

Newham NHS Health Trust

Readings & Music for Christmas

with

The Giltspur Singers

directed by

Christopher Maxim

Monday, 15th December 2003 6.30pm

Welcome

Choir *Make we joy now in this fest* – William Walton

All

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;

Refrain:

*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;

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest;

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born that happy morning;
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;

Refrain

First Reading

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary
(St Luke I:26-38)

Choir *Lætentur cæli* – William Byrd

Second Reading

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus (St Luke II:1-7)

Choir *Dormi Jesu* – Edmund Rubbra

All

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 angles keep
their watch of wond'ring love.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts

the blessings of his heav'n.
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.

Third Reading

The shepherds go to the manger (St Luke II:8-20)

Choir *The shepherds' cradle song*
 – Karl Leuner, arr. Charles Macpherson

Fourth Reading

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus (St Matthew II:1-11)

Choir *Bethlehem Down* – Peter Warlock

Choir *Past Three O'Clock* – English, arr. Charles Wood

All

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, goodwill to men,
from heav’n’s all-gracious King!’
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still though the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heav’nly music floats
o’er all the wary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov’ring wing;
and ever o’er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain has 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 send back the song
which now the angels sing.

Fifth Reading

Christmas Thank Yous – Mick Gower

Choir *All this time* – William Walton

Choir *Shakespeare's Song of Winter*
(from *Love's Labour's Lost*) – Christopher Maxim

All

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, heav'n cannot hold him
nor earth sustain;
heav'n 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.

Sixth Reading

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation
(St John I:1-14)

All

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!

Refrain:

*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!

Refrain

Hail, the heaven-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.

Refrain

Choir *What cheer?* – William Walton