

St Stephen's, Canonbury
Online Carol Service

Readings

Albert

Isaiah and Micah foretell the birth of the Messiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. You have given them great joy, Lord; you have made them happy. They rejoice in what you have done, as people rejoice when they harvest their corn or when they divide captured wealth. For you have broken the yoke that burdened them and the rod that beat their shoulders. You have defeated the nation that oppressed and exploited your people, just as you defeated the army of Midian long ago. The boots of the invading army and all their bloodstained clothing will be destroyed by fire.

Jess

A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. He will be called, "Wonderful Counsellor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace." His royal power will continue to grow; his kingdom will always be at peace. He will rule as King David's successor, basing his power on right and justice, from now until the end of time. The Lord Almighty is determined to do all this.

Isabel

The Lord says, "Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are one of the smallest towns in Judah, but out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family line goes back to ancient times." So the Lord will abandon his people to their enemies until the woman who is to give birth has her son. Then his fellow-countrymen who are in exile will be reunited with their own people. When he comes, he will rule his people with the strength that comes from the Lord and with the majesty of the Lord God himself. His people will live in safety because people all over the earth will acknowledge his greatness, and he will bring peace.

Emily

The angel Gabriel visits Mary

In the sixth month God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. The girl's name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!" Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He

will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end!"

Nina

Mary said to the angel, "I am only young. How, then, can this be?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do." "I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Jasmin

Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth

Soon afterwards Mary got ready and hurried off to a town in the hill-country of Judaea. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said in a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord's mother comes to visit me? For as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby within me jumped with gladness. How happy you are to believe that the Lord's message to you will come true!"

Isla

Mary said,
"My heart praises the Lord;
my soul is glad because of God my Saviour,
for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!
From now on all people will call me happy,
because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me. His name is holy;
from one generation to another he shows mercy to those who honour him.
He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans.
He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands.
He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors, and has come to the help of his servant Israel.
He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham and to all his descendants for ever!"
Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth and then went back home.

Colin

Jesus is born

This was how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately. While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of

David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus-because he will save his people from their sins."

Now all this happened in order to make what the Lord had said through the prophet come true,

"A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and he will be called Immanuel" (which means, "God is with us").

So when Joseph woke up, he married Mary, as the angel of the Lord had told him to

Rebecca

At that time the Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own town. Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judaea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger- there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

Eddy

The visit of the shepherds

There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Saviour was born-Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth 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 heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!"

Sara

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, which the Lord has told us." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. The shepherds

went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

Rhianna

The visit of the Magi

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judaea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterwards, some men who studied the stars came from the east to Jerusalem 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, and we have come to worship him." When King Herod heard about this, he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, "Where will the Messiah be born?" "In the town of Bethlehem in Judaea," they answered. "For this is what the prophet wrote: 'Bethlehem in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least of the leading cities of Judah; for from you will come a leader who will guide my people Israel.' "

Georgie

So Herod called the visitors from the east to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions:

"Go and make a careful 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. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshipped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him. Then they returned to their country by another road, since God had warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod.

Albert

Saint John reveals the mystery of the incarnation

Before the world was created, the Word already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God. From the very beginning the Word was with God. Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

Jess

God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. He himself was not the light;

he came to tell about the light. This was the real light- the light that comes into the world and shines on all mankind.

Isabel

The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him. He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father. The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.