

## First Hymn

The advent of our God  
with eager prayers we greet,  
and singing haste upon the road  
His glorious gift to meet.

The everlasting Son  
scorns not the Virgin's womb;  
that we from bondage may be won  
He bears a bondsman's doom.

Daughter of Sion, rise  
to meet thy lowly Kings;  
let not thy stubborn heart despise  
the peace he comes to bring.

On clouds of dazzling light,  
as Judge he comes again,  
His scattered people to unite,  
with him in heaven to reign.

Let evil flee away,  
ere that great hour shall dawn,  
let this old Adam day by day  
the new Man all put on.

Praise to the incarnate Son,  
who comes to set us free,  
with Father and with Spirit One,  
to all eternity. Amen.

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**Charles Coffin 1676-1749** Tune St Thomas

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Christians, awake! salute the happy morn  
whereon the Saviour of the world was born;  
rise to adore the mystery of love  
which hosts of angels chanted from above;  
with them the joyful tidings first begun  
of God incarnate and the Virgin's Son.

Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,  
who heard the angelic herald's voice, 'Behold,  
I bring you tidings of a Saviour's birth  
to you and all the nations on the earth:  
this day hath God fulfilled his promised word,  
this day is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord.'

He spake; and straightway that celestial choir  
in hymns of joy, unknown before, conspire:  
the praises of redeeming love they sang,  
and heaven's whole orb with alleluias rang:  
God's highest glory was their anthem still,  
peace on the earth, and unto men goodwill!

To Beth'lem straight the enlightened shepherds ran,  
to see the wonder God had wrought for man,  
and found, with Joseph and the blessed Maid,  
her Son, the Saviour, in a manger laid;  
joyful, the wondrous story they proclaim –  
the first apostles of his infant fame.

Like Mary let us ponder in our mind  
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind;  
trace we the babe, who hath retrieved our loss,  
from his poor manger to his bitter cross;

Then may we hope, angelic hosts among,  
to sing, redeemed, a glad triumphal song.

*John Byrom 1691-1763*  
(Stockport)

*Tune Yorkshire*

*In place of a Psalm or acclamation we stand to sing:*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

*Anonymous 1883*

*Tune: Cradle Song*

## **Offertory hymn**

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

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:

*At Communion if you wish to receive from the chalice – the common cup – please make your way to the Font (by the entrance). If you would rather have the host intincted in the wine by the Priest please come to the front.*

## **Communion Hymn**

Ding dong! merrily on high  
in heav'n the bells are ringing  
Ding dong! verily the sky  
is riv'n with angel-singing.

*Gloria! hosanna in excelsis!*

E'en so here below, below,  
let steeple bells be swungen,  
and i-o, i-o, i-o,  
by priest and people sungen.

Pray you, dutifully prime  
your matin chime, ye ringers;  
may you beautifully rhyme  
your evetime song, ye singers.

*G R Woodward 1848-1934*

*Tune 16<sup>th</sup> century French carol*

## **Final Hymn**

God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
let nothing you dismay,  
remember Christ our Saviour  
was born on Christmas day,  
to save us all from Satan's power  
when we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
comfort and joy!*

*O tidings of comfort and joy!*

And when they came to Bethlehem,  
where our dear Saviour lay,  
they found him in a manger,  
where oxen feed on hay;  
his mother Mary kneeling down,  
unto the Lord did pray:

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
all you within this place,  
and with true love and brotherhood  
each other now embrace;  
this holy tide of Christmas  
all other doth efface:

From God our heavenly Father  
a blessed angel came,  
and unto certain shepherds  
brought tidings of the same,

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how  
that

in Bethlehem was born  
the Son of God by name: