

# St Michael and All Angels, Sandhurst



*The Nativity* by Gerard David (1460–1523)

Christmas Eve Carol Service 2023

*Before the Service, there will be a performance of music for handbells, played by St Michael's Belles.*

*Four-in-hand:*

Let all mortal flesh keep silence  
Good Christian men, rejoice!

*Twelve bells:*

Away in a manger  
Christmas medley  
Il est né, le divin enfant  
Still, still, still  
Carol medley  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
O Christmas tree  
Merry Christmas medley

*The programme will run continuously without announcement.*

*Please save any appreciation until the end.*

*Thank you!*

## *About tonight's Carol Service*

Thank you for coming tonight to share in our celebration of Christmas. We hope that tonight's carol service will help you to find refreshment and a new sense of joy and hope for your own life and for the world. The notes below are intended to help you follow the theme of the service.

### *Notes on tonight's carols and readings*

The structure of the service is based on five readings from the Bible, interspersed with carols sung by the choir and the whole congregation. Readings and carols tell and comment on the mystery of the Incarnation—God's only Son becoming human in order to bring reconciliation between the world and God, and peace between the peoples of this troubled earth.

In the first reading, we hear how Adam and Eve's disobedience to God leads to their being banished from the Garden of Eden and the tree of life. But God's words that a descendant of theirs will "bruise the heel" of the serpent brings hope of redemption. In the second reading Isaiah prophesies about the birth of the Messiah. Centuries later, Mary's faith and obedience to the message of the angel enable God's plan to come into effect (3rd reading), and the evangelist Luke tells of the birth of Jesus and the visit of shepherds (4th reading). Finally, the Prologue to St John's Gospel explains the significance of the birth of Christ, who is God in human form (5th reading).

The Choir items form a commentary on this story. *People look East* looks forward to the coming of Christ, who is described as the Guest, the Rose, the Star, and Love itself. Paul and Ruth Manz's *E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come* uses words from Revelation to anticipate Christ's second coming as the Light to banish all darkness. *Sir Christèmas* is William Mathias's exuberant setting of a medieval carol that invites us to joyful celebration. A much more tranquil tone is set by Andrew Gant's arrangement of a traditional Austrian carol, *Still, still, still*, and by Jane Palmer's *Dormi Jesu*, before medieval exuberance erupts again in *Gaudete* (Rejoice!).

Our prayer is that through the words and music of this service, the wonder, joy and hope of the Christmas message may come home to you afresh.

*Rev. John Castle, Rector*

## Processional Hymn

*The first verse will be sung by the choir alone.*

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 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.

## Welcome and opening prayers

*Please remain standing*

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.

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## 1st Lesson:

Genesis 3:8–15 God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

### Choir: People, look east

*Words: Elizabeth Farjeon (1881-1965) ; music: Besançon carol, arr Malcolm Archer (b. 1952)*

People, look east, the time is near  
Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad; though earth is bare,  
One more seed is planted there:  
Give up your strength, the seed to nourish,  
That in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch; when night is  
dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather,  
Bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast:  
Him who cometh from the East;  
Set every peak and valley humming  
With the word: the Lord is coming!  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.



*The Annunciation* by Fra Angelico (1387–1455)

## Hymn

See amid the winter's snow,  
born for us on earth below,  
see, the tender Lamb appears,  
promised from eternal years

*Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!  
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!  
Sing through all Jerusalem,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

Lo, within a manger lies  
he who built the starry skies;  
he, who throned in height sublime  
sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine,  
what a tender love was thine,  
thus to come from highest bliss  
down to such a world as this!

Teach, O teach us, holy Child  
by thy face so meek and mild,  
teach us to resemble thee  
in thy sweet humility.

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## 2nd Lesson:

Isaiah 9:2,6-7 Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

Choir: E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come!

*Words: adapted from Revelation 22 by Ruth Manz; music: Paul Manz (1919-2009)*

Peace be to you and grace from him  
Who freed us from our sins,  
Who loved us all, and shed his blood  
That we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord,  
The Lord, Almighty God,  
Who was and is and is to come;  
Sing holy, holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,  
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,  
For Christ is coming, is coming soon!  
For Christ is coming soon!

E'en so Lord Jesus quickly come  
And night shall be no more  
They need no light, nor lamp, nor sun  
For Christ will be their All!

## Hymn

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.

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## 3rd Lesson:

Luke 1:26–38 The Angel Gabriel greets the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## Choir: Sir Christèmas

*Words: Rev Richard Smart (15<sup>th</sup> century); music: William Matthias (1934-1992)*

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell.*

Who is there that singeth so, nowell, nowell?

I am here, Sir Christèmas.

Welcome, my lord Sir Christèmas,

Welcome to all, both more and less,

Come near.

*Nowell, etc.*

Dieux vous garde, beaux sieurs,

tidings I you bring:

A maid hath borne a child full young

Which causeth you to sing:

*Nowell, etc.*

Christ is now born of a pure maid,  
In an ox-stall he is laid,  
Whereof sing we at a brayde:  
*Nowell, etc.*

Buvez bien par toute la companie.  
Make good cheer and be right merry  
And sing with us now joyfully  
*Nowell, etc*

## Hymn

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.

The shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoicèd much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
This blessed Babe to find.

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 others doth deface.

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

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## 4th Lesson:

Luke 2:1–20 St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.



*The Adoration of the Shepherds* by G. van Honthorst



## Choir: Still, still, still

*Trad. Austrian carol, translated and arranged by Andrew Gant (b. 1963)*

Still, still, still,  
Let all God's world be still.  
While Mary's holy child lies sleeping,  
Angels guard are quietly keeping;  
Still, still, still,  
Let all God's world be still.

Still, still, still,  
Let all God's world be still.  
In gentle Mary's sweet caressing  
Jesus gives his silent blessing;  
Still, still, still,  
Let all God's world be still.

Love, love, love,  
My heart is filled with love.  
The world from night is slowly turning,  
Still my heart with love is yearning;  
Love, love, love,  
My heart is filled with love.

## Hymn

The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields  
as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their  
sheep  
on a cold winter's night that was so  
deep.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east, beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.

*Nowell, Nowell, ...*

And by the light of that same star,  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a King was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it  
went.

*Nowell, Nowell, ...*

Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our Heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of  
nought,  
and with his blood mankind hath  
bought.

*Nowell, Nowell, ...*

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## 5th Lesson:

John 1:1-14 St John reveals the mystery of the Incarnation

**Choir: Dormi, Jesu**    *Words: traditional; music: Jane Palmer*

Dormi, Jesu! Mater ridet  
Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,  
Dormi, Jesu, blandule!  
Si non dormis, Mater plorat,  
Inter fila cantans orat,  
Dormi, Jesu, blandule.

Sleep, Jesus! Mother smiles  
Who sees such sweet sleep,  
Sleep, Jesus, gently!  
If you sleep not, Mother weeps,  
While she spins, in song she prays,  
Sleep, Jesus, gently!

**Gaudete**    *Words and music: Anon (Late Medieval)*

*Gaudete, gaudete!*  
*Christus est natus ex Maria virgine,*  
*gaudete!*

Tempus adest gratiae  
Hoc quod optabamus,  
Carmina laetitiae  
Devote reddamus.

Deus homo factus est  
Natura mirante,  
Mundus renovatus est  
A Christo regnante

Ergo nostra contio  
Psallat iam in lustris;  
Benedicat Domino:  
Salus Regi nostro.

*Rejoice, rejoice!*  
*Christ is born of the Virgin Mary,*  
*Rejoice!*

*The time of grace is here,*  
*That which we wished for;*  
*Songs of joy*  
*Let us give back with devotion.*

*God has become man,*  
*With nature marvelling,*  
*The world has been renewed*  
*By Christ, the one who reigns.*

*Therefore, let our assembly*  
*Now sing brightly;*  
*May it bless the Lord:*  
*Greetings to our King.*

**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 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:

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:



*The Adoration of the Magi*  
by Matthias Stom (1600– c.1650)

Sermon: Rev. John Castle

### Prayers

*The response to  
Lord in your mercy is  
**hear our prayer.***

**Hymn**    *A collection will be taken during this for the work of this church.  
You can also donate £5, £10 or £20 using the card reader by the door, or  
use the Donate button at [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk). Thank you!*

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:

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks,  
draw nigh with lowly fear;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God in the highest:

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

# Prayer over the offertory and Blessing

## Choir: Recessional

*Words: Medieval; music: Benjamin Britten (1913–76)*

Hodie Christus natus est,

hodie salvator apparuit.

hodie in terra canunt angeli,

laetantur archangeli.

Hodie exultant justi dicentes,

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia ...

*Today Christ is born,*

*today the Saviour has appeared.*

*today on earth the angels sing.*

*the archangels rejoice.*

*Today the righteous exult, saying.*

*Glory to God in the highest.*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia ...*

*‘To all who received him, who believed in his name,  
he gave power to become children of God.’*

*John 1:12*

**May God bless you this Christmas.**

### Services at St Michael’s

Christmas Eve, 24th December

15.30 Nativity Service

19.00 Carol Service

23.30 Midnight Communion

Christmas Day, 25 December

8.00 Holy Communion (1662)

9.30 Family Communion (children invited to show a present)

### Regular Sunday services

8.00 Holy Communion

9.30 Parish Communion (with activities for children & young people)

Except 4th Sunday: 10.30 Church Together All-Age service

11.15 Family Service on the first and third Sunday of the month

18.30 Evening Services: see our website, Facebook or newsletter

For more information about St Michael’s or the Christian faith,  
please fill in a welcome card (in the pews), or visit our website

[www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk). We are also on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst](https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelsSandhurst)