



SOMERVILLE
COLLEGE

Christmas Carol Concert



Somerville College Chapel

Monday 4th December

7:00 PM

Before the service, the organists will perform:

Cranham & Veni, veni Emanuel - Pamela Decker (b.1955)

The Holy Boy - John Ireland (1879-1962)

Pastorella BWV590, mvmt.2 - J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata in D Major - C. P. E. Bach (1714-1788)

Please stand with the choir to sing the opening hymn

Hymn: Once In Royal David's City

CHOIR ONLY

*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.*

ALL

**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 lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall we 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.**

C. F. Alexander (1818-1895)

IRBY

Henry J Gauntlett (1805-1876)

Arranged by David Wilcocks (1919-2015)

Welcome

Baroness Jan Royall
College Principal

Choir: *There is no Rose*

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu;
Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space;
Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see
That he is God in persons three,
Pari forma.

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo:
Gaudeamus.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth;
Transeamus.

Anonymous c.15th Century

Cecilia McDowall (b.1951)

Reading

Christmas by John Betjeman (1906-1984)
Read by Dr Jackie Watson (1986, English)
Alumni Relations Officer

The bells of waiting Advent ring,
The Tortoise stove is lit again
And lamp-oil light across the night
Has caught the streaks of winter rain
In many a stained-glass window sheen
From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.

The holly in the windy hedge
And round the Manor House the yew
Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge,
The altar, font and arch and pew,
So that the villagers can say
'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.

Provincial Public Houses blaze,
Corporation tramcars clang,
On lighted tenements I gaze,
Where paper decorations hang,
And bunting in the red Town Hall
Says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.

And London shops on Christmas Eve
Are strung with silver bells and flowers
As hurrying clerks the City leave
To pigeon-haunted classic towers,
And marbled clouds go scudding by
The many-steepled London sky.

And girls in slacks remember Dad,
And oafish louts remember Mum,
And sleepless children's hearts are glad.
And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'
Even to shining ones who dwell
Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare -
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.

Choir: *Alleluia! A new work is come on hand*

Alleluia, a new work is come on hand
Through might and grace of Gode's son
To save the lost of ev'ry land.
For now is free that erst was bound
We may well sing:
Alleluia!

Now is fulfilled the prophecy
Of David and of Jeremy
And also of Isaiah
Sing we therefore both loud and high:
Alleluia!

(continued overleaf)

This sweete song,
Out of a green branch it sprung.
God send us the life that lasteth long!
Now joy and bliss be him among
That thus can sing:
Alleluia!

Anonymous c.15th Century

Ghislaine Reece-Trapp (b.1992)

Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Redeem thy captive Israel
That into exile drear is gone
Far from the face of God's dear Son
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, thou Branch of Jesse! Draw
The quarry from the lion's claw
From the dread caverns of the grave,
From nether hell, they people save.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
Pour on our souls they healing light;
Dispel the long night's ling'ring gloom,
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, O come Adonai,
Who in thy glorious majesty
From that high mountain clothed with awe,
Gavest thy folk the elder law.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Anonymous Latin 12th Century Hymn
Trans. by J. M. Neale (1818-1866)

VENI EMMANUEL
15th Century French Monastic

Reading

Amazing Peace by Maya Angelou (1928–2014)

Read by Helen Morton (Emeritus Fellow, Treasurer 2000–2012)

Thunder rumbles in the mountain passes
And lightning rattles the eaves of our houses.
Flood waters await us in our avenues.

Snow falls upon snow, falls upon snow to avalanche
Over unprotected villages.
The sky slips low and grey and threatening.

We question ourselves.
What have we done to so affront nature?
We worry God.
Are you there? Are you there really?
Does the covenant you made with us still hold?

Into this climate of fear and apprehension, Christmas enters,
Streaming lights of joy, ringing bells of hope
And singing carols of forgiveness high up in the bright air.
The world is encouraged to come away from rancor,
Come the way of friendship.

It is the Glad Season.
Thunder ebbs to silence and lightning sleeps quietly in the corner.
Flood waters recede into memory.
Snow becomes a yielding cushion to aid us
As we make our way to higher ground.

Hope is born again in the faces of children
It rides on the shoulders of our aged as they walk into their sunsets.
Hope spreads around the earth. Brightening all things,
Even hate which crouches breeding in dark corridors.
In our joy, we think we hear a whisper.
At first it is too soft. Then only half heard.
We listen carefully as it gathers strength.
We hear a sweetness.
The word is Peace.
It is loud now. It is louder.
Louder than the explosion of bombs.

We tremble at the sound.
We are thrilled by its presence.
It is what we have hungered for.
Not just the absence of war. But, true Peace.
A harmony of spirit, a comfort of courtesies.
Security for our beloveds and their beloveds.

We clap hands and welcome the Peace of Christmas.
We beckon this good season to wait a while with us.
We, Baptist and Buddhist, Methodist and Muslim, say come.
Peace.
Come and fill us and our world with your majesty.
We, the Jew and the Jainist, the Catholic and the Confucian,
Implore you, to stay a while with us.
So we may learn by your shimmering light
How to look beyond complexion and see community.

It is Christmas time, a halting of hate time.

On this platform of peace, we can create a language
To translate ourselves to ourselves and to each other.

At this Holy Instant, we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ
Into the great religions of the world.
We jubilate the precious advent of trust.
We shout with glorious tongues at the coming of hope.
All the earth's tribes loosen their voices
To celebrate the promise of Peace.

We, Angels and Mortal's, Believers and Non-Believers,
Look heavenward and speak the word aloud.
Peace. We look at our world and speak the word aloud.
Peace. We look at each other, then into ourselves
And we say without shyness or apology or hesitation.

Peace, My Brother.
Peace, My Sister.
Peace, My Soul.

Choir: *Love Came Down at Christmas*

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,
Worship we our Jesus,
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Richard Lloyd (1933-2021)

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

**O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.**

**How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive Him still,
the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!**

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

FOREST GREEN

Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Reading

An Old Man Performs Alchemy On His Doorstep at Christmas Time

by Anna George Meek (b. 1969)

Read by Dr Aaron Maniam (1998, PPE), Senior Associate

*Cream of Tartar, commonly used to lift meringue and
angel food cake, is actually made from crystallized fine wine.*

After they stopped singing for him,
the carolers became transparent in the dark,
and he stepped into their emptiness to say
he lost his wife last week, please
sing again. Their voices filled with gold.
Last week, his fedora nodded hello to me
on the sidewalk, and the fragile breath
of kindness that passed between us
made something sweet of a morning
that had frightened me for no earthly reason.
Surely, you know this by another name:
the mysteries we intake, exhale, could be

sitting on our shelves, left on the bus seat
beside us. Don't wash your hands.
You fingered them at the supermarket,
gave them to the cashier; intoxicated tonight,
she'll sing in the streets. Think of the old man.
Who knew he kept the secret of levitation,
transference, and lightness filling a winter night?
— an effortless, crystalline powder
That could almost seem transfigured from loss.

Choir: *The Holly and the Ivy*

The holly and the ivy
when they are both full grown,
of all the trees that are in the wood
the holly bears the crown.

*The rising of the sun
and the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry organ,
sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a blossom,
white as the lily flower,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
to be our sweet Saviour.
The rising of the sun...

The holly bears a berry,
as red as any blood,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
to do poor sinners good.
The rising of the sun...

The holly bears a prickle,
as sharp as any thorn,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
on Christmas day in the morn.
The rising of the sun...

The holly bears a bark,
as bitter as any gall,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
for to redeem us all.
The rising of the sun...

English Traditional

English traditional melody
Arr. Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869–1941)

Choir: *We Three Kings*

We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.
*O star of wonder, star of light,
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 forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.
O star of wonder...

Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship him God on High
O star of wonder...

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
O star of wonder...

Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Heaven sings Alleluya,
Alleluya the earth replies
O star of wonder...

John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891)

English traditional melody
Arr. Andrew Carter (b.1939)

Reading

Extract from *The Feast of St Friend* by Arnold Bennett (1867-1931)

Read by Professor Benjamin Thompson

Fellow and Tutor in History, Associate Professor in History

If then, there is to be a festival, why should it not be the festival of Christmas? It can, indeed, be no other. Christmas is most plainly indicated. It is dignified and made precious by traditions which go back much further than the Christian era; and it has this tremendous advantage - it exists! In spite of our declining faith, it has been preserved to us, and here it is, ready to hand. Not merely does it fall at the point which uncounted generations have agreed to consider as the turn of the solar year and as the rebirth of hope! It falls also immediately before the end of the calendar year, and thus prepares us for a fresh beginning that shall put the old to shame. It could not be better timed. Further, its traditional spirit of peace and goodwill is the very spirit which we desire to foster. And finally its customs - or at any rate, its main customs - are well designed to symbolise that spirit. If we have allowed the despatch of Christmas cards to degenerate into naught but a tedious shuffling of pasteboards and overwork of post-office officials, the fault is not in the custom but in ourselves. The custom is a most striking one - so long as we have sufficient imagination to remember vividly that we are all in the same boat - I mean, on the same planet - and clinging desperately to the flying ball, and dependent for daily happiness on one another's good will! A Christmas card sent by one human being to another human being is more than a piece of coloured stationery sent by one log of wood to another log of wood: it is an inspiring and reassuring message of high value. The mischief is that so many self-styled human beings are just logs of wood, rather stylishly dressed.

Choir: *A Present for the Future*

Is it gold that you bring?
Is that your present for the King?
Is that your special offering?
But far more precious than the gold,
So often have we heard it told,
Is our beloved blue-green world.
Oh bring me a present for the future!

Is it frankincense you bring?
Is that your present for the King?
Is that your special offering?
However fair the frankincense,
Its perfume warming to our sense,
Our planet's need remains immense.
Oh bring me a present for the future!

Is it myrrh that you bring?
Is that your present for the King?
Is that your special offering?
If only could those drops of myrrh
A sense of longing in us stir,
To make Earth's blessings as they were.
Oh bring me a present for the future!

Words and Music by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange (b. 1971)

Closing Words

Baroness Jan Royall
College Principal

Hymn: O Come All Ye Faithful

**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!***

**God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:
*O come, let us adore him...***

**See how the Shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:
*O come, let us adore him...***

**Child, for us sinners
Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?
*O come, let us adore him...***

**Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the Highest
*O come, let us adore him...***

Organ Voluntaries

In Dulci Jubilo BWV729

J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Menuet Gothique Op. 25

Léon Böellman (1862–1897)

***Everyone is warmly invited to join us for mulled wine and mince pies
in the Flora Anderson Hall after the service***

The Choir of Somerville College

William Dawes

Director of Chapel Music

Alfred Kelsey (2023, Music)

Emmanuel Bor (2023, Biochemistry)

Organ Scholars



SOMERVILLE
COLLEGE

<https://www.some.ox.ac.uk>

Registered Charity no. 1139440