



Gilcomston Church

Watchnight Service

Saturday 24 December

**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, good will 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.**

**But with the 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 angel 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 the whole world give back the song
which now the angels sing.**

Edmond Hamilton Sears, 1810-76 All words are reproduced under Christian Copyright licence no. 293885

Prayer

**Cradled in a manger, meantly
laid the Son of Man His head;
sleeping His first earthly slumber
where the oxen had been fed.
Happy were those shepherds listening
to the holy angel's word;
happy they within that stable,
worshipping their infant Lord.**

**Happy all who hear the message
of His coming from above;
happier still who hail His coming,
and with praises greet His love.
Blessed Saviour, Christ most holy,
in a manger Thou didst rest;
canst Thou stoop again, yet lower
and abide within my breast?**

**Evil things are there before Thee;
in the heart, where they have fed,
wilt Thou pitifully enter,
Son of Man, and lay Thy head?
Enter, then, O Christ most holy;
make a Christmas in my heart;
make a heaven on my manger;
it is heaven where Thou art.**

**And to those who never listened
to the message of Thy birth,
who have winter, but no Christmas
bringing them Thy peace on earth,
send to these the joyful tidings;
by all people, in each home,
be there heard the Christmas anthem;
praise to God, the Christ has come!**

George Stringer Rowe, 1830-1913

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Matthew 1. 18-28

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1. 18-28

²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

**Jesus, good above all other,
gentle child of gentle mother,
in a stable born our brother,
give us grace to persevere.**

**Jesus, cradled in a manger,
for us facing every danger,
living as a homeless stranger,
make we Thee our King most dear.**

**Jesus, for Thy people dying,
risen Master, death defying
Lord in heaven, Thy grace supplying,
keep us to Thy presence near.**

**Jesus, who our sorrows bearest,
all our thoughts and hopes Thou sharest;
Thou to man the truth declarest;
help us all Thy truth to hear.**

**Lord, in all our doings guide us;
pride and hate shall ne'er divide us;
we'll go on with Thee beside us,
and with joy we'll persevere!**

Percy Dearmer, 1867-1936

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Luke I. 26-38

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."

Luke I. 26-38

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.

Luke I. 26-38

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.

**Still the night! Holy the night!
Sleeps the world; hid from sight,
Mary and Joseph in stable bare
watch o'er the child beloved and fair,
sleeping in heavenly rest;
sleeping in heavenly rest.**

**Still the night! Holy the night!
Shepherds first saw the light,
heard resounding clear and long,
far and near, the angel-song,
'Christ the Redeemer is here!
Christ the Redeemer is here!'**

**Still the night! Holy the night!
Son of God, O how bright.
Love is smiling from Thy face!
Strikes for us now the hour of grace,
Saviour, since Thou art born!
Saviour, since Thou art born!**

Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848

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Luke I. 68-75

⁶⁸ “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us

in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—

⁷² to show mercy to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant,

Luke 1. 68-75

⁷³ the oath he swore to our father
Abraham:

⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our
enemies,

and to enable us to serve
him without fear

⁷⁵ in holiness and
righteousness before him all our
days.

A New Day

**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.'***

**Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold Him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail, the Incarnate Deity,
pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
*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.'*

Charles Wesley,

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**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen.**

Sunday 25 December

*..Glory to God in the highest heaven and on
earth peace to those on whom His favour
rests...
Luke 2:14*

Birth Notice!

**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,
Io! 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.

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
born this happy morning.
Jesus, to Thee, be glory given.
Word of the Father
now in flesh appearing.**

***O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.***

John Wade c. 1711-86 Tr. Frederick Oakley 1802-80

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Prayer

**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!
Your sweetest songs employ
while fields and streams
and hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow
nor thorns infest the ground:
He comes to make His blessings flow
where Eden's curse is found,
where Eden's curse is found,
wherever Eden's curse is found.**

**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.**

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

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Birth Notice!

**Unto us a boy is born,
all the bells are ringing!
Angels greet the holy One
and shepherds hear them singing,
and shepherds hear them singing.**

**'Go to Bethlehem today,
find your king and saviour;
glory be to God on high,
to earth his peace and favour,
to earth his peace and favour!'**

**Held within a cattle stall,
loved by love maternal,
see the master of us all,
our Lord of lords eternal,
our Lord of lords eternal.**

**Soon shall come the wise men three,
rousing Herod's anger,
mothers' hearts shall broken be
and Mary's son in danger,
and Mary's son in danger.**

**Death from life and life from death,
our salvation's story:
let all living things give breath
to Christmas songs of glory,
to Christmas songs of glory.**

Michael Perry

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Luke 2. 8-15

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

Luke 2. 8-15

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

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests.”

¹⁵ 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.”

**Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.**

**Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine;
worship we our Jesus;
but wherewith for sacred sign?**

**Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and all men,
love for plea and gift and sign.**

Christina Rossetti, 1830-94

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Birth Notice!

Prayer

**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.'**

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the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen.**

Church Calendar

You'll find dates for your diary on our
website:

<http://www.gilcomston.org/calendar>