

Civil Service
Choir

at Christmas

Monday 14th, 6.30pm
A live-streamed
Carol Service

*Still here
for you this
Christmas*

See also our Carol Advent Calendar

Welcome to this special Carol Service, a socially-distanced celebration of Christmas in words and music, organised by the Civil Service Choir and live streamed from St Stephen's Rochester Row, Westminster.

This event is the 29th staff Carol Service to be held at St Stephen's, Rochester Row. We should like to express our gratitude to Revd. Graham Buckle for allowing us to use this fine church once again.

The Civil Service Choir brings together staff from almost all Government Departments and agencies in Westminster. Today's service is the choir's 132nd performance since it gave its first concert here in St Stephen's in November 2009. At full strength the choir boasts over 150 members and performs with orchestra. Last year it gave 23 performances including in St John's Smith Square, Central Hall Westminster, Westminster Abbey, St Martin-in-the-fields, Lancaster House, Somerset House, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and here at St Stephen's, with concerts in the Brandenburg London Choral Festival and the London Jazz Festival.

Through its concerts the choir has raised almost £40,000 for charity.

The choir has tried to continue to operate virtually since the Covid-19 pandemic and has produced four virtual recordings. These and recordings of many other performances are available on Youtube.

Please visit www.civilservicechoir.org.uk to find out more.

A Carol Advent Calendar of the choir's past Christmas performances is available on Youtube.

The choir is conducted by its director Stephen Hall OBE and is accompanied today by Matthew Blaiden, Director of Music Director at St Stephen's.

Choir introit: Ring Christmas Bells – Mykola Leontovich (1877 – 1921)

Ring, Christmas bells,
Merrily ring
Tell all the world
Jesus is king!
Loudly proclaim
with one accord,
The happy tale,
Welcome the Lord!

Ring, Christmas Bells,
Sound far and near
The birth day of Jesus is here.
Herald the news
to old and young
Tell it to all
in ev'ry tongue.

Ring, Christmas bells,
toll loud and long
Your message sweet
Peel and prolong.
Come, all ye people,
join in the singing,
Repeat the story
told by the ringing.

Ring, Christmas bells,
Ring, Christmas bells,
Loudly proclaim
with one accord,
The happy tale,
Welcome the Lord!

Ring, Christmas bells
Jesus is King!

Welcome from the Reverend Graham Buckle, Vicar of St Stephen's

Congregational carol:

Once in Royal David's city
Stood lowly cattle shed.
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ that little child.

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.

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.

Not in that poor, lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in Heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high,
When, like stars, His children crowned
All in white, shall wait around.

Reading: The birth of Jesus St Luke Chapter 2

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, everyone 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. This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: Nativity Carol – John Rutter

Born in a stable so bare
Born so long ago
Born 'neath light of star
He who loved us so
Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Wise men from distant far land
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare
Hearts with his warmth he fills
Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Cradled by mother so fair
Tender her lullaby
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky
Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow
Innocent dreaming babe
Make me thy love to know
Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day

Reading: *The shepherds go to the manger.* St Luke Chapter 2

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. This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

Congregational carol

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,” he said,
For mighty dread
Had seized their troubled minds
“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
The 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 swathing 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 to the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth
From heaven to men
Begin and never cease!”

Choir: Coventry carol (arr. Martin Shaw)

Lully, Lulla thou little tiny Child,
By-bye lully, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day,
This poor Youngling for whom we sing
By-bye lully, lullay.

Herod the King, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day;

His men of might, in his own sight,
All children young, to slay.

Then woe is me, poor Child, for Thee,
And ever mourn and say;
For Thy parting nor say nor sing,
By-bye lully, lullay.

Lully, Lulla thou little tiny Child,
By-bye lully, lullay.

Congregational Carol

God rest you merry, gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour
Was born upon this day
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed Angel came;
And unto certain Shepherds
Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born

The Son of God by Name.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

Reading: St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation. St John Chapter 1

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 anything 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: who 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 be-gotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: Away in a manger (W.J. Kirkpatrick arr. David Willcocks)

Away in a manger,
No crib for His 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 poor Baby wakes
But little Lord Jesus
No crying He makes

I love Thee, Lord Jesus
Look down from the sky
And stay by my side,
'Til 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

Address: The Reverend Graham Buckle

Congregational 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:

Chorus: *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:

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:

Choir: Sussex Carol – arr. Ian Crawford

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring
News of great joy news of great mirth
News of our merciful King's birth

Then why should men on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad
Then why should men on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad
When from our sin he set us free
All for to gain our liberty.
When sin departs before his grace
Then life and health come in its place

When sin departs before his grace
Then life and health come in its place
When sin departs before his grace
Then life and health come in its place
When sin departs before his grace
Then life and health come in its place
angels and men with joy may sing
All for to see the newborn King

All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night
Glory to God and peace to men
Now and forever more, Amen, Amen,
Amen.

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

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. 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.

Blessing

Hark the Herald angels sing
"Glory to the new born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful 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 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 th' incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
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 us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"

www.civilservicechoir.org.uk

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We are also on YouTube

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