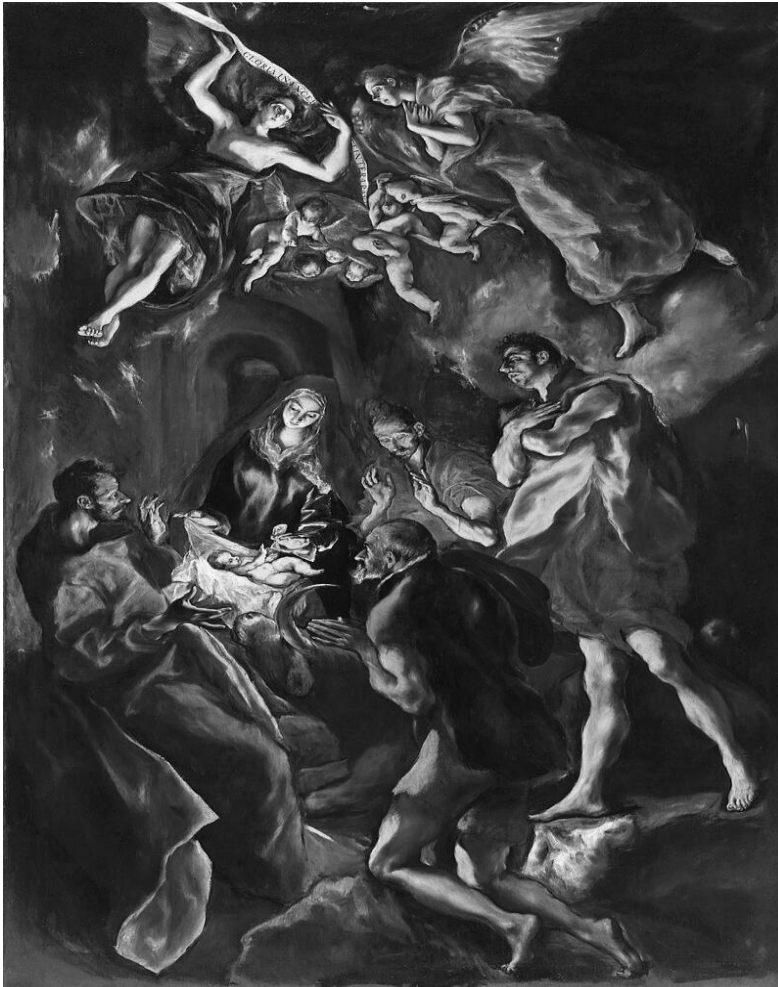




# Holy Trinity Headington Quarry

An open door between heaven and earth,  
showing God's love to all



## Christmas Carol Service

21st December 2025, 6pm

*You are very welcome to Holy Trinity this evening. If you are new to the church or visiting, please make yourself known to one of the welcomers, and let us know any additional needs you may have. An accessible toilet and baby change facilities are located in the meeting room on the north side of the church (across from the door you came in.)*

*Children are a beloved and integral part of Holy Trinity. Children and babies are very welcome to stay in the service, or to use the meeting room if a break-out space would be helpful. We are not bothered by noise or children being children: we're just glad you're here.*

*Please sit, or stand as you feel comfortable during the service, and join in with the words in bold type. Refreshments are served after the service: please stay for a friendly chat if you would like to.*

*Holy Trinity is funded almost entirely by donations. If you are able to contribute today as part of your worship, you can do so using the card reader or plate by the door on your way in or out. Regular supporters of Holy Trinity are encouraged to do so via the Parish Giving Scheme: a secure, tax-efficient way of contributing to our ministry here.*

*(i) You can access the Scheme's website through the QR code below and click on "Regular Giving," or visit*

*<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/headington-quarry-holy-trinity-oxford/>*

*(ii) call the Scheme on 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm.*



## **Welcome**

*The minister says:*

In the name of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

*Words of welcome and any announcements are given.*

*Please stand as you are able for the entrance of the choir  
and ministers.*

## **Processional carol: Once in Royal David's City**

*The first verse is sung by the choir only; please join in at  
verse two.*

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 mean, and lowly,  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.**

**And through all his wondrous childhood  
he would honour and obey,  
love, and watch the lowly maiden,  
in whose gentle arms he lay;  
Christian children all must be  
mild, obedient, good as he.**

**For he is our childhood's pattern,  
day by day like us he grew,  
he was little, weak and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feeleth for our sadness,  
and he shareth in our gladness.**

**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.**

**Not in that poor lonely stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
when like stars his children crowned  
all in white shall wait around.**

*Cecil Francis Alexander (1818-1895)*

## **Introduction and Bidding Prayer**

*Please be seated*

*A minister says:*

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of carols. As we gather together in the name of Christ, let us pray for the world he came to save:

For the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world;

For the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognize their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace everywhere;

For all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:

**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 and ever.  
Amen.**

### **1st Reading: Genesis 3:8-14 - *The Fall***

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this,  
    cursed are you among all animals  
    and among all wild creatures;  
upon your belly you shall go,  
    and dust you shall eat  
    all the days of your life.

***Choir:*** Jesus Christ the Apple Tree -*Elizabeth Poston 1905-1987*)

## **2nd Reading: Isaiah 9:2,6-7 – *The promise of the Messiah***

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.

## **2nd Carol: Unto us a boy is born**

**Unto us a boy is born!  
King of all creation,  
Came he to a world forlorn,  
The Lord of ev'ry nation.**

**Cradled in a stall was he  
With sleepy cows and asses;  
But the very beasts could see  
That he all men surpasses.**

**Herod then with fear was filled:  
"A prince," he said, "in Jewry!"  
And all the little boys he killed  
At Bethl'hem in his fury.**

**Now may Mary's son, who came  
long ago to love us,  
Lead us all with hearts aflame  
Unto the joys above us.**

**Alpha and Omega he!  
Now let the organ thunder,  
While the choir with peals of glee  
Shall rend the air asunder.**

*Latin 15th C. Tr. Percy Dearmer 1867-1936*

### **3rd Reading: Luke 1:26-38 – *The annunciation to Mary***

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.

### **3rd Carol: Gabriel's Message**

**The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,  
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

**'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,  
all generations laud and honour thee,  
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;  
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,  
'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said,  
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name':  
most highly favoured lady. Gloria!**

**Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:  
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!**

*Basque Carol, paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould*

### **4th reading: Matthew 1:18-23 - *The Birth of Jesus***

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.'

***Music group:*** Sing Gloria - John Bell

**5th reading: Luke 2:8-16 - *The Shepherds go to the Manger***

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste

and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

#### **4th Carol: While Shepherds watched**

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around.**

**‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind);  
‘glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and all mankind.**

**‘To you in David’s town this day  
is born of David’s line  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:**

**‘the heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
and in a manger laid.’**

**Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus  
addressed their joyful song:**

**‘All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to men  
begin and never cease.’**

*Nahum Tate (1652-1715)*

## ***Choir: Nativity Carol - John Rutter***

### **6th reading: Matthew 2:1-11 - *The Magi are Led by a Star to Jesus***

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.

## **5th Carol: The First Nowell**

**The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to Bethlehem's shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep:**

***Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel!***

**Then wise men from a country far  
looked up and saw a guiding star;  
they travelled on by night and day  
to reach the place where Jesus lay**

**At Bethlehem they entered in,  
on bended knee they worshipped him;  
they offered there in his presence  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense**

**Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord;  
for Christ has our salvation wrought  
and with his blood our life has bought**

*Cornish carol, possibly 18th century  
adapted by Michael Perry (1942-1996)*

## **7th reading: John 1:1-14 - *The Incarnation of the Word of God***

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.

Reflection - *The Revd Martin Little*

*Choir: Carol of the Bells - music by Leyontovyc*

### **6th Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

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 God-head see,  
Hail th' incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with man with 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,  
Ris'n with healing in his wings;  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald-angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

## **Conclusion**

### **The Blessing**

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. **Amen.**



# Holy Trinity Headington Quarry

Voluntary: **An open door between heaven and earth,** Chorale  
Prelude "In Dulci **showing God's love to all** Jubilo" J.S.  
Bach (1685- 1750) BWV 729

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*Merry Christmas from all at Holy Trinity!*  
*Please join us at one of our Christmas services:*

## **Christmas Eve**

*2:30 pm and 4:30 pm: Christingle services*  
*11 pm Midnight Mass*

## **Christmas Day**

*8 am Holy Communion*  
*10am Family Eucharist*

## **Contact us**

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*please note my day off is Friday*

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