

***Sunday 28 December***  
***First Sunday after Advent***

***All are welcome***

## ***What Child IS This***

### **Call to Worship**

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems  
sweet,  
While shepherds watch are keeping?**

Readers 1 & 2 then congregation  
sings;

**This, this is Christ, the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels  
sing:  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

Prayer of Invocation  
[unison]

Here, at the nativity of your birth,  
give us the courage to face this  
moment

with the desire for justice.

Open us to new understandings of  
the unfolding story of your  
presence among us.

Show us the true gifts we must  
bring to our moment,  
as we seek a better kin-dom on this  
earth.

We pray in the name of the Child,  
the One Who Reigns in our hearts  
and lives.

Amen.

## Hymn The first Noel

### Hymn The first Noel (maybe just 4 verses!)

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The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as  
they lay:

in fields where they lay a-keeping their  
sheep

on a cold winter's night that was so  
deep:

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

They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east, beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of  
naught,  
and with his blood mankind hath  
bought.

by Wen Reagan

## HYMN -

Light of the world,  
You stepped down into darkness,  
opened my eyes, let me see  
beauty that made this heart  
adore You,  
hope of a life spent with You.

So here I am to worship,  
here I am to bow down,  
here I am to say that You're my  
God.

And You're altogether lovely,  
altogether worthy,  
altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days  
oh so highly exalted,  
glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly You came  
to the earth You created,  
all for love's sake became poor.

Tim Hughes

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***Prayer and Lords Prayer***

# ALL AGE TIME

Be near us, Lord Jesus; we ask Thee to stay  
close by us forever, and love us, we pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
and make earth a heaven, where all have a share.

## HYMN - Hymn - We three Kings Of Orient

We three kings of Orient are,  
bearing gifts we travel afar,  
field and fountain, moor and  
mountain,  
following yonder star.

Chorus

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to Thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown Him again,  
King for ever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign.

Chorus

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to Thy perfect light.

Frankincense for Jesus have I,  
God on earth, yet Priest on high;  
prayer and praising all men raising:  
worship is earth's reply.

Chorus

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to Thy perfect light.

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume  
tells of His death and Calvary's gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in a stone-cold tomb.

Chorus

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to Thy perfect light.

Glorious now, behold Him arise,  
King, and God, and sacrifice!  
Heaven sings out, 'Alleluia',  
'Amen!' the earth replies.

Chorus

O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to Thy perfect light.

## Reading Matthew 2:1-14

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.'

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. 'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,

## Sermon

## Hymn CH4 624 In Christ there is no East or West

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In Christ there is no east or west,  
in him no south or north,  
but one great fellowship of love  
throughout the whole wide earth.

In Christ shall true hearts  
everywhere  
their high communion find,  
his service is the golden cord  
close-binding human kind.

Come, brothers, sisters of the faith,  
whate'er your race may be:  
whoever does my Father's will  
is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and  
west,  
In him meet south and north,  
all Christ-like souls are one in him,  
throughout the whole wide earth.

John Oxenham, pseud. (1852–1941)  
William Arthur Dunkerley (1852–1941)  
(*alt.*)

## Intimations Offering

## Prayers of intercession & Dedication

## Christ be our light

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1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light!*  
*Shine in our hearts.*  
*Shine through the darkness.*  
*Christ, be our light!*  
*Shine in your Church gathered today.*

2 Longing for peace, our world is  
troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us.  
Make us your living voice.

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stone.

5 Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one  
another,  
making your kingdom come.

Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957)

## Benediction