

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, 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 alleluia; alleluia the earth replies.
O star of wonder . . .

Reading: Jesus is the Word of God and the Light of the
World, John 1.1-5, 14

Prayers

Carol: 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.

The Advent candles are put out, then we say together:

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world."
Let us take his light into the world. Amen.

CRIB SERVICE

The Advent candles are lit.

*The figure of the angel is carried to the altar during the singing
of the next carol.*

Carol: 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 wondering love.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
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!

Reading: The Birth of Jesus, Luke 2: 1-7

*The children are invited to carry the figures of Jesus, Mary,
Joseph and the donkey to the altar during the singing of the
next carol.*

Carol: Little donkey, little donkey, on a dusty road,
got to keep on plodding onward
with your precious load.
Been a long time little donkey,
through the winter's night –
don't give up now, little donkey,
Bethlehem's in sight.
Ring out those bells tonight, Bethlehem, Bethlehem!
Follow that star tonight, Bethlehem, Bethlehem!
Little donkey, little donkey, had a heavy day –
little donkey, carry Mary safely on her way.
Little donkey, carry Mary safely on her way.

Reading: Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds, Luke
2:8-20

*The figures of the shepherds and sheep are carried to the altar
during the singing of the next carol.*

Carol: 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 swaddling 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."

Reading: Visitors from the East Arrive at Bethlehem,
Matthew 2:1-12

*The figures of the wise men and camels are carried to the altar
during the singing of the next carol.*

Carol: We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we travel afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.
*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.
*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!*

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