

Cornish Carols Evening

What are we doing?

Welcome to our regular and annual Cornish Carols event at Gloweth Chapel. During our session together we want to enjoy learning and singing some traditional Cornish Carols. This is a workshop - not a service - and it is completely relaxed and informal. You do not have to be able to read music. You do not need any previous musical experience. All the music can be learned by ear. The Cornish Carols are a phenomenon, and a thriving tradition across Cornwall, being sung in a wide variety of contexts beyond the walls of the chapels. You do not have to be a Christian to sing and enjoy this music—we are delighted to welcome you just on the basis that you want to come and take part—we hope you enjoy the music, the words, and the whole experience.

Why is this happening at Gloweth Chapel?

At Gloweth Chapel, we have been putting on special events at Christmas for many years. A Cornish Carols Workshop is something we were keen to try out, as we know that many people in Cornwall value this heritage and enjoy participating in it. As a small christian church in Truro, in the middle of Cornwall, we at Gloweth are enthusiastic about meeting together, about singing, and about the message of the christian faith which is enduringly relevant to all people everywhere.

What is this music about?

We'll be learning three or four of these glorious carols in full four-part harmony. Last year was our second year, and we were staggered at how amazing the carols sounded after just a short practice. We take a light-hearted and non-technical approach—we are not aiming for choral perfection this afternoon. In fact, we're not viewing this as choral performance music at all. The Cornish Carols are more about singing as a community to one another. In the non-conformist tradition, the singing should be vigorous, heart-felt and loud. This music was composed for joyful congregations. As we learn this material together today, we will find that fussy tuning and stuffy elocution have no part to play. Precision in timing and dynamics takes a back seat to the biblical goal of making a loud and joyful noise.

Why was this music written?

The words prompted the music. The profoundly moving, and skilfully constructed poetry of the christian hymn writers spurred on the musicians in their creative work. Writing at a time when methodist, evangelical Christianity was the majority faith in Cornwall, Thomas Merritt and composers like him penned musical settings that have proved enduring. Their vigorous, community-style pieces are composed in the 'west gallery' tradition of christian music, where stirring harmony results from melodic part-writing. Their music has conveyed the words of the carols across more than a century of time. Geographically, their compositions have inspired not only the Christians within their own local churches, but beyond the borders of Cornwall, the worldwide Cornish diaspora have also made these carols their own.

What are the words about?

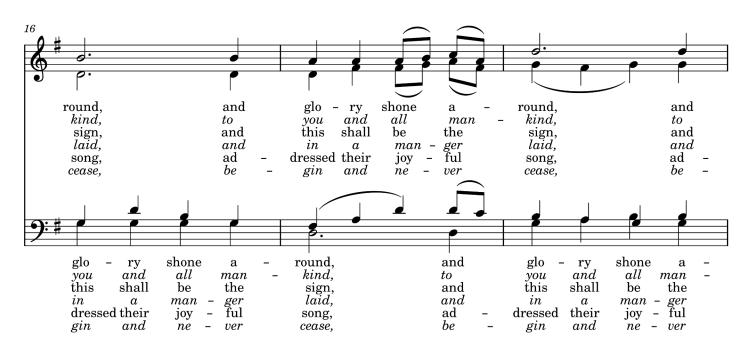
These are Christmas carols. Though full of spiritual content, they are earthy. The words are about a baby, born in a stable in Bethlehem (a town that is still on the map), in the Roman province of Judea, during the reign of Augustus Caesar, to a Jewish couple, Mary and Joseph. His birth, two millennia ago, and his subsequent life, death, and resurrection from the dead mark out the turning point of all history, and convey a message from God to all people. In the words of the angel whose sudden appearance once terrified a group of unsuspecting shepherds, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.'

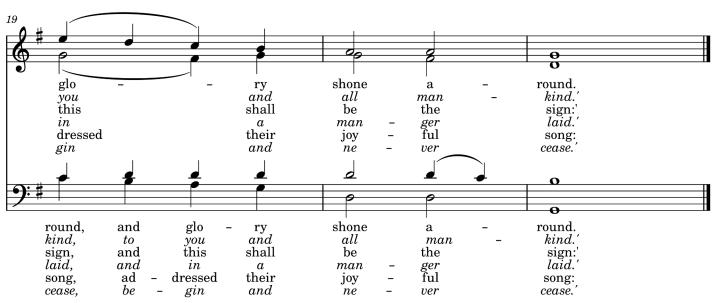
While Shepherds Watched

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Thomas Jarman (1776-1861) Lyngham, *CM*







Hark the Glad Sound





Lo! He Comes an Infant Stranger

Richard Mant (1776-1848)

Thomas Merritt (1863-1908) Infant Stranger, 8.7.8.7.4.7



- Lo! He comes an infant stranger, of a lowly mother born, swathed and cradled in a manger, of His pristine glory shorn! Hallelujah! Praise ye God's incarnate Word!
- Lo! He comes by man unfriended, fain with stable beasts to rest, shepherds who their nightfold tended hailed alone the newborn guest! Halleluiah!

Praise ye Jesse's tender Rod!

Son of the eternal Father, who again in power shall come, cherub, seraph hosts adorning, swell His state and loudly cry: Hallelujah! Praise ye Him, the living Lord!



Angels from the Realms of Glory

James Montgomery (1771-1854)

Thomas Merritt (1863-1908) Angels from the Realms of Glory, 8.7.8.7 plus chorus



- 1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth; ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

 Come and worship,

 worship Christ, the new-born King.
- 2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night, God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant light: *Come...*
- 3. Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar; seek the great Desire of nations, ye have seen his natal star: *Come...*

- Sinners, wrung with true repentance, doomed for guilt to endless pains, justice now revokes the sentence, mercy calls you—break your chains: Come...
- 5. Though an infant now we view him, He shall fill his Father's throne, gather all the nations to him; every knee shall then bow down: Come...

10



Lo, the Shephereds were Abiding

C Williams, St Ives (1908)

Hellesveor, 8.7.8.7 plus coda $\begin{array}{cc} \text{Lo, the} \\ As & the \end{array}$ flocksbid-ing with Beth-lehem's shep-herds were their on a chordswerering-ing, loheaven - ly voicesac - red did $f\!\!f$ carphin spirito 0 Lo, $\begin{array}{c} \mathrm{bid} - \mathrm{ing} \\ \mathit{ring} - \mathit{ing} \end{array}$ plains. the shep-herds were Asthesac - redchordswere cry. were bid-ing, lo, the shep-herds were $chords\ were$ ring-ing, as thesac - red chords were 13 with their flocks Beth - lehem's plains, with their flocks on heavenly didheaven lo, anvoicecry, lo, anlу bid - ing with their flocks Beth - lehem's plains, on heavenly ring - ing, lo, anvoicecry, Beth-lehem's When they plains. heard the joy-ful tid - ings, when they heard the "Fear not didbring-ing, fear not, mor-tals, voicecry, mor-talswe are joy - ful tid - ings sung in gel strains. sweet ic an bring - ing fromheaven most earthhigh. we arepeace to<u>d</u>

12



The Star of Jacob

Steven Nicholas (1865-1927) Star of Jacob, 10.10.10.10



- Awake, my harp, my lute and cheerful voice; ye people all in songs of praise rejoice: on this glad morn, to chase the gloom of night, the Star of Jacob rose divinely bright.
- 2. He comes, the tyrant's kingdom to destroy, to publish peace and universal joy. From pole to pole, o'er all the vast domain, the King of Salem shall forever reign.
- Break forth aloud, and swell the lofty song: to man beloved the lofty strains belong.
 While endless ages in their circles move, enraptured saints shall sing redeeming love.



Come Let Us All With One Accord

Thomas Merritt (1863-1908) Come Let Us All With One Accord, *CM*



- Come then to hear our songs of love around the throne above, with all the heavenly choirs to sing. And crown the Prince our King,
- 5. Come let us join the choirs above to chant the Saviour's love, where all the angels chant their songs, and join all human tongues.
- 6. Come let us strike our harps of gold, to chant the love untold, with all our instruments below, the Christmas songs we know.



Cornish Carols Workshop What are the words of the carols about?

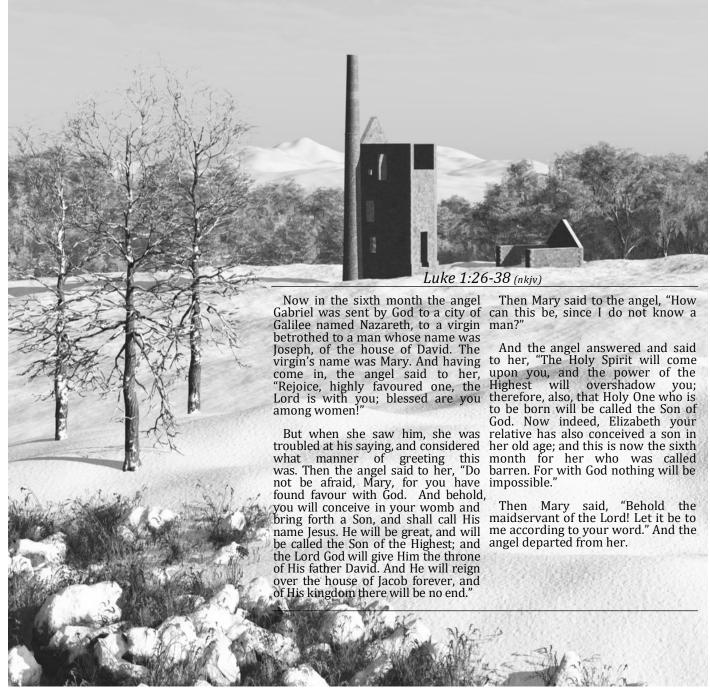
Isaiah 9:2

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Isaiah 9:6-7

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.



Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.

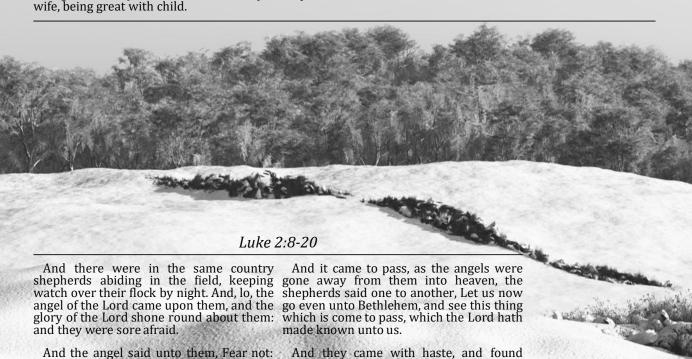
Luke 2:1-7

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn



And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a shepherds. multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

But Mary

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.



Thank You for Coming to our Cornish Carols Evening...



Thomas Merritt

Thomas Merritt was the most prominent of a group of Cornish composers, who wrote music in the 'West Gallery' style, of tuneful harmonies and overlapping (fuguing) melodies. His carol tunes are particularly well known.

Thomas Merritt was born in 1863. His father, also named Thomas Merritt, was a tin miner. He died when Thomas was 11 years old, and Thomas immediately followed in his footsteps, working as a tin miner at the Carn Brea mine, and at the nearby tin streams at Tolvaddon.

He evidently developed a love of music, and from his older teen years onwards taught music privately to local children in their homes. Around 1889 Thomas became the Organist and Choirmaster of the United Methodist Free Church in Illogan Highway, holding this appointment for 12 years. Thomas died in 1908 aged 46.

He composed and conducted his own music, and is particularly famous in Cornwall for his carols. These have grown in popularity over the years, and are now sung widely across Cornwall, and in the worldwide Cornish diaspora.

The Message of the Non-Conformist Carol Singing Tradition: Glad Tidings of Great Joy

The words of the Cornish carols represent a deeply heartfelt and personal expression of Christian faith. They focus on Jesus Christ, and express great joy at the thought of Jesus coming into the world as the long-promised Saviour. Full of the rich language and imagery of the Holy Bible, they put into verse the Christian faith: the overwhelming good news that God has come to the rescue of the human race.

We need the Saviour because of sin. By nature we are cut off from fellowship with God because of sin, and we deserve God's fair judgement. But God is kind and merciful, and He sent His Son to save us. When Jesus died on the cross, He was a substitute. He took God's judgement for sin in the place of sinners, so that we may go free.

God now commands all people everywhere to turn away from their sins, and to trust in Jesus. Because of the Son of God, born ...mercy calls you, break your chains... to Mary in Bethlehem, God forgives the sins of every person who puts their faith in Him. Jesus also came back to life, after His death on the cross, giving us a sure hope that death is not the end. Whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

At Gloweth Chapel, this is our simple Christian faith. We are pleased to share it with you in this workshop, through the words and music of these popular and well-loved Cornish carols.

...break forth aloud...

...He comes the broken heart to bind...

...to Saviour promised long...

...to chase the gloom of night...

...justice now revokes the sentence...

nercy calls you, break your chains...

...from pole to pole...

...reap the joys...