

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



2022

Bidding Prayer

Dear People of God: In this season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought us by this Holy Child Jesus; and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and carols of praise.

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and justice on earth; for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this town.

And because he particularly loves them, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who know not the loving kindness of Jesus Christ.

Lastly let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we forevermore are one.

And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

All 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,
and the power,
and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Almighty God bless us with his grace;
Christ give us the joys of everlasting life;
and unto the fellowship of the citizens
above may the King of Angels bring us all.

All Amen.

Carol 1 (first two verses choir only)

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

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.

**And, through all his wondrous childhood,
 Day by day, like us he grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
 Tears and smiles like us he knew;
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.**

**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.**

**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;
Where like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.**

[Mrs. C. F. Alexander]

First Lesson

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

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." *(Genesis 3: 8-15)*

Carol 2

This is the truth sent from above (*Traditional*)

Second Lesson

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

(Isaiah 9: 2,6-7)

Carol 3

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 blesséd angels sing.

Yet 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 angels 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.

[Edmund Sears]

Carol 4

In dulci jubilo (*Traditional*)

Third Lesson

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

(Micah 5: 2-4)

Carol 5

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals, sleep the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

[Phillips Brooks]

Fourth Lesson

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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.

(Luke 1: 26-38)

Carol 6

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came (*Old Basque Carol*)

Fifth Lesson

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, 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.

(Luke 2: 1-7)

Carol 7

In the bleak midwinter, 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 midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to
reign.

In the bleak midwinter 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?
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 Rossetti]

Carol 8

Infant holy, infant lowly (*Polish Carol*)

Sixth Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger.

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."

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

(Luke 2: 8-16)

Carol 9

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,' said he, (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
'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
A 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 on the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'

[Nahum Tate]

Seventh Lesson

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

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 any thing 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:

Which 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 begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

(John 1: 1-14)

Carol 10

Ding dong! Merrily on high (*G. R. Woodward*)

Carol 11

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 hosts 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 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 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]

Collect and Blessing

God our redeemer, who prepared the blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of your Son:
Grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Christ who by his Incarnation gathered into one
all things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with his joy and peace;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD - CHRISTMAS SERVICES



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*St Hilda's offer you a warm welcome to our church this
Christmas*

December 24th Christmas Eve
(4pm) CRIB SERVICE (including NATIVITY)
(11pm) FIRST MASS OF CHRISTMAS

December 25th Christmas Day
(10.00am) EUCHARIST

Contact Information

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