

Worship from King's College Chapel Podcasts

Season 3 Episode 10 Transcript

University of Aberdeen Carol Service 2021

Held in St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen

Voiceover This podcast is brought to you by the University of Aberdeen.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL Once in royal David's city

Rev Marylee Anderson Please do have a seat. A very warm welcome to the University of Aberdeen Carol service in this beautiful St Machar's Cathedral. It's great to be back here together. Just a gentle reminder that unless you are exempt, then masks have to be worn throughout the service, but please do join in with the carol singing and a special thank you to all of you who are here tonight without you and the people who are participating tonight, this carol service couldn't happen. I just want to express a few, a few thank yous to those who have been involved in making the service come together tonight. to all the Chaplaincy staff and helpers who worked very hard to put this service together, to St Machar's Cathedral staff for all your help and to the bell ringers for welcoming us here tonight. Those of you who are reading for us tonight and leading us in prayer and of course, to Reverend David Hutchison, who will be giving the meditation later. Our thanks as well to Andrew Forbes, who's Director of Music at Glasgow Cathedral, for playing the organ tonight this evening and also to our Hopkin conducting scholar Sam Scheibe, who has written a carol, especially for this evening's service. Sam is a postgraduate student of composition and has set the text to lauds by 16th century English poet George Gascoigne, and you'll hear the choir sing that carol just after the sixth lesson. And last but not least to our Director of Chapel and Ceremonial Music, Stuart Muir, and our wonderful Chapel Choir.

We gather together tonight from across this University community, students, staff, alumni and friends, we gather together tonight from across the city and indeed from across this world. We gather together as people of faith and no faith, people of hope and no hope, people of peace and no peace, we gather with anticipation and with a prayer, however vague and tenuous. That in spite of the absence of virgins and angels, wise men and shepherds, we might still be a witness to the birth of all love. We gather as ready as we'll ever be for this story of faith to be unfold. Reverend Sarah Brown is going to come and open our time together in prayer.

Rev Sarah Brown God of all time and place take us to Bethlehem tonight because we need a reminder of what love is. Take us to Bethlehem tonight to hear the angels sing and see the shepherds run. Take us to Bethlehem tonight to catch the wonder of the birth that turned the world upside down. Take us to Bethlehem tonight. Amen.

The First Lesson - Genesis Chapter 1, verses 1-5, 26-28

Ondrej Kucerák In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.

And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Thanks be to God

CAROL BY CHOIR

See him born

Traditional French Carol;
arr. Ian Higginson (b1959)

The Second Lesson - Isaiah Chapter 9, verses 2, 6, 7

Christianna Hellwig

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 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.

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Thanks be to God

CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear

The Third Lesson - St Luke Chapter 1, verses 26-38

Dr Robert Heimbürger In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God

CAROL BY CHOIR *Sussex Carol* Fraser Wilson (b1984)

The Fourth Lesson - St Matthew Chapter 1, verses 18-23

Allen Quinn Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',
which means, 'God is with us.'

Thanks be to God

CAROL O Little town of Bethlehem

The Fifth Lesson - St Luke Chapter 2, verses 1-16

Dr Fiona Jane Brown And it cam' tae pass aboot this time that the Emperor Augustus put forth a decree that a' the fowk in the hale o' the Roman Empire had tae be registered for tax reasons.

This wis fan Cyrenius wis Governor o' Syria an' it wis the first time that sic an event had ever been ordained . . . So - a'boday had tae ging awa' tae be registered, ilka body tae his ain hame toon, an' that included Joseph.

Noo Joseph belonged tae the stock an' the family o' Davit - an' sae it wis that he had tae ging tae Davit's toon which is ca'd Bethlehem - an' it wis frae Nazareth in Galilee far he wis bidin' an' yokit tae his carpentry work, that he traivelled wi' his espoused wife Mary - Mary that wis lang handfasted tae Joseph and expectin' his bairn at ony time, and it wis fan they were in Bethlehem that she cam' tae her time an' brocht forth her first-born son. An' she his tae sweal the bairn in orra kinda cloots an' hid tae bed him in a box for cattle fodder, an' this wis in a byre 'cause there wis nae room for them in the inn.

Now in that same pairt o' the country there were a puckly shepherds bidin' oot on the hill an' keepin' watch ower their flock at nicht. An' lo - all of a sudden - an angel o' the Lord appeared, an' the glory o' the Lord shone roon aboot them; an' oh, me! - they were uncoly terrified. But the angel comforted them. "Nae need tae be frichtit at a' I bring ye guild news - news o' unco joy for a'boday in the world. This day in Davit's toon o' Bethlehem a saviour his been born tae ye - Christ the Lord! An' the wye o't is that ye'll find the barinie in a byre, swealed in roch cloots an' lyin' in a boxie for feedin' the nowt".

Syne in a gliff a great muckle throng o' the airmies o' Heaven were made manifest aside the angel, giein' laud an' praise tae God an' proclaimin':

"Glory tae God in the hicht o' Heaven.

And, on the Earth, peace - goodwill tae a'boday".

Fan the angels vanished awa back tae heaven the shepherds hid richt claik amang een anither and agreed: "Richt enough - we'll need tae gang ower-bye tae Bethlehem an' see fit this a' about . . . see fit the Lord's tryin' tae tell us".

So - aff they set, knypin' ower tae Bethlehem an' they did find Mary and Joseph there and the new-born bairnie lying in his manger.

Thanks be to God

CAROL BY CHOIR

Nou lat us sing

John Wedderburn –

Gude and Godlie Ballatis (1957)

CAROL

Angels from the realms of glory

The Sixth Lesson - Matthew 2, verses 1-12

Tracey Slaven In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently

for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Amen

CAROL BY CHOIR

Brighter Sun

text: George Gascoigne (1525-1577)

Music: Sam Scheibe (b1999)

Rev David Hutchison Good evening. Before I became a University Chaplain I was a Church of Scotland minister in an area to the south of this city called Torry. I don't think the problem was simply within Torry, but I was troubled by the view of children in the church. Kids were so often viewed as the entertainment for the adults and the children's address might as well have been called the comedy hour, it was a time for laughing not just with the children but at the children, and that troubled me. I wanted to stress that their size was not a reflection of their importance to the church. Their smallness belied their value, and they were as vital, each child was as vital to the church as any adult. And so I took my life in my hands and decided I would give a children's address about small things having a big impact. So I took out my little bag of tricks and I brought out a match, a match so small but how much damage could that do? I wanted to encourage the children to have a go but realised that if they all ran home and started lighting matches around the house I probably would have been marched out of Torry quick as you like. So ever since I've neglected the match from my bag of tricks, I then took out a key and I told the children that a key, a simple key, barely bigger than my finger could unlock the door of a mansion with all its treasures. And then I took out a seed, a tiny tiny wee seed, the poor kids were confused. "What's he holding? I can't even see anything." I carried a seed and I said, "This seed could grow into a tree bearing fruit, bearing shelter, bearing I mean, at its old age it would give us timber, it would give us paper." And then lastly I took out a pen and I said, "listen, boys and girls, you will discover in your lifetime the wonders, whether it was a pen, whether it was a quill, but the wonders of the written word." I wanted to stress that size was not to be despised when there is a lack of it. And of course, we're here tonight to celebrate something very, very small. A baby born to an unknown couple, who on earth had heard of Mary before now, who on earth had heard of Joseph. An unknown couple in Nazareth. A baby, born not just to an unknown couple but in a horrendous situation, a blessed stable, a barn full of straw and smells and goodness knows what. A baby born as every baby before and since; quite weak, quite helpless, quite vulnerable, quite frail. And this child, this seemingly inconsequential event, this child was and remains, according to Isaiah, 'The Prince of Peace', according to Matthew, 'Emmanuel', meaning God with us. A baby, God with us. And then Luke's version, "To you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is the Messiah, the Lord." From such small, almost insignificant beginnings, peace is born, hope springs, a life, new life is born.

We know a match can burn 10000 trees. We know a key, what it can do. We know a seed can spring to life. We know the wonders that can flow from a pen. And now here in our story this evening, we have another miracle; Emmanuel, God with us. Do not be fooled, Christmas is not just for kids, Christmas is neither just for entertainment. For the size of the original miracle made the skies it's importance.

There is a lovely lovely quote, and I shouldn't confess amongst University folks that I don't know where it came from. "They who speak the truth have no need to shout." God was not shouting that evening in Bethlehem. With an unknown couple, in a blessed stable, that wasn't shouting. But I believe, it is a truth that all of us can rejoice in this evening. The miraculous but tiny birth in the stable with animals around. The scale of the miracle has no bearing on the scale of the impact and we are all here, this evening, to enjoy the enduring truth. Emmanuel, God with us, "For unto us a child is born, a son is given, and he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God and Prince of Peace."

God bless you all, and have a wonderful Christmas time. Amen.

CAROL BY CHOIR

Silent Night

Franz Grubel (1787-1863);
arr. Bob Chilcott (b1955)

Fr Emmet O'Dowd Let us pray. O God, who gladden us year by year as we await in hope for our redemption. Grant that just as we joyfully welcome the birth of your only begotten son as our redeemer, we may also merit to face him confidently when he comes again, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God, forever and ever. Amen.

And at the Saviour's command and formed by the words he has given us, we dare to say.

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

CAROL

O come, all ye faithful

The Seventh Lesson - John Chapter One, verses 1-14

Simon Bains In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God

CAROL BY CHOIR

Sir Christèmas

William Matthias (1934-1993)

CAROL

Hark! the herald angels sing

Rev Marylee Anderson May you, throughout this advent season and beyond follow where the spirit of hope leads you, listen as the child of peace cries to you, rejoice as the love of God embraces you. And go now with hope, peace and love in your hearts. And the blessing of God, Creator, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you this night and always. Amen.

RECESSIONAL

Choral Prelude on *In dulci jubilo*, BWV 729 J S Bach (1685-1750)

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