

## **Welcome**

**Carol:** Once in Royal David's City

### **The crib figures are blessed:**

"Bless, O Lord, these figures, that through them we may learn again the story of your birth, and that this Christmas you may enter into our hearts and our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

### **A prayer for Christmas:**

"God, our loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and the wisdom of the wise men.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

(Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94), taken from The Lion Book of 1,000 Prayers for Children, Lois Rock, 2003, p. 442)

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Carol:** O Come All Ye Faithful

**Narrator:** In the Christmas Story we hear how the Angel Gabriel came to Mary to tell her that Jesus would be born.

**Reading:** Luke 1.26-33

**Narrator:** The animals are first to the stable.

*Children bring the animals and place them in the stable, as the congregation sings the next carol.*

### **Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

**Narrator:** Mary and Joseph journey a long way and are very tired when they arrive at the inn in Bethlehem. Everywhere is so crowded, however, that there is only room for them in the stable.

*Children bring Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus and place them in the stable, as the congregation sings the next carol.*

**Carol:** While Shepherds Watched

**Narrator:** We hear of the first visitors to see Jesus.

**Reading:** Luke 2.8-16

*Children bring the lambs and place them in the stable, as the congregation sings the next carol.*

**Carol:** Away in a Manger

**Narrator:** Later some Wise Men followed the path of a bright star for hundreds of miles and it told them that a great King was going to be born in Bethlehem. First they went to Herod's palace, but he was of no help. Then they left that wicked king and went on.

**Reading:** Matthew 2.9-12

*Children bring the Wise Men and place them in the stable.*

**Narrator:** The Crib scene is now complete. It is just left to us to enter in and offer to Jesus our gifts, of which the most important is ourselves.

**Prayer:**

"Holy Spirit, remake me in all my ways, outwardly and inwardly, like Christ. May His likeness be in my face - not for my own pride, glory or vanity - but so that others can see what the loving presence of Christ can do when He is received into the heart of a sinner like me. May Christ be real to others, through me.

Christ my God, may I love You with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul and with all my strength; and love all I meet for Your sake: for You are the Source of all love, and my Saviour from all that is unloving.

Thanks be to You, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the pains and insults You took in my place: for all the many blessings You have won for me. Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may I know You more clearly, love You more dearly and follow You more nearly, day by day.

Amen"

(St Richard, Bishop of Chichester, d. 1253)

**Carol:** O Little Town of Bethlehem

**The Grace**