



Saint Matthew-in-the-City

Christmas, Midnight 2012

"The moment God is figured out with nice neat lines and definitions, we are no longer dealing with God."

Rob Bell

Introit

The Truth from above

Ralf Vaughan Williams 1872-1958

Processional Hymn

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to all
from heaven's all gracious King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with tasks of love and life
the world has laboured long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of song;
and folk, at war with folk, hear not
the love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, set forth Christ's life,
and hear the angels sing.

For lo! The days are hastening on,
by prophet bards foretold,
when with the ever-circling years
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and all the world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

*Words: Anon., English 17th cent.
Music: Noel, English trad. melody
adapted by Arthur Sullivan 1842-1900*

Welcome

Liturgist "For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was half spent, thy all-powerful Love leaped from heaven, from the royal throne."

Wisdom of Solomon 18:14-15, adapted

Of all the wonders in this universe,
none is as precious or mysterious as a baby.
Tonight we remember the birth of Jesus,
child of promise, born in a stable.
May the power of his life
empower our lives in order
to give, to love and to hope. **Amen.**

We light this Christ candle – to remember the small and fragile ones who can change the world.

Together we pray

In Jesus the divine vision of joy, justice, and love has been declared. May we bring that vision to birth. Amen.

Please be seated

The First Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 9:2-7

Let us wait

And hope in God.

The Anthem

*"And there were shepherds" and "Break forth"
from Christmas Oratorio*

J. S. Bach 1685-1750

Gradual Hymn

Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright;
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born."

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from Thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

Words: Josef Mohr 1792-1848
Music: Melody by Franz X. Gruber 1787-1863

The Gospel

Hear the Gospel of Christ according to Luke,
chapter two, beginning at verse one.



Shine on our path - ways.

Luke 2:1-14

This is the Gospel of Christ.



May we hear wis - dom.

The Sermon

The Reflection

Virga Jesse Anton Bruckner 1824-96

The Prayers of the People

Let us be still and mindful of the world, the Church,
this nation, our communities, and ourselves.

To the words Love called God

We respond Be born in us tonight.

The Peace

Please stand for the Greeting of Peace

Peace be with us all.

With justice comes peace.

Let us build peace together

And change our world.

Please turn and greet those around you with peace

Offertory Hymn

[If you wish to make a donation, please use the
collection box at the rear of the church at the
conclusion of the service.]

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him
born the king of Angels:

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

True God of true God,
Light of Light eternal,
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father,
begotten, not created:

O come, let us adore him . . .

See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with holy fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:

O come, let us adore him . . .

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above,
"Glory to God,
glory in the highest":

O come, let us adore him . . .

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father
now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him . . .

Words: possibly by John Francis Wade c. 1711-86
Music: *Adeste Fideles*,
probably by John Francis Wade c. 1711-86

The Great Thanksgiving

Cantor *All*

Hope is a-mong us. We are God's light.

Cantor *All*

Shine then with free-dom into all the cor-ners of the world.

Cantor *All*

Lest fear overcome the bril-liance of life and light and lib-er-ty.

*All life is holy, sacred;
worthy of respect and dignity.
Let us give thanks for the power of heart
to sense the holy in the midst of the simple.*

Power and possibility of Love,
we praise you and give you thanks,
for on this night Jesus was born among us,
a baby needy and naked, born into poverty and
oppression, in order to in time proclaim the gift of
your transforming grace and justice.

Therefore with all the faithful, living and dead,
with Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, Magi, and
angels, we proclaim your great and glorious
name, forever praising you and singing:

Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly is the Love called God, the

sparks of hope. Blaze, jus-tice blaze.

Blest is Je-sus who lit up our world, who

lit up our world. Ho-san-na, ho-

-san-na, ho-san-na to the low-est and the least.

On the night before he died Jesus took bread;
when he had given you thanks, he broke it, gave it
to his disciples, and said:

*Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;
do this to remember me.*

After supper he took the cup; when he had given
you thanks, he gave it to them and said:

*Drink this, all of you, for this is my blood which
brings new life; do this as often as you drink it, to
remember me.*

With this bread and wine we remember the dream
of God, and the call of God.

We of-fer bread to eat with eyes and hands held

o-pen. We pass this cup to share. We take, break,

bless and give kind-ling hope ev-ry where.

Empower our celebration Spirit of promise,
feed us with your life,
fire us with your love,
confront us with your justice,
and make us one with all who share your gifts.

We remain standing for the Lord's Prayer in Maori:

Kua akona nei tatou e to tatou Ariki, ka inoi tatou:

**E to matou Matua i te rangi kia tapu tou Ingoa.
Kia tae mai tou rangatiratanga. Kia meatia tau
e pai ai ki runga ki te whenua, kia rite ano ki to
te rangi. Homai ki a matou aianeī he taro ma
matou mo tenei ra. Murua o matou hara, me
matou hoki e muru nei, i o te hunga e hara ana
ki a matou. Aua hoki matou e kawea kia
whakawaia; engari whakaoranga matou i te
kino: Nou hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha, me
te kororia, Ake, ake, ake. Amine.**

The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the life of Christ.

**We who are many are one body, for we all
share the one bread.**

*"Hodie Christus natus est"
from "Ceremony of Carols"*

Benjamin Britten 1913-76

The Invitation

Come bringing your varied faiths and
backgrounds, for all are welcome to share in this
grace.

*There are two places to receive Communion – at the
High Altar or at the St Thomas Chapel.*

*At the High Altar there is a chalice for dipping - simply
hold the bread in front of you to signify your choice.*

Te Taro, o te Ora. The Bread of Life

Te Kapu o te Ora. The Cup of Salvation.

Music during Communion

The Shepherd's Farewell

Hector Berlioz 1803-69

Cantique de Jean Racine

Gabriel Fauré 1845-1924

Prayer after Communion

"Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour."

Luke 2:10,11

Together we pray

**God in the manger,
may we to whom the angels have sung
never lose that awesome vision;
may we who like the Magi,
bring the gifts of who we are
and what we have,
never cease to be overwhelmed
in wonder and worship;
may we who like the shepherds,
have seen in your birth
a new kind of love,
witness to that love in our lives. Amen.**

The Blessing

*"Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"
(How brightly beams the morning Star)
from Cantata BWV 172*

J. S. Bach 1685-1750

Recessional Hymn

**Hark! the herald angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! the herald angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!"**

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold Him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!"**

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings,
Mild, He lays His glory by;
Born that we no more may die;
Born to raise the folk of earth;
Born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!"**

Words: Charles Wesley 1707-88

Music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn 1809-47

Liturgist Go now, so the world may know the
wonder and mystery of grace.

All **Amen. We go in the power of Love.**

Organ Voluntary

Walking in the Air

Howard Blake