

St Nicholas Church, Sighthill

Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2025

11:15pm



Carol: O come o ye faithful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpwRGxwh83s>

1. 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;

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

2. God of God, Light of Light eternal,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

Refrain

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"

Refrain

LIGHTING OF THE FOUR ADVENT CANDLES

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)

At Christmas, God gave us the best gift ever. He sent his Son, Jesus, to live, die, and rise again so we could live with him forever in heaven. Although this gift required great sacrifice, God knew we needed Jesus.

Four candles, burning bright, Chasing away the darkness with light.
Four candles, glowing bright, the blessing of God, giving new sight.

Carol: Hark the herald Angels sing (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRdJwYpd4Qw>

1. Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn 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 hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

2. 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 men to dwell
Jesus our Emmanuel
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace
Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all He brings

Ris'n 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 newborn King

CCLI Song # 27738, Charles Wesley© Words: Public Domain

Prayer

Dear God, we pray that our faith may be renewed once again, and may we relive the wonder of your love in our lives. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

Who stands at my door?

Who stands at my door?
Who stands at my door in the storm and rain
On the threshold of being?
One who waits till you call him in
From the empty night.

I ask Him - Are you a stranger, out in the storm,
Or has my enemy found me out
On the edge of being?

He replies - I am no stranger who stands at the door
Nor an enemy come in the secret night,
I am your child, in darkness and fear
On the verge of being.

I say - go back, my child, to the rain and the storm,
For in this house there is sorrow and pain
In the lonely night.

He replies, I will not go back for sorrow or pain,
For my true love weeps within
And waits for my coming.

I say - Go back, baby Jesus, to the vacant night

For in this house dwell sin and hate
On the verge of being.

He says - I will not go back for hate or sin,
I will not go back for sorrow or pain,
For my true love mourns within
On the threshold of night.
I have come down – and I am here to stay.

(Kathleen Raine, 1908–2003)

Carol: Once in Royal David's city (video)

Prayer:

Here, on this night, Here, on this night, we come in praise and prayer, we long for hope and grace. Here, on this night, we recollect another night in a country not yet Israel and Palestine as we know them, yet under martial law, occupied.

Here, on this night we imagine displaced people the world over, seeking sanctuary and we remember on that night, long ago, two others who found no shelter for a birth, save amid the straw and dung of resting cattle.

Threats then, as today, hung over them. And in prayer we identify with them and with those through the ages found homeless and stateless, threatened and disowned, and for our part we side with the angels, though not simply in song, pledging ourselves to bring peace and goodwill to all people, here, on this night... and for as long as we live. We ask this prayers in the name of Christ child, our Lord and Saviour, Amen.

Bible Reading: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness

from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Poem: A birth

Lonely, frightened and bewildered they wandered, with no place to stay and a crisis coming on them imminently.

Doors and windows spilled light and noise, but there was no space to welcome their weariness; no warmth to wrap around their cold discomfort.

Turned away again and again, they trudged the busy streets where people thronged, but none would take the time to recognize their need.

Only one hard-pressed pub landlord took two minutes from his business to point them to an outbuilding at the back,
where they could get in from the cold and attend to their emergency.

Their child was born in the dirt with no assistance from anyone but the father and wrapped in the cloths they'd hoped they'd never have to use, until they'd returned to the disapproving family home, they had left so many weeks before.

It was not the way they had anticipated that their son would enter the world and hardly a significant birth that would be noticed amongst the chaos that surrounded them.

But they survived and their child grew and despite his unpretentious beginning, he fulfilled all the promise that God had invested in him.

The world changed, as his life translated God into human terms and brought new hope to all who are despairing and disregarded. Even today – even today.

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Carol: silent Night (Played by Pastor Edward)

1. Silent night holy night
All is calm I'm singin' all is bright
'Round yon virgin mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Oh sleep in heavenly peace

2. Silent night holy night
Shepherds quake oh at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia
Christ the Saviour is born
Christ the Saviour is born

3. Silent night holy night
Son of God oh 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

CCLI Song # 4629513

MIDNIGHT LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Wishing one another a Merry Christmas (video)

Sermon

Here in the darkness, moving toward the end of a December which began with decisions about the rightness or otherwise of bombing Syria, we wait in darkness.

Candles are being lit in chapels, in Cathedrals, in private homes... a sign of hope. We recollect a squalid birth in a country under the power of an occupying force.

And all too easily it is obscured by tinsel, by memories of childhood, by the joy of seeing our children, grandchildren and young friends wearing dressing gowns – is the powerful story in that earthy, earthly setting a child was born

like any other, who lived and grew, who hurt and died in such a way that those who watched saw God within his eyes.

And those who choose to follow him as Lord or even as Saviour - can and will know that the one we name as the Christ child has shared our path and knows their lot.

And this we share in our own way, in many ways, in the meaning of Immanuel - that God is here and God is now, and God is with us, and within us - everyone one of us – irrespective of who we are, where we have been, or how good or bad we might think of ourselves.

What better way to spend the night than walking down a city street? But to stop and say – thank you – thank you God for loving the world so much and sending your one and only son – that whosoever believes in Him will not be without home, but will have meaningful and fulfilled life here and hereafter.

Though time has masked reality, and though two thousand years have past, the centre of this feast remains: God's love was born and love will last.

Prayer

We praise you, God of wonder and mystery.
We praise you in the excitement of anticipation,
in the heartache of our longing, and the fulfilment of our dreams.

We praise you that in this moment you step into our humanity meeting our expectation and anticipation with the promise of Emmanuel, God with us; fulfilling our longing and our dreams with your glory dwelling amongst us

We praise you that your Word is made flesh in the birth pains of a young mother in the protective fear of a father, in the cries of a new-born baby.

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CAROL 5: JOY TO THE WORLD, THE LIGHT IS COME

1. Joy to the World , the Lord is 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.

2. Joy to the Earth, the Saviour reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love

Christmas blessing

**Let us go out with that peace
taking it and the love of God in our hands
to offer them to others
as a sign of the presence of our God
who really is for life,
not just for Christmas.
And may His grace...**