



*24th December 2025*

*Crib Service*

*4.00pm*

I bring you good news of great joy:

*All* **a Saviour has been born to you. Alleluia.**

Unto us a child is born,

*All* **unto us a Son is given. Alleluia.**

## Welcome

Welcome to our Crib Service. This evening we hear the story of how Jesus, God's Son came to be born. We hear about the shepherds, the angels and the wise men and how they were overjoyed to see the baby Jesus.

This is the story of the very first Christmas which we celebrate together.

## Lighting the Advent Wreath

*The Advent Wreath is lit, and the Priest blesses the lit candles using the following words:*

Lord Jesus, light of the world, blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news; blessed is Mary, your mother and ours. Bless your Church preparing for Christmas; and bless us your children, who long for your coming.

*All* **Amen.**

## Carol: 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 poor and meek 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.

## The Christmas Story

### Mary and Joseph Make the Journey

Our story begins in a small town in Galilee named Nazareth. One day, God sent the angel Gabriel to deliver a message to a young woman engaged to a man named Joseph. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said she was to have a baby called Jesus. Now, Mary was just a young girl, and she was surprised at what the angel had said, but she was very brave. She told the angel, 'I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said come true.' At that time, Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. Everyone had to go to their hometowns to be registered. Joseph was a descendent of King David, so he and Mary went from Nazareth to register in Bethlehem.

*Mary and Joseph are brought to the crib during the carol.*

### Carol: Little Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey  
On the dusty road  
Got to keep on plodding onwards  
With your precious load.

Been a long time, little donkey  
Through the winter's night  
Don't give up now, little donkey  
Bethlehem's in sight.

*Ring out those bells tonight  
Bethlehem, Bethlehem  
Follow that star tonight  
Bethlehem, Bethlehem.*

Little donkey, little donkey  
Had a heavy day  
Little donkey  
Carry Mary safely on her way.

### **The Baby is Born & the Angel appears to the shepherds**

While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger; there was no place for them at the inn. The King of Heaven, Jesus, came to earth, born among animals and laid in a manger.

*The Baby Jesus is brought to the crib with other animals.*

There were some shepherds who were spending the night in the fields surrounding Bethlehem, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. The shepherds were afraid, but the angel said to them, 'Don't be afraid! I am here with good news of great joy. This very day in David's town your Saviour was born, Christ the Lord! You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.' Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God: 'Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.' When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger.

*The shepherds and the sheep are brought to the crib during the carol.*

### **Carol: See him lying on a bed of straw**

See him lying on a bed of straw,  
A draughty stable with an open door;  
Mary cradling the babe she bore;  
The Prince of glory is His name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,  
To see the Lord appear to men;  
Just as poor as was the stable then,  
The Prince of glory when He came.*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,  
Show where Jesus in the manger lies;  
Shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise  
To see the Saviour of the world.

Angels, sing again the song you sang,  
Bring God's glory to the heart of man;  
Sing that Bethlehem's little baby can Be  
salvation to the soul.

### **Wise Men Visit the Baby Jesus**

Just after Jesus was born, some wise men who studied stars came from the East to Jerusalem. They went to King Herod and asked 'Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east. We have come to worship him.' When King Herod heard about this, he was very upset, and sent the wise men to Bethlehem with these instructions: 'Go and make a search for the child; and when you find him, let me know, so that I too may go and worship him.' And so they left, and on their way, they saw the same star they had seen in the East. It stopped over the place where the child was, when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshiped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him. Then the wise men returned to their country by another road, since God had warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod.

*The wise men are brought to the crib during the singing of the carol.*

### **Carol: We Three Kings**

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

*O Star of wonder, star of night  
Star with royal beauty bright  
Westward leading, still proceeding  
Guide us to Thy perfect light*

Glorious now behold Him arise  
King and God and Sacrifice  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
Earth to heav'n replies

*O Star of wonder, star of night  
Star with royal beauty bright  
Westward leading, still proceeding  
Guide us to Thy perfect light*

### **Closing Talk**

*Given by Rowland Linder*

### **Blessing of the Crib**

As we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God our Father will bless this crib, and that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father, on this night your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation: bless this crib, which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth; may all who see it be strengthened in faith and receive the fullness of life he came to bring, who is alive and reigns for ever.

*All*   **Amen.**

**Carol: Away in a manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay;  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes:  
I love You, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky  
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus: I ask You to stay  
Close by me forever and love me, I pray;  
Bless all the dear children in Your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with You there.

**Blessing & Dismissal**

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of God almighty, ✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, go in the peace of Christ.

*All* **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Carol: We wish you a merry Christmas**

We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!  
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



From The Reverend. Julia Palmer,  
and the People of St Thomas the Apostle, Hanwell

We wish you and yours a very  
**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year**

