
I would do my part,
yet what I can I give him:
give my heart.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Collect

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.

All Amen.

Please sit for:

The Fifth reading: Matthew 2.1-11

Wise men are led by the star to Jesus

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." "

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand for:

The Carol: We three Kings

We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar;

field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring, to crown him again,
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I,
incense owns a Deity nigh,
prayer and praising, gladly raising,
worship him, God most high.

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in a stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now, behold him arise,
King and God and sacrifice;
alleluia, alleluia,
earth to heav'n replies.

John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891), alt.

Collect

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child;
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please remain standing for:

The Sixth Reading: John 1.1-14

The Incarnation of the Word of God

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God

Please sit or kneel for:

The Prayers

Christ, born in a stable,
give courage to all who are homeless:

Jesus, Saviour,

All hear our prayer.

Christ, for whom the angels sang,
give the song of the kingdom to all who weep:

Jesus, Saviour,
All hear our prayer.

Christ, worshipped by the shepherds,
give peace on earth to all who are oppressed:
Jesus, Saviour,

All hear our prayer.

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt,
give humility and wisdom to all who govern:
Jesus, Saviour,

All hear our prayer.

Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger,
give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you:
Jesus, Saviour,

All hear our prayer.

**Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the Father,
full of the Spirit,
hear our prayer,
receive our praises,
fill our lives. Amen.**

Please stand

Collect

God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine in our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ the Lord.

All Amen.

Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing

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 th'angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail, th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

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 we may no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788), George Whitefield (1714-1770),
Martin Madan (1726-1790) and others, alt.*

Blessing

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son from before the foundation of
the world,
shed that love upon us his children.

Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and

heavenly,
fill us with joy and peace.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the Godbearer,
give us grace to carry the good news of Christ.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us and remain with us always.

Amen.

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*We hope you have enjoyed the service, for more details on our
Christmas services please visit www.cockfieldbenefice.com
or visit our facebook page!*

*For any other matters contact the Rector: Rev Canon Sharon Potter
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