

Worship Sheets for Sunday 20th December

Fourth Sunday in Advent

CAROLS SERVICE

THE ARRIVAL OF HOPE

HOPE fuller than we could have
known on our own.

HOPE forgiving and setting us free.

A new life...a new heart... a new beginning

A prayer Loving, faithful God, as your people of
old waited and watched for Your coming to
earth in Jesus, so we wait and watch.

As we come before you now -

Fill us with your light



*(If you have an Advent wreath with you please
symbolically light the candle now)*

JOHN 1 vs 14 (The Message)

“The word became flesh and blood, and moved into
the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own
eyes... generous inside and out, true from start to
finish.”

WELCOME EVERYONE

Welcome everyone as we join together
wherever we are for our Carol Service.

Hope is what we need right now, because we
are going through a difficult year. A time that
none of us asked for. A time that has shaken us.
A time that has kept us apart but also brought
us closer together.

In light and despite of all this, we are here today
to celebrate. To acknowledge that HOPE has
come.

We are going to go on a journey of HOPE
reflecting on the Christmas story through the
eyes of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the
Magi

Jesus, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas,
is the one referred to as “Emmanuel” – which is
a Hebrew word meaning “God is with us.” Jesus
is here bringing HOPE up close – defying social
distancing rules and inviting us to imagine what
it means to have his hope arrive on our
doorstep.



**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come
to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Desire of nations bind in one
the hearts of all mankind.
Bid thou our sad divisions cease
and be thyself our King of Peace
Rejoice, rejoice, Immanuel shall come
to thee, O Israel**

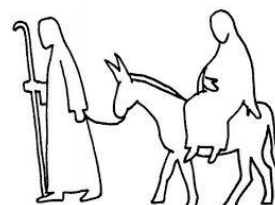
HOPE UP CLOSE FOR MARY Luke 1:26b–41, 56

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a
village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary.
She was engaged to be married to a man
named Joseph, a descendant of King David.

Gabriel appeared to her and said,
“Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is
with you!” Confused and disturbed, Mary
tried to think what the angel could mean.
“Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her,
“for you have found favour with God! You
will conceive and give birth to a son, and
you will name him Jesus. He will be very
great and will be called the Son of the Most
High. The Lord God will give him the throne
of his ancestor David. And he will reign
over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never
end!”

Mary asked the angel, “But how can this
happen? I am a virgin.”

The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will
come upon you, and the power of the Most
High will overshadow you. So the baby to
be born will be holy, and he will be called
the Son of God. What’s more, your relative
Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old
age! People used to say she was barren, but
she has conceived a son and is now in her
sixth month. For the word of God will never
fail.” Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s
servant. May everything you have said
about me come true.” And then the angel
left her.



HOPE UP CLOSE FOR JOSEPH Matt 1:18–24

His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet: “Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means ‘God is with us.’” When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.



**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....***

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above;
glory to God, all glory in the highest; *O come....***



HOPE UP CLOSE – FOR THE SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:1–16

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David’s ancient home. He travelled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Saviour – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others – the armies of heaven – praising God and saying, “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger.



**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 swaddling 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;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'

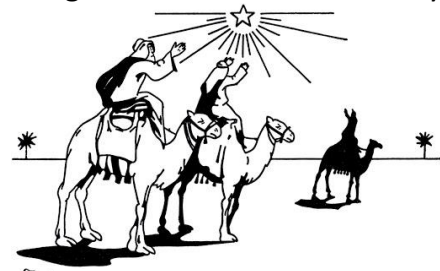
© Nahum Tate

HOPE UP CLOSE – FOR THE MAGI

Matthew 2:1–12 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: 'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'" Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" 6

Continued plan After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary,

and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

***O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal
beauty bright; westward leading, still
proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, gladly raising,
worship him, God on high.

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice; "Alleluia, Alleluia!"
sounds through the earth and skies.

LET US PRAY - REMEMBERING the words...
**"The people who walked in darkness have
seen a great light"**

We pray for the people we have lost. For goodbyes that went unsaid. For celebrations that never happened. For jobs that came to an end. For times we felt alone. For the silence and the waiting. For the loss of things hoped for. For the days that never came.

LORD, SHINE YOUR LIGHT OF HOPE & LOVE

We pray for those, in every occupation, who risked their lives for others. For friends and neighbours, and the kindness of strangers. For the things we tried out. For signs of hope

in unexpected places. For rediscovering our need of one another. For encountering beauty on our doorsteps For creation's space to breathe. For the faith and hope that sustained us in the darkest places.

LORD, SHINE YOUR LIGHT OF HOPE AND LOVE

We pray with you Lord into the pain and suffering of our world. Longing for the yoke of injustice to be lifted. For the rod of oppression to be broken. For bloodshed and conflict to cease. For the reign of justice and righteousness. For the coming of the Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

LORD, SHINE YOUR LIGHT OF HOPE AND LOVE

Light for the world, who fills us with light and life and hope....

LORD SHINE YOUR LIGHT OF HOPE AND LOVE



OUR RESPONSE

Like Mary, who said YES to carrying Jesus into the world in order to give us life....

May we say YES today to Jesus living in us. coming close to us today.

Like Joseph, who, against public opinion, chose to love and to stand by Mary

May we be generous with the love we share with friend and stranger.

Like the shepherds on the hill, who, with a shiver down their spine, found hope because God chose to meet them first

May we hear the angelic song of heaven calling us to come home.

Like the Magi, who travelled far in the hope of paying tribute to a baby king bigger than them all

May we search until our restless hearts find hope fulfilled in you, eternal king.

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel. **AMEN**



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 the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn 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 the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail, the heav'n-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 newborn King!"

A blessing

Be blessed your waiting

Be blessed in your loving

Be blessed in your hardship and pain

Be blessed in your seeking and finding

Be blessed in the name of Jesus who comes
close and is alive with us today.

It is Christmas - hope is here. AMEN

