

**St Anne's Church
Kemnay**

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 8 December 2019, 4 pm

The Rev'd David Atkinson

The Cathedral Choral Scholars and Lay Clerks
of St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen

Director of Music and Organist: Professor Andrew Morrisson

Introduction

The service begins with a welcome and introduction

Hymn 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'

(Words: From *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum*, published in Germany in 1710, Tr John Mason Neale. Music: French traditional, adapted by Thomas Helmore, *Veni Emmanuel*; descant by Philip Ledger)

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lowly exile here,
Until the Son of God appear:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

- 2 O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

- 3 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here-;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

- 4 O come, thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

- 5 O come, O come, thou Lord of Might,
Who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

First Reading: Romans 12:1-2, 13:11-14

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Chorale: *Wachet Auf Ruft Uns die Stimme*, harmonised by J.S. Bach

Wake, O wake! with tidings thrilling
The watchmen all the air are filling,
Arise, Jerusalem, arise!
Midnight strikes! no more delaying,
'The hour has come!' we hear them saying.
Where are ye all, ye virgins wise?
The Bridegroom comes in sight,
Raise high your torches bright! Alleluia!
The wedding song swells loud and strong:
Go forth and join the festal throng.

Second Reading: St Nicholas

We know him best by his Dutch name, Santa Claus - this Saint so long and universally beloved by Christians of the East and West. He was a bishop of Myra, a city in southwest Turkey. He was a singularly holy child - on fast days and Fridays, he would refuse his mother's breast. After his wealthy parents died of plague, he set about doing good deeds. Three young women he knew

were about to enter lives of prostitution, for their poor father had no money to provide them with dowries. Secretly, by night, Nicholas threw three bags of gold into their window. (The ‘three balls,’ representing financial aid in time of need, became the emblem of the pawn-brokers’ guild.) In a time of famine, Nicholas provided the poor with miraculous bread - hence his patronage of bakers. During that same famine, our Saint (by now a bishop) visited a local butcher, and was served meat – much to his surprise. Suspecting the worst, Nicholas proceeded to his host’s cellar, there to find three barrels each containing a murdered boy in brine. Rest assured, the bishop lost no time in restoring them to life, and has been a Patron of children-in-a-pickle ever since. He was martyred in the Diocletian persecution in 305. His bones rest in the San Nicola basilica in Bari. A sweet-smelling, myrrh-like substance that oozes from the tomb accounts for Nicholas’s patronage of perfumers.

Patron Of Bakers, Barrel Makers, Bootblacks, Brewers, Brides, Children, Dockworkers, Fishermen, Merchants, Pawnbrokers, Perfumers, Prisoners, Greece, Russia, Sailors, Spinsters, And Travellers

Santa Claus is round and plump;
St. Nicholas is tall and thin.

Santa Claus wears a stocking cap;
St. Nicholas wears a bishop’s hat.

Santa Claus comes December 25th;
St. Nicholas comes December 6th.

Santa Claus is often seen in stores;
St. Nicholas is often seen in churches.

Santa Claus flies through the air—from the North Pole;
St. Nicholas walked the earth, caring for those in need.

Santa Claus, for some, replaces Jesus at Christmas;
St. Nicholas, for all, points to Jesus at Christmas.

Santa Claus isn’t bad;
St. Nicholas is just better!

Hymn: Lo he comes with clouds descending

(Words: Charles Wesley and John Cennick. Music: Adapted from John Wesley's *Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed, Helmsley*, descant by George Chittenden)

1 Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

2 Every eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold him,
Pierced and nailed him to the Tree,
Deeply wailing
Shall the true Messiah see.

3 Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers:
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

4 Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
High on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory:
Claim the kingdom for thine own:
O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

Third Reading: Advent Calendar (Rowan Williams)

He will come like last leaf's fall.
One night when the November wind
has flayed the trees to bone, and earth
wakes choking on the mould,
the soft shroud's folding.
He will come like the frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net
of alien, sword-set beauty.
He will come like dark.
One evening when the bursting red
December sun draws up the sheet
and penny-masks its eye to yield
the star-snowed fields of sky.
He will come, will come
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, like breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free.
He will come like child.

Hymn: Hark the Glad Sound, the Saviour Comes

(Words: Philip Doddridge, pastor of a non-conformist church in 18th century Northampton. Music: Thomas Ravenscroft, *Bristol*)

- 1 Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
The Saviour promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

- 2 He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
Enrich the humble poor.

4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With thy beloved Name.

Fourth Reading: Blackbird in Fulham (P.J. Kavanagh)

A John the Baptist bird which comes before
The light, chooses an aerial
Toothed like a garden rake, puts a prong at each shoulder,
Opens its beak and becomes a thurifer
Blessing dark above dank holes between the houses,
Sleek patios or rag-and-weed-choked messes.

Too aboriginal to notice these,
Its concentration is on resonance
Which excavates in sleepers memories
Long overgrown or expensively paved-over,
Of innocence unmawkish, love robust.
Its sole belief, that light will come at last.
The point is proved and, casual, it flies elsewhere
To sing more distantly, as though its tune
Is left behind imprinted on the air,
Still legible, though this the second carbon.
And puzzled wakers lie and listen hard
To something moving in their minds' backyard.

Carol: *The Truth from above* (traditional, music by Ralph Vaughan Williams)

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love:
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create,
The next thing which to you I'll tell,
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Then, after this, 'twas God's own choice
To place them both in Paradise,
There to remain, from evil free,
Except they ate of such a tree.

But they did eat, which was a sin,
And thus their ruin did begin.
Ruined themselves, both you and me,
And all of their posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose,
And so a promise soon did run,
That he would redeem us by his Son.

Fifth Reading: Advent (Stephen Leake)

Somewhere your star-struck choir sings
As the evening unpeels our histories.
The world is here again!
I feel the breathing of yuletide fires,
The ribboned refrains of seasoned candles
And bars of voices beyond St. Stephen's Wall.
The robin appears in a globe of joy
His carol negotiating wreaths of cloud
And tinsled cakes of snow.

We wing into the holy day
While the blinking eye of the gifting moon
Receives you at that vanishing point
On memory's path:
Outlived by love alone.

Hymn: Hark a thrilling voice is sounding

(Words: Latin 6th century, *Vox Clara Ecce Intonat*, Tr Edward Caswall, a Church of England priest who converted to Roman Catholicism. Music: William H. Monk, Merton, published in 1861 in *The Parish Choir*.)

1 Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding;
‘Christ is nigh,’ it seems to say;
‘Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day.’

2 Wakened by the solemn warning,
Let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all ill dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.

3 Lo, the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heaven;
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all to be forgiven.

4 That when next he comes with glory,
And the world is wrapped in fear,
With his mercy he may shield us,
And with words of love draw near.

5 Honour, glory, might, and blessing
To the Father and the Son,
With the everlasting Spirit,
While eternal ages run. Amen.

Sixth Reading: The Second Coming (William Butler Yeats)

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand:
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Anthem: *O Radiant Dawn* (James MacMillan, Antiphon for 21 December)

O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice.
Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
Isaiah had prophesied, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.”
O Radiant Dawn... Amen.

Seventh Reading: Advent 1955 (John Betjeman)

The Advent wind begins to stir
With sea-like sounds in our Scotch fir,
It's dark at breakfast, dark at tea,
And in between we only see
Clouds hurrying across the sky
And rain-wet roads the wind blows dry
And branches bending to the gale
Against great skies all silver pale
The world seems travelling into space,
And travelling at a faster pace
Than in the leisured summer weather
When we and it sit out together,
For now we feel the world spin round
On some momentous journey bound -
Journey to what? to whom? to where?
The Advent bells call out 'Prepare,
Your world is journeying to the birth
Of God made Man for us on earth.'

And how, in fact, do we prepare
The great day that waits us there -
For the twenty-fifth day of December,
The birth of Christ? For some it means
An interchange of hunting scenes
On coloured cards, And I remember
Last year I sent out twenty yards,
Laid end to end, of Christmas cards
To people that I scarcely know -
They'd sent a card to me, and so
I had to send one back. Oh dear!
Is this a form of Christmas cheer?
Or is it, which is less surprising,
My pride gone in for advertising?
The only cards that really count
Are that extremely small amount
From real friends who keep in touch
And are not rich but love us much

Some ways indeed are very odd
By which we hail the birth of God.

We raise the price of things in shops,
We give plain boxes fancy tops
And lines which traders cannot sell
Thus parcell'd go extremely well
We dole out bribes we call a present
To those to whom we must be pleasant
For business reasons. Our defence is
These bribes are charged against expenses
And bring relief in Income Tax
Enough of these unworthy cracks!
'The time draws near the birth of Christ'.
A present that cannot be priced
Given two thousand years ago
Yet if God had not given so
He still would be a distant stranger
And not the Baby in the manger.

Hymn: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

(Words: Charles Wesley. Music: John Stainer, *Cross of Jesus*)

1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

3 Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

Eighth Reading: Luke 21:25-36

Jesus said: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Hymn: On Jordan’s Bank

(Words: Charles Coffin, 18th century Rector of Paris University and a prolific author of Latin poems, *Jordanis oras praevia*, Tr John Chandler. Music: a chorale taken from *Musikalisches Handbuch der Geistlichen Melodien*, by Georg Wittwe, 1690)

- 1 On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Come then and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings from the King of kings.

- 2 Then cleansed be every Christian breast,
And furnished for so great a guest!
Yea, let us each his hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without thy grace our souls must fade,
And wither like a flower decayed.

4 Stretch forth thine hand to heal our sore,
And make us rise to fall no more;
Once more upon thy people shine,
And fill the world with love divine.

5 All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
Whose Advent sets thy people free,
Whom, with the Father, we adore,
And Holy Ghost, for evermore.

Carol: Benjamin Britten, *Hymn to the Virgin*,

Of one that is so fair and bright
Velut maris stella, [*Like a star of the sea*]
Brighter than the day is light,
Parens et puella: [*Both mother and maiden*]
I cry to thee, thou see to me,
Lady, pray thy Son for me,
Tam pia, [*so pure*]
That I may come to thee.
Maria! [*Mary*]

All this world was forlorn,
Eva peccatrice, [*because of Eve, a sinner*]
Till our Lord was yborn,
De te genetrix. [*through you, his mother*]
With ave it went away,
Darkest night, and comes the day
Salutis; [*of salvation*]
The well springeth out of thee.
Virtutis. [*of virtue*]

Lady, flower of everything,
Rosa sine spina, [*Rose without thorn*]
Thou bare Jesu, heaven's king,
Gratia divina: [*by divine grace*]
Of all thou bearest the prize,
Lady, queen of paradise
Electa: [*chosen*]
Maid mild, mother
es effecta. [*you are made*]

Prayers and Blessing

Hymn: Joy to the World

(Music: Isaac Watts, based on Psalm 98, Psalm 96, and Genesis 3. Music: Lowell Mason, a leading American composer of Church music)

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Saviour reigns;
Your sweetest songs employ,
While fields and streams and hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love.