



## Carol Service at Home 2022

### Comfort & Joy!

As you share in this Carol Service at home,  
may the love of God be found in your hearts.

### Isaiah 9: 2, 4, 6

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

### StF 210 – Love came down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas,  
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
Love incarnate, Love divine;  
worship we our Jesus:  
but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,  
love be yours and love be mine,  
love to God and all the world,  
love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

### Let us pray.

*Loving God, help us to love the way Jesus  
taught us to love. We cannot do all things, nor  
can we do everything, but may we do all we  
can to love you, with our thoughts, words and  
deeds. For the times we make mistakes and  
fail to live out your love, we are sorry and turn to  
You through Jesus our Saviour. Amen.*

### StF 214 – Once in royal David's city

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 needy, poor and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

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;  
there his children gather round  
bright like stars, with glory crowned.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

### Luke 2: 1-7

### The Birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

## StF 217 – Silent night, holy night

Silent night, holy night:  
sleeps the world; hid from sight,  
Mary and Joseph in stable bare  
watch o’ver the child belovèd and fair  
sleeping in heavenly rest.

Silent night, holy night:  
shepherds first saw the light,  
heard resounding clear and long,  
far and near, the angel-song:  
‘Christ the Redeemer is here!’

Silent night, holy night:  
Son of God, O how bright  
love is smiling from your face!  
Stirkes for us now the hour of grace,  
Jesus, Lord at your birth.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)  
*translated by Stopford Augustus Brooke (1832-1916)*

## Luke 2.8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## StF 202 – Hark! The herald-angels sing

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 the 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, the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel:

*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 (1707-1788)

Jesus is the Light of world, God’s only Son.  
Let us offer prayers, for our neighbours, near  
and far; for those we know by name and for  
the stranger at the door looking for room at  
the inn.

*Let us pray in the name of Jesus Christ, in the  
power of the Holy Spirit, knowing the Fathers  
embrace as we pray.*

We pray for those most vulnerable in this  
world and all those in need.

*Jesus, light of the world, brighten their  
darkness, call love into action.*  
We pray for those living in homelessness; for  
those displaced by war and conflict.

*Jesus, light of the world, brighten their  
darkness, call love into action.*

We pray for those who feel lost; for those who are lonely; and those living with anxiety.

*Jesus, light of the world, brighten their darkness, call love into action.*

We pray for those who have said goodbye to a loved one and those seeking comfort.

*Jesus, light of the world, brighten their darkness, call love into action.*

We pray for all living through hardship, trauma, or simply finding life a struggle.

*Jesus, light of the world, brighten their darkness, call love into action. Amen.*

## **A Christmas reflection**

Recently when I come to pray for the world, either during my personal devotions or during a collective worship, it can feel like a news broadcast. The overwhelming number of troubling situations and great weight of needs is too much. Yet the truth is any trouble or need is too much, and it's not ours to solve. I take comfort in God and knowing that no matter the scale troubles or weight of needs, God is bigger and able to do imaginably more than we could ever know or fathom. We are to bring each other, nations, groups and individuals in prayer to God. I would also suggest we are to be open and ready to serve however God leads us to respond in love.

At this time of year, I remember the lady whose name I do not know, but who has two daughters and who was worrying about how to give her daughters the best Christmas when she couldn't afford it. I met this lady in a shop where she worked. I encouraged her to come to church and discover the true meaning of Christmas, explaining this is something money cannot buy. Each year we are presented with images, projecting into our lives what someone else thinks will make Christmas the best ever. Newsflash! The best ever Christmas, was the first Christmas, when Christ Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and laid in a borrowed manger. The Son of God given to a broken, lost and hurting world. Money cannot buy God's love, nor can it buy the best Christmas, but we can receive the

best Christmas gift, Jesus born in our heart. And when we do receive Jesus into our hearts and lives, then we will know true Comfort and Joy. Amen.

## **StF 204 – In the bleak midwinter**

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.

Heaven cannot hold him,  
nor the earth sustain;  
heav'n and earth shall flee away  
when he comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter  
a stable-place sufficed  
God, the Lord Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels  
may have gathered there,  
cherubim and seraphim  
throngèd the air –  
but his mother only,  
in her maiden bliss,  
worshipped the Belovèd  
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 Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

May the Prince of Peace reign in our hearts  
and may Comfort and Joy increase as we  
celebrate God with us, Immanuel.  
The Blessings of God, Father, Son and Holy  
Spirit, remain with us now and for ever. Amen.

*Merry Christmas!*