

# Carol Service

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Date: 17 December 2023

Preacher: Andrew Wingfield

[0:00] .

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[1:56] We'll be right back.

So it's lovely to see you, lovely to see those who are joining us online as well. We thank you for joining us this morning. So we've come this morning to sing carols.

We're going to listen to some songs. We have readings to listen to and prayers. And Andrew, our pastor, is going to speak to us from God's word. We've just watched a video which posed us the question, are you ready?

Are you ready for Christmas? So I wonder what goes through your heart, your minds. What does that make you think of? Ah, I haven't wrapped up all my presents. Oh, I haven't even bought all my presents.

I haven't delivered all the cards. I haven't bought the food ready for the Christmas meal. I haven't put up all the decorations. These are all important ways that we celebrate Christmas.

[3:19] But the question goes deeper than that. We put aside the practical things. And the question is, are you ready? Are you ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus?

Are you ready to celebrate the coming of the newborn king, Emmanuel, God with us? To receive him into your hearts, to welcome him into your life, as he calls you to do.

Are you ready to rediscover the events that happened just over 2,000 years ago? Are you ready to be part of that story, to see it with fresh eyes and renewed hope?

This story that changes everything. Let's pray. Father God, we gather today to hear the joyful message brought by angels.

And to reflect on the birth of Jesus Christ. We come to share in this profound mystery of Christmas.

[4:31] We come to celebrate, to give thanks. And we come to bow in humble adoration before your throne. Fill our hearts with praise as we sing, as we listen to your word.

Open our hearts to you, Lord Jesus, God with us. Let us see you with fresh eyes and renewed hope today.

You came from the Father, full of grace and truth. Reveal to us who you are, so we can begin to see the world in the light of understanding which you give.

This Christmas, let us accept the invitation to embrace this story that changes everything. And be willing to be transformed by you.

Amen. We come to sing God's praise. We come to worship the newborn king. Let us stand to sing. Angels from the realms of glory.

[5:38] Angels from the realms of glory.

Angels from the realms of glory. We come to worship.

We come to a court. futurovi■■ folk!

God bless you.

God bless you.

[7:25] God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. Christ the new home King. Saints before the halls repenting, watching how we know and fear.

Suddenly the Lord is sent in, in his temple shaming. Love and worship, Christ the new home King. Love and worship, worship Christ the new home King.

Grace, if you want to come up and help me.

[9:08] John 3, 16 says this, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

As we light our fourth Advent candle today, we remember God's amazing love for us. The love that came to earth in the form of Jesus Christ. The unconditional love that is there as a gift for anyone who chooses to believe.

The love that as Christians we can shine out to the world. Grace is going to help light the candle and then she's going to pray. So, come around this side, Grace. Oh, you hear that. Oh, you hear that.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, as we light the fourth candle of this Advent wreath, we are reminded of your boundless love. May the light of this candle shine forth as a symbol of the love you have shown us through your Son, Jesus Christ.

[10:54] We fill your heart with love and help us to love one another as you have loved us. Amen. Amen. Reading today is from Isaiah chapter 9.

The people walking in darkness have seen great light. On those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders, and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

the zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. Thank you.

Thank you.

[12:58] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[15:52] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. and a well-equipped team of fully qualified midwives.

Come to a manger. Come and see a mother whose nine months of pregnancy has ended in a cross-country census trip with no prearranged comfortable accommodation just in case the baby comes at a bad time.

Emperor Augustus had given orders for the names of all the people in the Roman Empire to be listed in record books. Everyone had to go to their own hometown to be listed.

For Joseph, along with his heavily pregnant fiancée Mary, that meant leaving Nazareth and trekking to Bethlehem. Bethlehem was the hometown of King David and it wouldn't be long before it hosted the birth of an even greater king.

This would be no easy birth though, certainly not the birth we would expect a king to have. Alone and exhausted, unable to find room to stay in the inn, Mary and Joseph find shelter amongst the animals.

[17:11] Mary gives birth to a son, wrapping him and laying him on a bed of hay. The king's first bed. No scales to weigh the pounds and ounces, no family rushing to discover if he has his father's eyes.

Just a couple, miles from home, eagerly anticipating who their baby would become. A little town of Bethlehem.

And during this time, any children are welcome to leave to go to activity groups. A little town of Bethlehem.

Obed-then't even how still we see thee lie. Above nighting and dreamless thing the silence does divide.

Yet in the dark streets shineth the everlasting light. Thou ups and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

[19:01] O morning stars together, birthday, the holy birth.

And praise they sing to God the King and his good men on earth. The Christ is born of Mary and now the Lord above.

God holds us thee, the angels be careful, child, but dreams are.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is gained.

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his hand.

[20:02] No weary in his coming, but in his world of sin.

When these souls will receive him, till the dear Christ enters in.

The holy child of Bethlehem, he said to us, we pray.

God's count us in and entering, he holy must today. We pray to the Christmas day, and make our tidings still.

O come to us, the white river, the holy man you are.

[21:05] This was a baby that people had waited centuries to see.

And it is maybe a little odd for us today to hear that shepherds were the first people chosen to lay eyes on the newborn king. But here they were, outcasts in society, working in demanding and lonely conditions.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to bring them such unexpected news. Terrified, they hid their eyes as the angel declared, Don't be afraid. I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy.

This very day, in King David's hometown, a saviour was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him wrapped and lying in a bed of hay.

Suddenly, many other angels appeared, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest.

Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God.

[22:21] After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about. They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.

They repeated what the angels had declared about him. Everyone listened and was surprised, but Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant.

The shepherds were not the only ones chosen for this great honour. Wise men from the east also saw Jesus' star in the night sky and rushed to Jerusalem to ask King Herod where the king of the Jews was due to be born, since they were keen to go and worship him.

Herod's advisors informed him that the prophets had said that Bethlehem was the place, exactly where Jesus had just been born. And so the king told them, Go and search carefully for the child.

Then, let me know where he is, so that I can come and worship him too. The wise men followed the star ahead of them, and it guided them to the place where Jesus lay.

[23:34] They were thrilled and excited to discover the king, and knelt before this little baby to worship him. A baby whose first bed was merely a pile of hay was now being treated like a true king, as the wise men offered him gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Later, in a dream, they were warned not to return to Herod, and so they went back home by another road, wandering at the sights they had seen.

Oh, dear. Go oh, dear. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[26:09] Amen. Amen. Amen. Have you■■■.

Amen. Okay, thank you. Is it the turkey? If you're in my family, what we're more interested about is the pigs in blankets. I don't know if that applies to any of you.

Maybe you're not so into the meat. Maybe for you, what really makes Christmas, maybe you're more of a vegetable person, maybe it's these guys. Is it the Brussels sprouts? I know that's quite a divisive issue, so you might love it or hate it on that one.

Maybe it's not about the food for you. Maybe for you, what really makes it Christmas is the favourite Christmas movie. Here are a couple of my favourites. I'm sure you've got favourites in your household that you watch every year.

Is that what makes it Christmas for you? Maybe it's about the time together. Maybe it's playing a family board game. Maybe it's the Christmas tree, beautifully decorated and gathering round that tree with presents underneath.

[27:21] Or maybe for you, it's putting the Christmas cracker. Maybe that's what really makes it Christmas for you. What is it that really makes it Christmas? What's the essential thing? I suppose the obvious answer you would expect to hear from me in the context of a carol service at a church in which we've been singing about and hearing about the birth of Jesus is that it wouldn't be Christmas without Jesus.

But let's face it. The reality in this country is that that is a minority view. And the majority of people who celebrate Christmas this year could have everything that they expect Christmas to be. The turkey, the movie, the Christmas tree, the family gathering without any reference to Jesus. Or could they? Well, I'd like us to test that idea.

What if the account that we've heard this morning of Jesus being born in Bethlehem a little over 2,000 years ago, what if that didn't happen? I want to suggest to you that if that didn't happen, the world that we live in would be a very different place today.

Because the culture that we live in and the values that we collectively hold have been profoundly shaped by the movement that sprung out of the life of that baby who was born in Bethlehem.

[28:43] The author Glenn Scrivener says, If you're a 21st century Westerner, whether you've ever stepped foot inside a church building, whether you consider yourself a pagan or humanist or atheist, Christianity is the water in which you swim.

What he means is that in so many aspects of our life, so many aspects of our life and things that we value, so many of them exist because of the revolution that sparked from the birth and life and death of Jesus.

Let me give you some examples. If you've been taught how to read, if you've ever voted in an election for a leader, if you've ever received medical care in a doctor's surgery or a hospital, if you've had access to a school or workplace or public building, no matter your gender, colour, sexuality or social class, if you've felt a sense of injustice at news reports of civilians who've been killed or injured in conflicts and wars around the world, if you have the freedom to choose how you celebrate this Christmas, if any of those statements apply, then you have gained something from the revolution which was begun by Jesus Christ.

Let me just dig into a couple of those ideas. Let's start with the idea of equality. It's been interesting in recent days following the COVID inquiry, observing politicians and other experts being questioned about decisions that they made, which were based on judgments about the value of human life.

And these questions are being asked because we believe in equality, in the sense that no one person is more valuable than another because they have more money or more strength or more intelligence.

[30:31] Everyone is equal in having the same rights to healthcare and basic needs, no matter their race, religion, gender and so on. However, back through history in pre-Christian and non-Christian cultures, this notion of equality would have seemed a crazy idea.

The philosopher Plato and his students are considered the fathers of Western philosophy. But Plato would be baffled by the assumption we hold today that all lives are valuable.

It was obvious to him that all lives were of unequal value. He writes, Nature herself intimates that it is just for the better to have more than the worse, the more powerful than the weaker.

Justice consists in the superior ruling over and having more than the inferior. His view was shared by most people in history up to that point. The view that there were superior races, a superior sex and superior classes.

And weaker or less superior people were simply expendable. Plato wrote about children that in order to be worth rearing, children must be malleable, disposed to virtue and physically fit.

[31:49] He states that if they did not prove themselves worthy, parents would properly dispose of them in secret so that no one will know what has become of them. This was common practice in the time of Plato.

And it's shocking for us to hear today. Because our moral imperative is to protect the weak, not eliminate them. But down through history, the vast majority of cultures have considered that we're all better off without the weak.

And yet we now live in a world where we have underlying moral assumptions woven into the fabric of our society about the value of human life, about human rights, about equality and the imperative to protect the weak.

How did this change? Where has our modern belief in equality and human value come from? Well, it's not from science, although science has taught us a great deal.

Science can tell us a lot. It can tell us a lot about what's physical, what's natural. It can tell us that we share 40% of our DNA with bananas. It can tell us the chemical composition of our bodies.

[32:55] But based on that, we'd only be worth a few pounds each in terms of our raw chemical ingredients. Science doesn't tell us anything about our equal status in relation to each other.

And yet we all recognize that every human has value that transcends their material makeup or their economic usefulness. This idea of the value of a human has to have come from outside of us.

And if you look back, you can trace it back to the biblical account of a loving God who created humans in his image for a relationship with him.

That's why we have this idea of being equally valuable, because we're equally valuable to God. The Bible shows us that humans tragically rebelled against the creator God, breaking their relationship with him, and chaos then ensued.

But the creator God, who values humans so much, became one to save us. That's the Christian story. That's the Christmas story. God who loves us so much that he would lower himself to be born as one of us, to live as one of us, and to die for us, to restore our relationship with God the Father.

[34:12] John's Gospel tells us, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. This is where we see the word, the idea, the message of who God is, and our value in God's eyes.

We see this idea or this ideal fuse with the real, the flesh, the human, the physical, in the person of Jesus. While natural selection means survival of the fittest and sacrifice of the weakest or least worthy, Christianity is about the sacrifice of the fittest, the most worthy, Jesus Christ, for the survival of the weakest, the least worthy, us.

Jesus taught and demonstrated in his life and in his death the inherent value of every human. Now we may not recognize it, but this Christian idea of every human having equal value, made in the image of God, is right at the root of our modern view of the world.

Since the birth and life and death of Jesus onwards, previously held assumptions have been replaced with a moral framework which is modeled on his life and death and teaching.

So back to our original question, it wouldn't be Christmas without dot, dot, dot, dot. And if we took Jesus out of history, the fact that it wouldn't be Christmas would actually be the least of our concerns.

[35:42] Because without Jesus, it wouldn't be what we know and cherish as Western civilization. And we wouldn't have human rights. And we wouldn't have equality.

And we wouldn't have healthcare for everyone. And we wouldn't have democracy. In other words, it wouldn't be the world as we know it, with all the values that we take for granted, without Jesus.

The trouble is, most of the time, we don't realize where our moral values have come from. We don't recognize the water that we're swimming in. In 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed by the founders of the United States of America.

It stated, I should have given that in an American accent, but it's not very good.

Now, the interesting historical caveat around that document is that this isn't what it said in the original draft. Thomas Jefferson, its author, originally wrote, We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable.

[37:02] Sacred and undeniable. But he sent his draft to Benjamin Franklin, asking him to review the draft. Now, you can see pictures of

this online, of the original handwritten documents with the corrections and with the edits.

See, Franklin, among other edits, he put a line through sacred and undeniable, and he replaced it with self-evidence. Now, on the surface, it's just a minor change of language.

But this is a powerful metaphor of what the West has done, which is to take hold of truths which are essentially sacred in nature. They're grounded not in reason, but in a Christian worldview.

Jefferson was right. He said, These are sacred truths. They're not self-evident at all. But by the time Franklin got hold of his draft, these ideas had been so thoroughly baked into Western society that he could say, self-evident, and everyone said, Yeah, that sounds about right.

And this is one illustration of the way in which our modern Western society has said, We'll keep the Christian assumptions, but we're going to gradually try and remove the foundations that got us here.

[38:08] It's like the child on Christmas Day, when in the frenzy of unwrapping presents, they unwrap a wonderful toy, and they spend the rest of the Christmas holidays playing with this amazing toy.

But they have no idea, and the parents have no idea, who gave it to them, because the gift tag has been lost in all the mess of the wrapping paper. Now, you don't have to take my word for it.

You can read the secular historian, Tom Holland, who explains in his best-selling book, Dominion, that our most cherished modern values depend on Jesus Christ.

He explains that throughout history, it was only as Christianity spread that these beliefs in human equality and rights became generally accepted. The ancient Greeks and Romans would have laughed at them.

Now, even if historians agree that our moral building blocks came to us from Christianity, it's very tempting to us to think these days that we can keep these values that we cherish, while removing the claims about Jesus himself.

[39:10] We like to think that we can build a moral high tower without God. But it's like playing Jenga, taking blocks out of the bottom of the tower to make it higher and higher.

Sooner or later, the Jenga tower collapses. If we ignore the foundations of our moral fabric, we don't just lose our morality, we lose our sense of meaning. And I would encourage you to reflect on this, this Christmas.

You may not believe in God, but I'm going to guess that you believe in equality and human rights and care for the weakest in society. If the birth and life and death of this one man has had such a powerful transforming impact on our world and on our culture, could it also transform your life?

That has been my story. That's my experience. Getting to know Jesus for myself, the man who's transformed the course of history, has given my life meaning and purpose and made sense of the world around me and given me a hope for the future.

I would commend you to discover Jesus for yourself this Christmas. Please come and talk to me afterwards. Talk to any of our leaders. Talk to the person that you came with.

[40:24] We'd also love to invite you to a great opportunity to discuss and explore the claims of Jesus on a short course we're running in the new year called Christianity Explored. Everyone is welcome and it's a great place to ask whatever questions that you have about what Christians believe in a very friendly and informal environment.

You can sign up online or do please take one of these flyers from the table by the door on your way out. Thank you for listening.

In a moment, the choir are going to sing to us a carol called The Truth From Above. It's not a carol that mentions holly and all the trimmings of Christmas, but it mentions the truth, the biblical history that has transformed our culture and history from the creation of the world, God creating humans in his image, humans rebelling against God and God acting to save us by sending Jesus.

Before the choir sing to us, let me pray. Dear God, we thank you for the birth of your son Jesus. For his life and for his sacrificial death and the way that has changed the course of history.

We pray that you would help us to understand how Jesus' life and death transformed our culture and our values. And we pray that you would help us to understand how Jesus can transform our lives today.

[41:49] We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. 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 we do relate is that God did not create The next thing which to you will tell Our God was made with him to dwell In paradise all evil three Except they ate of such a tree But those they ruined it begin And brought us on for the power of sin

Thus we were heirs to endless woes Till God the Lord did interpose For so a promise soon did run That he would redeem us by his Son And that this season of the year A blessed Redeemer did appear He did live and did it preach And many thousands he did teach Must he in love to us today To show us how we must be saved And if he wants to know the way Be pleased to hear what he did say God grant to all within this place True saving faith That special grace Which to his people doth belong And thus I close my Christmas song Amen Amen

[45:18] Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright.

Round yon virgin, my proud child, holy infant so tender and mild.

Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the skies.

Glory, strength of heaven afar, heavenly home, sing hallelujah.

[46:46] Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's your light.

Legend, peace, my glory face. With the dawn of saving grace.

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

The absence of light.

[48:18] The loss of direction. No frame of reference. The presence of fear and uncertainty.

Void. And then, a light. A light. It starts as a flicker.

It's not glaring for all to see. But it's a light nonetheless. Beautiful and mysterious. It's a light.

Beautiful and mysterious. Helping us to see. Guiding us. Warming us. Comforting us. Comforting us.

It is growing. It is shining. It is shining brighter now. In one timeless moment, something of heaven is birthed through the tears of a teenage girl.

[49:27] And the cry of a newborn baby king. All of heaven is perched at the edge of the sky. Watching. Waiting. God is sending the light of heaven into the dark of this world.

To the young. To the old. To the weak. To the strong. To the lost. To the found. He is coming to us. He is walking with us. He is dying for us.

He is living in us.

Our unthinkable darkness is being shattered by unbearable light. and we gather to see, to view with fresh eyes again, the light that all the darkness in the world cannot ever extinguish.

Jesus is the light of the world. This baby was the promised king.

[51:03] This baby was one with God. This baby was God. From the very beginning, this baby, the word of life, was with God, and nothing was made without him.

Everything that was created received its life from him. He has shone his light into this dark world, and the darkness has never been able to put it out.

A man named Simeon was living in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' birth, and he loved and trusted God, waiting for him to save the people of Israel.

God's spirit had promised him that he would not die until he had seen Christ the Lord. Imagine his astonishment and joy when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple.

Simeon took the baby in his arms and praised God, saying, Lord, I am your servant, and now I can die in peace, because you have kept your promise to me.

[52:14] With my own eyes I have seen what you have done to save your people and all foreign nations. Your mighty power is a light for all the nations, and it will bring honor to your people Israel.

He spoke of the light and power that had been promised, the same light that had shone in the darkness through all eternity.

But he made it clear to Mary that Jesus would not be received by everyone as he deserved. He told her, This child of yours will cause many people in Israel to fall and others to stand.

Jesus would divide people of all nations, for not all people would see him for who he is. Not all people would accept the light.

Not all people would welcome the word. Even though this word gave life to the world, gave life to the people of the world, many would not recognize, welcome, or accept him.

[53:23] Yet some people would accept him and put their faith in him. And to those he would give the right to become the children of God.

Not through anything they had done, but through the loving mercy of their heavenly father. The word has come, and we have seen his true glory, the glory of the only son of the father.

A glory that shines today, as it has shone through all eternity. From this son, all the kindness and truth of God has come down to us.

God's light and God's word is with us. Let's come to God in prayer.

Almighty God, our heavenly father, in this season, when every heart should be happy and light, many are struggling with the heaviness of life, burdens that steal the joy from our Christmas celebrations.

[54:45] We sing the wonderful message of God coming to dwell with us, his heavenly light, beautiful and mysterious, shining into the darkness of this world in the person of Jesus.

And yet we confess that our hearts are too often filled with worry, fear, despair, hopelessness, unbelief.

Where darkness prevails, shine your true light, we pray. The light which all the darkness in the world cannot ever extinguish.

The light which brings peace, joy, hope, and love. This Christmas, make it real in our hearts. Thank you for the gift of Jesus, God with us, the word made flesh.

Forgive us for forgetting that your love never changes, never fades, and that you never abandon the purpose for which you came, to save us from our sinful condition.

[55:54] And to give us life eternal, the joy of relationship with a holy God. Your birth, and your death, sealed your promise to us forever.

We pray for those dealing with financial worries, unemployment, addictions, sickness, pain, and frustrations of all kinds.

for those who are experiencing bereavement and loss this Christmas. For those whose hearts are battered by sorrow or broken relationships.

For those whose lives know only conflict and confusion. For those whose very existence has been shattered by the horrors of war.

Precious Savior, draw them close to you. Let them know you. You are still the same Jesus, the one sent by a heavenly Father, who offered not condemnation for our sins, but love and forgiveness.

[57:06] You have promised rest for the weary, peace for the anxious, hope for those in despair, and acceptance for the brokenhearted, not just at Christmas, but every day of the year.

Show us again the beauty of that holy night so many centuries ago. We cry out for a fresh filling and a new awareness of who you are.

We choose by faith to make the good news of great joy a reality in our own lives so others can see us pointing to you this Christmas. We know one day that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that you are Lord.

And yet, we also know that peace on earth can only come when human hearts find peace with you. You are no longer a baby in the manger.

You are Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and we worship you, Lord Jesus, this Christmas and always. Amen.

[58:16] We have a few notices before we sing again. Our Christmas offering this year is going to Embrace, which is a local charity partnering with Christians in the Middle East as they work to transform lives and restore the dignity of the most excluded and marginalized

communities, regardless of race or religion.

Their partners are working to bring support to the people most impacted by the current crisis, and this includes running psychological interventions for children and mothers, as well as fun activities for children to help alleviate the psychological pressure they have as a result of their traumatic experiences.

They distribute hygiene kits and organize health awareness sessions, and they're providing primary health care in distributing medicines at their RAFA clinic.

Please consider giving an online donation as your expression of thankfulness this Christmas. Our Christmas services are next Sunday.

There is no in-person service here in the morning on the 24th. There is an online service which you can access on the website and YouTube, and that will start at 10.15.

[59:42] You can watch it after. In the afternoon, we have our Christingle service at 4 o'clock. You need to book online for this, and its places are going fast, so if you want to come, please make sure you've booked online.

And also, we welcome you to our Christmas Day celebration, which will be on Monday, the 25th of December, at 10.15. No need to book online for this one.

Just come along. Thank you. After this service, there will be refreshments down in the main hall, and we hope you will be able to join us and spend some time together talking then.

We're going to sing our final song now. Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. Glory to a new young King. He's on earth and mercy mild, God has sinners reconciled.

[61:01] Joyful all the nations rise, Joyful triumph of the skies, Great and glory to the King.

Christ is born and path to Him. God, the Herald Angels Sing. God, the Herald Angels Sing. How He's to the new young King.

Christ by God is there by God. Christ the everlasting Lord. Christ the everlasting Lord.

He's eternal Lord. Christ the everlasting Lord. Christ the everlasting Lord. ■ Hail the heaven of peace, hail the Son of righteousness.

Light and light to all He brings, brings with healing in His wings. While He lays His glory high, all that blood will fall in time.

[62:47] Born to raise His sons of earth, born to hear His second world. Father, Lord, make you sing, glory to the newborn King.

And a final blessing. This Christmas, as you celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus, whose coming changes everything, may you open your heart anew to receive His grace and truth and be transformed by His presence within.

May the blessing of His peace rest upon you. May the blessing of His joy fill you. May the blessing of His love flow out through you. And may you be filled with thanks and praise to our Heavenly Father who loved the world enough to send the greatest gift, His Son, so that you might truly know the joy of Christmas.

Amen. Thank you. Amen.