



SUNDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2021

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

A CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE
OF SCRIPTURE, MUSIC AND POETRY
TO PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF THE CHRIST CHILD
led by THE VICAR, FR KEVIN MORRIS

Cover: Painting by Domenico di Michelino, dated 1465, showing Dante in the imagined afterlife his epic poem depicts.

Life's Journey and the Christian Way

This year we commemorate the life of the Italian poet, Dante Alighieri, who was born in Florence and died in Ravenna, 700 years ago (14 September 1321). His 'Divine Comedy,' originally called 'Comedia,' is widely considered one of the great works of Western civilisation. It is certainly one of the most important and influential poems of the Middle Ages and the greatest literary work in the Italian language. His depictions of Hell ('Inferno'), Purgatory ('Purgatorio') and Heaven ('Paradiso') served as the inspiration for a huge body of art, music and literature and had a powerful effect on theology, language and devotional thinking and imagery.

His most famous work was called the 'Divine Comedy' in the classical sense of the word 'comedy,' meaning a work that reflected belief in an ordered universe, in which events are influenced by Providence. As St Paul writes to the Romans (8:28), 'And we know that in all things God is working for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' The progression or journey from Hell to Paradise is a definitive example of this kind of 'comedy,' beginning with the pilgrim's moral confusion and ending with a vision of God.

And so, the pilgrimage in Dante's Divine Comedy has been taken allegorically to signify an exploration of the landscape of the human soul: Our choices create the various kinds of existential hell, purgatory, and paradise experienced on this mortal coil. In Dante's vision, our experiences of misery, our moments of conversion, and the blessings of bliss take place with attention to our concrete histories -with the

persons, places, memories, and events that make up our complicated lives. As he guides us through his vision, Dante helps us think about our own participation in the Christian pilgrimage which has as its summit, the beatific vision of Almighty God, who made Himself known to us as Love in the birth, life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

COLLECTIONS

A Collection will not be taken at this service but please do give generously to the work of the church. This can be done using the credit card station at the back of the church or placing donations in the collection bowls also at the back of the church. If you can gift aid your donation, then please place your donation in a white gift aid envelope.

Please ask the siderspersons if you need any assistance.

THANK YOU.

MUSIC BEFORE THE SERVICE

Chorale Prelude BWV 659 'Nun Komm Seele der Heiden Heiland'

– J. S. Bach

Please remain seated as the Sanctuary Party processes into the Church.

Canto 1 from ‘The Inferno’– Tr Ciaran Carson

Halfway through the story of my life
I came into a gloomy wood, because
I’d wandered off the path, away from the light

It’s hard to put word to what that wood was:

I shudder even now to think of it
So wild and rough and tortured were its ways;

How I got into it, I still don’t know
For I was well upon my way to sleep
Before I ever left the straight and narrow

It seems I’d found myself at the foot of a steep
Hill; here, the valley formed a cul-de-sac;
And there, I fell into depression deep

Then I looked up, Clouds were riding pickaback
On the high-shouldered peaks, as, bursting through
The sun pursued its single-minded track

So was the lake of fear in me subdued
A little, that had festered like a cyst
All night, till I thought dawn long overdue.

The Church is darkened as a symbol of the darkness of sin, pain and alienation in our world. The candles on the High Altar are lit as a sign of the dawning of God’s grace in Jesus Christ, the light of hope we are to follow

Priest:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Eternal Creator of Light and Darkness.

Now, as darkness is falling, hear the prayer of your faithful people.
Wash away our transgressions, cleanse us by your refining fire, and
make us temples of your Holy Spirit.

May we live in watchfulness as we wait for the coming of your Son
Jesus Christ, who shall judge the world and all its works. Rouse us
from the sleep of sin and make us ready to enter your Kingdom.
For you are the True Light, who lightens everyone, and the new
Heavens and the new Earth join to sing your praise now and for
evermore. **Amen**

The candles of the congregation are lit

The choir sings 'O Radiant Dawn'

O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice:
come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of
death. Isaiah had prophesied, "The people that walked in darkness
have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a
light has shone." O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal light, Sun of
Justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death. Amen

Words: from the 'Great O' Advent Antiphons Music: James MacMillan b 1959

Priest: Let us proceed in peace

Please stand for the HYMN

Of the Father's heart begotten,
 Ere the world from chaos rose,
 He is Alpha: from that Fountain
 All that is and hath been flows;
 He is Omega, of all things
 Yet to come the mystic Close,
 Evermore and evermore.

By His word was all created;
 He commanded and t'was done;
 Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
 Universe of three in one,
 All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
 All that breathes beneath the sun,
 Evermore and evermore.

He assumed this mortal body,
 Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
 That the race from dust created
 Might not perish utterly,
 Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
 In the depths of hell to lie,
 Evermore and evermore.

This is He, whom seer and sibyl
 Sang in ages long gone by;
 This is He of old revealèd
 In the page of prophecy;
 Lo! He comes, the promised Saviour;
 Let the world His praises cry!
 Evermore and evermore.

Sing, ye heights of Heaven, His praises;
 Angels and Archangels, sing!
 Whereso'er ye be, ye faithful,
 Let your joyous anthems ring,
 Every tongue His Name confessing,
 Countless voices answering,
 Evermore and evermore.

melody from 'Piae Cantiones' Theoderici Petri Nylandensis 1582

words Prudentius 348-413 trans Robert F Davis 1866-1937

Please remain standing

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas
 let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. In
 scripture readings and poems, hymns and music, let us rejoice that the
 good purposes of God are being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the
 promise that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, will bring humanity and
 all things into the glory of God's eternal Kingdom.

But first, let us pray for the world which God so loves, for those who have not heard the Good News of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death; and for all Christians throughout the world, that the Church may be freed from evil and fear, and may in pure joy shine with the light of the love of God.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words which 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

The Journey Begins

Cranach 1528

In his 'Inferno,' Dante uses the allegory of his own journey through Hell to reflect the spiritual journey that leads to a better understanding and acceptance of one's own situation in life. 'Hell' is a representation of the recognition of sin and its consequences and the mistakes that lead every person into bad choices. For Dante, it is the beginning of understanding that sin begets suffering and leads to alienation from God and those he loves.

The Book of Genesis describes 'sin' in theological and relational terms: as a broken relationship with God and with others. It is devastating in its consequences and complex in its nature, as its associated words convey: evil, guilt, impurity, injustice, wickedness, failure, shame, dishonesty, pride, arrogance, selfishness and so on. At the Easter Vigil however it is called the 'necessary fault of Adam' ('felix culpa') because 'it gained for us so great a Redeemer.' The expulsion from Paradise (close union with God and others) is not the end of the story but its beginning.

READING: Genesis 3

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And

the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

The choir sings 'Adam lay ybounden'

Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond
 Four thousand winters thought he not too long
 And all was for an apple an apple that he took
 As clerkes finden written in their book
 Ne had the apple taken been, the apple taken been
 Nay had never our lady abeen heavené queen.
 Blessed be the time that apple taken was
 Therefore we moun singen: Deo gracias, Deo gracias!

Words: Traditional

Music: Boris Ord 1897-1961

Please kneel

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed

And all flesh shall see it together

Our help cometh in the Name of the Lord

Who hath made Heaven and Earth

COLLECT *for* ADVENT SUNDAY

Almighty God,

give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness

and put upon us the armour of light,

now in the time of this mortal life,

in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility;

that in the last day, when He shall come again

in His glorious Majesty

to judge both the quick and the dead,

we may rise to the life immortal,

through Him who liveth and reigneth

with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. Amen

The FIRST ADVENT CANDLE is lit

The Choir sings the ANTIPHON 'O Sapientia'

O Wisdom, which camest out of the mouth of the Most Highest,

and reachest from one end to another, mightily and sweetly

ordering all things. Come and teach us the way of prudence.

Please stand to sing the HYMN

God who created this Eden of earth
Giving to Adam and Eve their fresh birth

What have we done with that wonderful tree?

Lord, forgive Adam,

For Adam is me.

Adam ambitious desires to be wise,

Casts out obedience, then lusts with his eyes;

Grasps the sweet fruit, "As God I shall be."

Lord, forgive Adam,

For Adam is me.

Thirst after power is this sin of my shame,

Pride's ruthless thrust after status and fame,

Turning and stealing and cowering from thee.

Lord, forgive Adam,

For Adam is me.

Cursed is the earth through this cancerous crime,

Symbol of man through all passage of time,

Put it all right, Lord: let Adam be free;

Do it for Adam,

For Adam is me.

**Glory to God! What is this that I see?
 Man made anew, second Adam is he,
 Bleeding his love on another fine tree;
 Dies second Adam,
 Young Adam, for me.**

**Rises that Adam the master of death,
 Pours out his Spirit in holy new breath;
 Sheer liberation! With him I am free!
 Lives second Adam
 In mercy in me.**

Words: Richard Jones (b1926)

Music: Quedlinburg J.C.Kittel 1732-1809)

Please sit

INFERNO

“At grief so deep, the tongue must wag in vain; the language of our sense and memory lacks the vocabulary of such pain.”

Inferno Canto 26 - Dante

Dante's Inferno has a particular geography of hell – the famous ‘nine circles of hell.’ He has reasons for locating sinners where he does. The less sinful, are lodged in ‘upper hell,’ punished for having given in to their appetites such as sex, money or revenge. The more sinful are deeper down, punished for wilfully choosing violence or deception and in the deepest circle are those trapped in ice, punished for their cold-

heartedness to those who trusted them the most. They all have one thing in common: they have abandoned hope which is both their sin and their punishment. Dante's vision of hell reminds us of the ways in which our sins and wickedness can have terrible consequences for others, both those near to us whom we know and love, and others further way, who suffer because of our thoughtlessness, greed, and inaction.

POEM

NIGHT SINGING IN A TIME OF PLAGUE

Ruth Padel

Can't you sleep either? After a dark year,
 many old friends gone, I thought I heard you sing
 outside the window
 inches from my ear. Who are you singing for
 this time of night? Did I dream you?
 Even if I did, I'm with you, robin,
 the only ones awake at half-past two
 under a full December moon
 in city air the colour of spat-out liquorice.
 Again. You really are here. One chirrup,
 then a song I've heard in better times
 and other countries. An olive grove on Crete –
 where I'd love, love to be right now –
 and a Welsh snowstorm,
 challenging the gods of loneliness and ice.

Take me to a new world. No. You've turned
 the music off. A light comes on
 between those green-slit stairwells
 in flats across the road. Someone else can't sleep.
 But you, I bet, are perky as a Christmas card
 among thorns of that shaggy creeper.
 Another trill, rich as day. Now a carol,
 a wild cantata. What do you know
 of months penned in, not seeing anyone,
 a hundred thousand people
 dead, this country alone? Or the larger thing,
 poisoned seas, a dying planet
 whole pristine forests burned? Your little tribe
 has learned to stay up close
 and use what humans bring. Come morning
 you'll be on the sill, waiting for crumbs.
 We're in this together,
 this Stations of the Cross situation,
 and you are the Advent hymn. Bonkers but brilliant.
 Let sleep come softly. Let the heart return.

The Choir sings 'Sans Day Carol'

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk,
 And Mary bore Jesus, who was wrapped up in silk.
Refrain: And Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!

Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass,
And Mary bore Jesus, who died on the cross.

Refrain

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal,
And Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all

Refrain

Now the holly bears a berry, as blood is it red,
Then trust we our Saviour, who rose from the dead

Refrain

Cornish Traditional Carol arr by John Rutter b1945

Kneel

O people of Sion, behold the Lord is nigh at hand

To redeem the nations

In the gladness of your hearts

The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard

Declare his honour unto the heathen

And his wonders to the people

COLLECT (for the Second Sunday of Advent)

Blessed Lord,

who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning;

Grant that we may in such wise hear them,

read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them,

that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word,
we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of
everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus
Christ. Amen.

The SECOND ADVENT CANDLE is lit

The Choir sings the ANTIPHON 'O Clavis David'

O Key of David, and Sceptre of the house of Israel, that openest, and
no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth: Come, and bring
the prisoner out of the prison house, and him that sitteth in darkness,
and the shadow of death.

PUGARTORIO

'Prodigal Son's Return' - Rembrandt 1667

[Manfred]: "After my body had been shattered by
two fatal blows, in tears, I then consigned
myself to Him who willingly forgives.
My sins were ghastly, but the Infinite
Goodness has arms so wide that It accepts
who ever would return, imploring It." (*Purg.* III, 118-123)

*Dante presents Purgatory as a climb up a mountain. It represents the penitent
Christian life, where the Christian pilgrim seeks the grace and healing of God as she
recognises her sins: the examples of vice as well as virtues that are evident in one's life,*

issues of morality and the practice of forgiveness. It is the journey of the Prodigal Son who faces up to the reality of his sinfulness and seeks reconciliation with his father whom he sees running out to meet him, embrace him and bring him home.

POEM

Excerpt from THE WORLD

Henry Vaughan

I saw Eternity the other night,
 Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
 All calm, as it was bright;
 And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
 Driv'n by the spheres
 Like a vast shadow mov'd; in which the world
 And all her train were hurl'd.
 Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
 And sing, and weep, soar'd up into the ring;
 But most would use no wing.
 O fools (said I) thus to prefer dark night
 Before true light,
 To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
 Because it shews the way,
 The way, which from this dead and dark abode
 Leads up to God,
 A way where you might tread the sun, and be
 More bright than he.
 But as I did their madness so discuss

One whisper'd thus,
 "This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide,
 But for his bride."

Please stand

HYMN

Long ago, prophets knew
 Christ would come, born a Jew,
 Come to make all things new;
 Bear His people's burden,
 Freely love and pardon.

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!

Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!

When He comes,

When He comes,

Who will make Him welcome?

God in time, God in man,
 This is God's timeless plan:

He will come, as a man,
Born Himself of woman,
God divinely human:

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!

Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!

When He comes,

When He comes,

Who will make Him welcome?

Mary, hail! Though afraid,
She believed, she obeyed.
In her womb, God is laid:
Till the time expected,
Nurtured and protected,

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!

Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!

When He comes,

When He comes,

Who will make Him welcome?

Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlehem shines, like a star,

Stable door stands ajar.

Unborn Son of Mary,

Saviour, do not tarry!

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!

Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!

When He comes,

When He comes,

We will make Him welcome?

tune 'Personent Hodie' *arr* Gustav Holst 1874-1934

words Fred Pratt Green 1903-2000

Please sit

READING: Luke 1:26- 38

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto

the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

POEM

LISTEN

Clare Bevan

Listen.

Far away, the snore of a camel,

The swish of boots in the endless sand,

The whisper of silk and the clatter of ceremonial swords,

Far away.

Listen.

Not so far, the slam of a castle door,

A cry of rage in the midnight air,

A jangle of spurs and the cold thrust of a soldier's command,

Not so far.

Listen.

Closer now, the homely bleat of a ewe among the grasses,

The answering call of her lamb, fresh born,

The rattle of stones on a hillside path,

Closer now.

Listen.

Closer still, the murmur of women in the dark,

The kindly creak of a stable door,

The steady breathing of the sleepy beasts,

Closer still.

Listen.

So close you are almost there,

The soundless flurry of wings,

The soft whimper of a child amongst the straw,

So close you are almost there.

COLLECT *for the* THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O Lord Jesus Christ,

who at thy first coming

didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee;

grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries

may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way,

by turning the hearts of the disobedient

to the wisdom of the just,

that, at thy second coming to judge the world,

we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight,

who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost,

ever one God, world without end. Amen

The THIRD ADVENT CANDLE *is lit*

The Choir sings the ANTIPHON ‘O Rex Gentium’

O King of the nations, and their Desire; the Cornerstone, who makest both one: Come, and save mankind whom thou formedst of clay.

IN PARADISO

Fra Angelico – 'Paradise' 1483

For Dante paradise represented the soul's ascent to God. He begins this poem at the top of Mount Purgatory (the earthly Paradise) at Easter time and is guided closer and closer to God. This is the end of all journeys. All of us must die, and journey through death. Dante reminds us that Love will be our guide; Love is our destination. One day we hope for the bliss of the beatific vision of God. Dante ends his three-part work being enthralled 'by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.'

St. John questions Dante on love. Dante replies (Canto XXVI):

Thus I began again: My charity
results from all those things whose bite can bring
the heart to turn to God; the world's existence

and mine, the death that He sustained that I
might live, and that which is the hope of all
believers, as it is my hope, together

with living knowledge I have spoken of
these drew me from the sea of twisted love
and set me on the shore of the right love.

The leaves enleaving all the garden of
the Everlasting Gardener, I love
according to the good He gave to them.

Please stand

Come thou redeemer of the earth
And manifest thy virgin-birth:
 Let every age adoring fall;
 Such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,
 But of the Spirit, thou art still
 The Word of God in flesh arrayed,
 The promised fruit to man displayed.

O equal to thy Father, thou!
 Gird on thy fleshly mantle now,
 The weakness of our mortal state
 With deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
 And darkness breathe a newer light
 Where endless faith shall shine serene,
 And twilight never intervene.

All laud eternal Son, to thee
 Whose advent sets thy people free,
 Whom with the Father we adore,
 And Holy Ghost for evermore. Amen

trad melody adapted Michael Praetorius 1571-1621

arr David Willcocks 1919-2015

words St Ambrose 340-97 *trans* J M Neale 1818-66 *and others*

READING Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.' And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

POEM**THE KINGDOM**

R. S. Thomas

It's a long way off but inside it
 There are quite different things going on:
 Festivals at which the poor man
 Is king and the consumptive is
 Healed; mirrors in which the blind look

At themselves and love looks at them
 Back; and industry is for mending
 The bent bones and the minds fractured
 By life. It's a long way off, but to get
 There takes no time and admission
 Is free, if you purge yourself
 Of desire, and present yourself with
 Your need only and the simple offering
 Of your faith, green as a leaf

The Choir sings

In paradisum deducant te Angeli: In tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
 Et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.

Chorus angelorum te suscipiat, et cum Lazaro quondam paupere,
 æternam habeas requiem.

May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs receive you at
 your arrival and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem.

May choirs of angels receive you and with Lazarus, once a poor man,
 may you have eternal rest.

Words: From the Requiem Mass

Music: M. Duruflé 1902-86

POEM

GATES AND DOORS

Joyce Kilmer

There was a gentle hostler
 (And blessed be his name!)
 He opened up the stable

The night Our Lady came.
Our Lady and St. Joseph,
He gave them food and bed,
And Jesus Christ has given him
A glory round his head.

So let the gate swing open
However poor the yard,
Lest weary People visit you
And find their Passage barred.
Unlatch the door at midnight
And let your lantern's glow
Shine out to guide the traveler's feet
To you across the snow.

There was a courteous hostler
(He is in Heaven to-night)
He held Our Lady's bridle
And helped her to alight.
He spread clean straw before her
Whereon she might lie down,
And Jesus Christ has given him
An everlasting crown.

Unlock the door this evening
And let your gate swing wide,
Let all who ask for shelter

Come speedily inside.
 What if your yard be narrow?
 What if your house be small?
 There is a Guest is coming
 Will glorify it all.

There was a joyous hostler
 Who knelt on Christmas morn
 Beside the radiant manger
 Wherein his Lord was born.
 His heart was full of laughter,
 His soul was full of bliss
 When Jesus, on His Mother's lap,
 Gave him His hand to kiss.
 Unbar your heart this evening
 And keep no stranger out,
 Take from your soul's great portal
 The barrier of doubt.
 To humble folk and weary
 Give hearty welcoming,
 Your breast shall be to-morrow
 The cradle of a King.

*During the Anthem the FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE is lit. The Altar is
 censured as the symbol of our prayers and our desire for the coming of the Christ Child*

The Choir sings I wonder as I wander

I wonder as I wander out under the sky,
 That Jesus my Saviour did come for to die.
 For poor on'ry people like you and like I...
 I wonder as I wander out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall,
 With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
 But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,
 And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
 A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
 Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
 He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.

Words: Traditional Music Carl Rutti b 1949

Please kneel

Drop down ye Heavens from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness

Let the Earth open
And bring forth a Saviour

The Heavens declare the glory of God
And the firmament sheweth His handiwork

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,

**As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be world without end. Amen**

COLLECT *for the* FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O Lord,
**Raise up (we pray thee) thy power,
 and come among us, and with great might succour us;
 that whereas, through our sins and wickedness,
 we are sore let and hindered
 in running the race that is set before us,
 thy bountiful grace and mercy
 may speedily help and deliver us;
 through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord,
 to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost
 be honour and glory, world without end. Amen**

THE BLESSING

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;
 hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil;
 strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted;
 honour all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of
 the Holy Spirit. And the blessing + of God Almighty, the Father,
 the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain
 with you for ever. **Amen**

Please stand

Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
LOnce for favoured sinners slain:

Thousand thousand Saints attending
 Swell the triumph of His train;
 Alleluya!
 God appears, on Earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold Him
 Robed in dreadful majesty;
 Those who set at nought and sold Him,
 Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
 Deeply wailing
 Shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of His passion
 Still the dazzling body bears,
 Cause of endless exultation
 To His ransomed worshippers:
 With what rapture
 Gaze we on those glorious scars.

Yea, Amen! Let all adore thee,
 High on thine eternal throne;
 Saviour, take the power and glory:
 Claim the Kingdom for thine own:
 O come quickly!
 Alleluya! Come Lord, come!

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Chorale Prelude BWV 661 'Nun Komm Seele der Heiden Heiland' –
J. S. Bach

**PLEASE TAKE THIS SERVICE BOOKLET HOME WITH YOU
AS AN AID TO FURTHER REFLECTION DURING ADVENT**

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT ST MICHAEL'S

Those who received Holy Communion at Midnight Mass are also permitted to receive again on Christmas Day at the 10 am Parish Mass

Sunday 19 December **Nine Lessons and Carols**
6.30pm

Friday 24 December **Christmas Eve**
4 pm **Crib Service**
11.30 pm **Midnight Mass**

Saturday 25 December **Christmas Day**
10 am **Choral Parish Mass**
A service for all the family with
a mini panto/homily,
followed by Festive Bucks Fizz

Sunday 26 December **Feast of the Holy Family**
10am Mass

AT OUR SISTER CHURCH OF ST PETER'S SOUTHFIELD ROAD

Thursday 23 December 4pm Crib Service

Thursday 23 December 7.30pm Carol Service

Saturday 25 December **Christmas Day** 10am Sung Family Mass

All other weekday and Sunday Services are as usual

Details of regular weekday and Sunday Services, Festivals, &c
can be found on the noticeboards and website www.smaaa.org.uk

THE CLERGY

Fr Kevin Morris The Vicar

Fr Fabrizio Pesce, Associate Vicar

Fr Thomas Couper Assistant Priest

Mthr Maggie Davidge Smith Hon Assistant Priest

Fr Neil Evans Hon Assistant Priest

Fr Graham Morgan Kt Hon Assistant Priest

THE CHOIR OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

Jonathan Dods *Director of Music*

Parish Office

For information on pastoral care, baptisms, marriages and funerals
as well as room bookings &c,
please call the Parish Office

open weekdays 9 am-12.30 & 2.30-5 pm

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St Michael & All Angels Parish Hall,

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