

CAROLS FROM KING'S

Friday 12 December, 2025

3.00 pm

King's College Chapel
Cambridge



DEAN

The Revd Dr Stephen Cherry

DIRECTOR *of* MUSIC

Daniel Hyde

CHAPLAIN

The Revd Dr Jonathan Kimber

CHAPEL MANAGER

Emily Lyons

ASSISTING ORGANIST

Harrison Cole

PRODUCER

Simon Lole

DIRECTOR

Marcus Viner

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Rosheen Archer

B B C STUDIOS

WELCOME *from* THE DEAN

THANK you for coming to share this experience with us: an act of worship and an opportunity to make a programme to be enjoyed by many.

The programme will be broadcast on BBC Two on Christmas Eve at 5.45 pm, and repeated there at 8.45 am on Christmas Day.

§ *To help all who attend to find this a beautiful and meaningful experience we ask, please, that you:*

- ✱ *Ensure your phone is turned off, and refrain from photography, videography or any other form of recording;*
- ✱ *Follow the invitations to stand or sit as you are able, and always feel free to sit, if that is more comfortable for you.*
- ✱ *Expect to be here until 5.00pm. The recording will be made ‘as live’ but we do need all present to remain for all re-takes.*

§ *The Dean and Director of Music will brief the congregation at 2.40 pm.*

The initials KC in this booklet are used to designate membership of King’s College.

Further information about the life of the Choir and its recordings can be found here:

kingscollegechoir.com

The Revd Dr Stephen Cherry *Dean*

PODCAST – ‘ENCOUNTERS *with* KING’S COLLEGE’

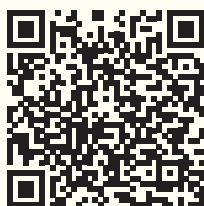
Uniquely recorded as guests encounter the beauty of King’s College Chapel, this ‘hybrid’ podcast is both conversation and personalised walking tour.

Join Dean Stephen Cherry as he invites guests like Sir Simon Jenkins and Sir John Rutter to share their impressions and experiences of our marvellous Chapel. And look out for the episode with members of the *Carols from King’s* production team.



NEW ALBUM – ‘ALL THE STARS LOOKED DOWN’

The Choir of King’s College, Cambridge, has released a new album for Christmas 2025: *All the Stars Looked Down*. The disc features the Choir with Britten Sinfonia and includes orchestral arrangements and original works by Sir John Rutter alongside a selection of carols by the composers who have influenced him.



ORDER *of* SERVICE

HYMN

§ *The Choir alone sings verses 1–3.*



*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
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden
in whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.*

**FOR he is our childhood's pattern:
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 heav'n 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,
when, like stars, his children, crowned,
all in white shall wait around.**

Cecil Frances Alexander

'Irby'

Henry Gauntlett

harm. Arthur Henry Mann KC

verse 6 arr. David Willcocks KC

BIDDING

Dean THE BIRTH of the Christ child brings joy to the world, it shines healing light into our deepest wounds and proclaims the gospel of peace.

The message of Christmas is universal but the power of the story, the true grace of God, is found in its details: the message of the uninvited angel, Mary's labour and Jesus' birth in the stable, the revelation of glory to shepherds on the hills, the journey and adoration of the magi.

As we celebrate the gift of God's loving presence, let us hold in mind all who suffer in war and civil conflict; all who live in fear, anxiety, pain or anguish, and all whose hearts are heavy with grief or shame.

Finally, let us pray that as we now fill this Chapel with carols of praise, God's loving-kindness, mercy and peace may touch our souls.

§ *All sit.*

CAROL

Ding-dong-ding:

Ding-a-dong-a-ding:

Ding-dong, ding-dong:

Ding-a-dong-ding.

UP! good Christen folk, and listen
how the merry church bells ring,
and from steeple
bid good people
come adore the new-born King:

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmastide,
bringing gladness,
chasing sadness,
showering blessings far and wide.

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
Ex Maria Virgine,
in a stable
(’tis no fable),
Christus natus hodie.

from the Virgin Mary

Christ is born today

George Ratcliffe Woodward

from *Piæ Cantiones*
harm. *George Ratcliffe Woodward*
Oxford University Press

FIRST READING

THE TIME draws near the birth of Christ:
The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

from 'In Memoriam A. H. H.'
by *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*
Edward Moxon, 1850

CAROL

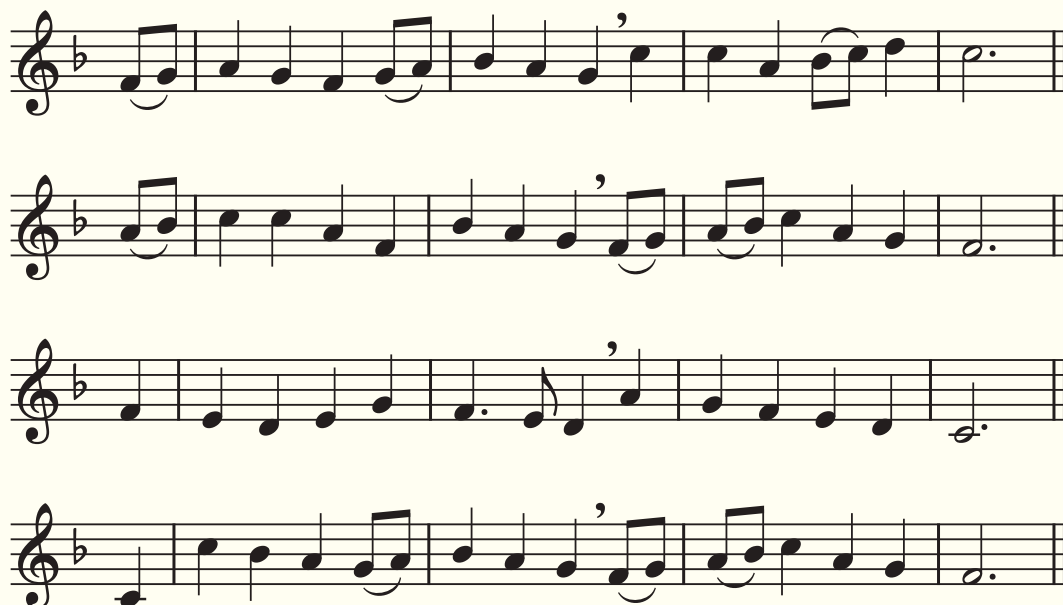
How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that publisheth salvation;
that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Isaiah 52.7

John Stainer

§ *All stand.*

HYMN



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 heav'n'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 heav'nly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov'ring wing;
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessèd 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 hast'ning 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 Hamilton Sears

'Noel'

adapt. *Arthur Sullivan*

verse 4 arr. *John Scott*

Oxford University Press

§ *All sit.*

SECOND READING

Mary responds with graceful acceptance to the message of the Angel.

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 Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1.26–35, 38

CAROL

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum;
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus
fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae.
Amen.

Luke 1.28, 42

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the
fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour
of our death.
Amen.*

Anton Bruckner

CAROL

*There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu.*

THERE is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu;
Alleluia.
There is no rose &c.

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space;
Res miranda.
There is no rose &c.

A marvellous thing.

By that rose we may well see
That he is God in persons three,
Pari forma.
There is no rose &c.

Equal in form.

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo:
Gaudeamus.
There is no rose &c.

Glory to God in the highest:
Let us rejoice.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth;
Transeamus.
There is no rose &c.

Let us go.

anon., 15th-century

anon., 15th-century
arr. John Stevens
Stainer & Bell

THIRD READING

The birth of Jesus Christ.

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 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, 3–7

CAROL

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,
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;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

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

English Traditional

English Traditional
Philip Ledger KC
Halston & Co. Ltd.

CAROL

*Nowell sing we now all and some,
For Rex pacificus is come. the king of peace.*

IN BETHLEHEM in that fair city,
A child was born of a maiden free;
That shall a lord and princè be;
A solis ortus cardine. from the rising point of the sun.
Nowell sing we &c.

Children were slain in full great plenty,
Jesus, for the love of thee;
Wherefore their soulès savèd be;
Hostis Herodis impie. Herod, ungodly enemy.
Nowell sing we &c.

As the sunnè shineth through the glass,
So Jesu in his mother was;
Thee to servè now grant us grace;
O lux beata Trinitas. O light, blessed Trinity.
Nowell sing we &c.

Now God is comen to worshipen us;
Now of Mary is born Jesus;
Make we merry amongès us;
Exultet cœlum laudibus. Let the sky exult with praises.
Nowell sing we &c.

anon., 15th-century English

*Elizabeth Maconchy
Cambridge University Press*

§ *All stand.*

HYMN



UNTO us is born a Son,
King of quires supernal:
See on earth his life begun,
Of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger;
Ox and ass their owner know,
Be cradled in the manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
And grievously bewilder,
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild
This the Christmas story;
And O that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us up to glory!

O and A, and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Let our merry organ go
Benedicamus Domino.

anon., 14th century.

With singing in the choir

Let us bless the Lord

from *Piæ Cantiones*

arr. *David Willcocks* KC

Oxford University Press

§ *All sit.*

FOURTH READING

A host of angels announces the good news of Christ's birth to shepherds.

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.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 2.8–16

CAROL

THERE'S a star in the East on Christmas morn,
Rise up shepherd and follow.
It will lead to the place where the Saviour's born,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your flocks and leave your lambs,

Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your sheep and leave your rams,

Rise up shepherd and follow.

Follow, follow, rise up shepherd and follow.

Follow the star of Bethlehem,

Rise up shepherd and follow.

If you take good heed of the angel's word,
Rise up shepherd and follow.
You'll forget your flock, you'll forget your herd,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your flocks &c.

trad. American Spiritual

'Rise up, shepherd!'

arr. Grayston Ives

Waynflete Music

CAROL

THOU must leave thy lowly dwelling,
The humble crib, the stable bare,
Babe, all mortal babes excelling,
Content our earthly lot to share,
Loving father, loving mother,
Shelter thee with tender care!

Blessed Jesus, we implore thee
With humble love and holy fear,
In the land that lies before thee,
Forget not us who linger here!
May the shepherd's lowly calling,
Ever to thy heart be dear!

Blest are ye beyond all measure,
Thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure,
The Prince of Peace, the Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you,
Guide you safely through the wild!

Paul England

from *L'Enfance du Christ*, Op.25

Hector Berlioz

Oxford University Press

FIFTH READING

THIS WAS the moment when Before
Turned into After, and the future's
Uninvented timekeepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the earth.

This was the moment when even energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote provinces.

And this was the moment
When a few farm workers and three
Members of an obscure Persian sect

Walked haphazard by starlight straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.

'BC – AD'

by *U.A. Fanthorpe*
Enitharmon, 2002

CAROL

LITTLE Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and he is mild,
He became a little child;
I, a child, and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

William Blake

John Tavener

CAROL

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.*

Cradled by mother so fair,
Tender her lullaby;
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky.

Far away &c.

Wise men from distant far land,
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare,
Hearts with his warmth he fills.

Far away &c.

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow;
Innocent dreaming babe,
Make me thy love to know.

Far away &c.

John Rutter

John Rutter
Oxford University Press

§ *All stand.*

HYMN



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,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created.

O come, let us adore him &c.

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God
In the highest:

O come, let us adore him &c.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him &c.

Adeste, fideles
trans. Frederick Oakley,
William Thomas Brooke et al.

'Adeste, fideles'
John Francis Wade
arr. David Willcocks KC
Oxford University Press

§ *All sit.*

SIXTH READING

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And demanded of the chief priests and scribes of the people where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 2.1–11

CAROL

AWAY in a manger, no crib for a 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 baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me for ever, and watch me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

anon., 19th century

William James Kirkpatrick
arr. David Hill
Novello & Co. Ltd

CAROL

I SAW three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.

I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?
And what was in those ships all three,
On Christmas Day in the morning?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.
Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Pray, whither sailed those ships all three,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?
Pray, whither sailed those ships all three,
On Christmas Day in the morning?

Oh, they sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.
Oh, they sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth shall ring,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
And all the bells on earth shall ring,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the angels in heaven shall sing

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.

And all the angels in heaven shall sing

On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the souls on earth shall sing

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.

And all the souls on earth shall sing

On Christmas Day in the morning.

Then let us all rejoice amain

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day.

Then let us all rejoice amain

On Christmas Day in the morning.

Traditional English

Traditional English

arr. *Stuart Nicholson*

Oxford University Press

SEVENTH READING

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.

Thanks be to God.

John 1.1–14

CAROL

DORMI, Jesu! mater ridet
Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu, blandule.
Dormi, Jesu, blandule.

Si non dormis, mater plorat	<i>If thou sleep not, mother mourneth</i>
Inter fila cantans orat,	<i>Singing as her wheel she turneth,</i>
Blande, veni, somnule.	<i>Come, soft slumber, balmily.</i>
<i>Dormi, Jesu, &c.</i>	

Sleep, sweet baby! my cares beguiling:
Mother sits beside thee, smiling:
Sleep, my darling, sleep, my darling, tenderly.
Dormi, Jesu, &c.

Latin, origin unknown
trans. *Samuel Coleridge Taylor*

John Rutter
Oxford University Press

§ *All stand.*

PRAYER & BLESSING

Dean INSPIRE us, O God,
to have compassion for the suffering,
to seek justice for the oppressed,
the exploited, and the abused,
to engage kindly with friends,
neighbours, strangers and enemies,
and to follow the example of your son,
our saviour, Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Dean MAY God's gift of love bring you healing and joy;
may God's gift of joy lead you to gentleness and grace;
may God's gift of grace grow in you as peace and love;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

DISMISSAL

WHEN the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

'The Work of Christmas'
by *Howard Thurman*
Harper & Row, 1973

HYMN



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 host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem:
*Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heav'n 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 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 new-born King.

Charles Wesley et al.
adapt. William Hayman Cummings

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
verse 3 arr. David Willcocks KC
Oxford University Press

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

§ *All remain standing during the organ voluntary.*

Vom Himmel hoch,

da komm ich her BWV 606

Johann Sebastian Bach

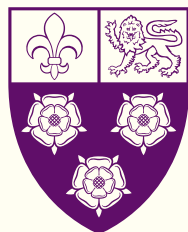
Bärenreiter Verlag

§ *Please be patient as we complete any further recording.*

AT THE END *of* THE SERVICE

- § *Please give generously to the retiring collection, which supports the life and work of the Chapel, using the Gift Aid envelope provided.*
- § *A contactless donation point is available in the Ante-Chapel.*
- § *Twenty per cent of all our collections is donated to charitable causes beyond the College.*
- § *Thank you for joining us for this service; please leave the College through the main gate onto King's Parade.*

* * *



KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
MMXXV