

Christmas
with the
Giltspur Singers

Conductor:
Christopher Maxim

An evening of music and readings
in aid of
Cancer Research

Generously sponsored by
Lane & Partners

St Giles in the Fields
Monday, 13th December 2004 7.00pm

Welcome

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

Christmas – John Betjeman

Choir

Make we Joy now in this Fest – Walton

Dormi Jesu – Edmund Rubbra

Second Reading

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

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

While shepherds watched their flocks by night – Thomas Clark

Bethlehem Down – Peter Warlock

Past Three O'clock – English, arr. Charles Wood

Fourth Reading

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

All

The stars shone down to welcome Christ

On his first night on earth

And one star, brightest of them all,

Blazed for Messiah's birth.

No royal cradle welcomed him,

No robes of state were worn.

But in the outhouse of an inn

The Prince of Peace was born.

Around the fields of Bethlehem

Great angel voices rang

And startled shepherds left their sheep

To hear the words they sang.

'Good news, great joy and peace is come.

A child is born this night

Whose life and death will change the world

And you will see this sight.'

From Eastern lands the wise men came

To greet this newborn king,

Though shadows hung around the gifts

They brought to honour him.

Their dreams and visions drew them on
Past Herod's jealous eye.
Their pilgrimage of faith and hope
Led by that star-strewn sky.

So may we in this present time
Be constantly aware
That God still comes in human form
To those who trust and care.
May we, like shepherds, hear his voice:
Like wise men, travel far
To find our faith newborn again
Beneath that Christmas star.

INTERVAL
20 minutes

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

King John's Christmas – A. A. Milne

Choir

All this time – William Walton

God rest you merry, gentlemen – West Country traditional

Sixth Reading

All

See, amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the tender lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years.

Refrain:

*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 heights sublime,
Sits amid the cherubim.

Refrain

Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
What your joyful news today?
Wherefore have you left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?

Refrain

As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light;
Angels, singing peace on earth,
Told us of the Saviour's birth.

Refrain

Sacred infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss,
Down to such a world as this!

Refrain

Virgin mother, Mary blest,
By the joys that fill thy breast,
Pray for us, that we may prove
Worthy of the Saviour's love.

Refrain

Seventh Reading

Christmas Thank Yous – Mick Gower

Choir

What cheer? – William Walton

Shakespeare's Song of Winter

(from *Love's Labour's Lost*) – Christopher Maxim

Eighth 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