

with us through these strange times. We know that Jesus was born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. We need to be sure that we have room for Jesus in our lives. Joseph probably walked to Bethlehem while Mary rode the donkey. We are Walking the Way – Living the life of Jesus today and we can celebrate having Jesus in our lives today and every day.

The words of the carol are familiar and meaningful. The second verse reminds us where Jesus came from and why he came. There has been a lot written this year about the possibility of “saving Christmas” but that is the wrong way round. Jesus came at Christmas to save us, or as the hymn says, “lived on earth our Saviour holy”. As we celebrate Christmas, we remember the reason that Jesus came, he came to lead us to be with Him and His Father is heaven. We look forward to Christmas and the New Year and the one certainty that we have is that Jesus will still be with us. Verse 4 of the hymn reminds us that one day we will join Him and see him in heaven.

Prayer

Almighty God,
We ask that you help us feel the presence of Jesus with us as we approach Christmas.
Show us that He is here and remind us that He will never leave us.
Help us to share the good news of Christmas with people who do not yet understand what it really means.
In Jesus name we pray Amen

Daily Devotions *from the United Reformed Church*

Advent Hymns and Carols 2



Sunday 13th December – Saturday 12th December

Introduction

Over the Advent and Christmas season we will look at various hymns and carols associated with this time of year and reflect on them and the Biblical stories they relate to. We hope that, in these strange times, a feast of music will help lift our spirits.

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Sunday 13th December - Santa Lucia

The Rev'd Dr Jack Dyce is Emeritus Professor of Nordic Theology at the Scottish Congregational and United Reformed Church College in Glasgow and a member of Port Glasgow URC.

St Lucy is the patron saint of the blind. She lived in the 4th Century and used to visit Christians hiding in the dark of the catacombs. She came from a rich family but refused to be married off. Legend says she plucked out her own eyes to make herself unmarriageable! In Scandinavian countries girls place candles in their hair and process, singing the hymn, below, to St Lucy. It's a festival of light looking forward to the birth of Jesus, the light of the world.

St Matthew 5: 14-16

Jesus said: 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Once in Royal David's City
Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

This can be heard here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT3cfXd3Shk>

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.

3 & thro' all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.

2 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.

4 And our eyes at last shall see him,
thro' his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heav'n above:
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

5 Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall 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.

Reflection

The passage starts with a decree from the ruler. We are now used to various decrees from our leaders as they deal with an unprecedented situation. We all know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, it was a long 90-mile journey from Nazareth and must have been difficult for Mary at her stage of pregnancy. Bethlehem was David's city and it reminds us of many scriptures including this promise in Psalm 89 "I have sworn to David my servant, 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations'." During this current time when we are learning to live with a new-normal it is good to remember that Jesus is

In the midst of this gloom we long for Christ to come again. We remind ourselves of the stories of his birth, born into poverty and exile, wrapped in a woman's blood, needy and naked for our sake and find hope. That baby grew up and taught us how to live. The values of the baby of Bethlehem are needed again in our world and, whilst we long for him to return, we have to face up to the fact that, in the meantime, it's our job to proclaim His values and offer His hope to the world.

Lord Jesus,
as we prepare to celebrate your coming amongst us,
remind us that it's up to us,
until you come again,
to do your work in this world. Amen

Saturday 19th December - Once in Royal David's City
John Collings, Lay Preacher, Rutherglen URC

St Luke 2: 1 - 7

Many contemporary Christians find the lines in today's carol about Christ leading his children on to heaven rather difficult, yet when this carol was written infant mortality was extremely high and the bereaved would find comfort in the notion that their children were with the Lord in Heaven.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hark Through the Darksome Night

You can hear the tune here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5GrLY9mq9g

Hark! through the darksome night	Deep in the northern sky
Sounds come a-winging:	bright stars are beaming;
Lo! 'tis the Queen of Light	Christmas is drawing nigh,
Joyfully singing.	candles are gleaming.
Clad in her garment white,	Welcome thou vision rare,
Wearing her crown of light:	lights glowing in thy hair,
Santa Lucia! Santa Lucia!	Santa Lucia! Santa Lucia!

Darkness will soon take flight, from all the earth
These words she speaks to us, wonderful tidings
Daytime will come again, rise in a rosy sky
Sankta Lucia, Sankta Lucia

Reflection

Particularly in Sweden, but across Nordic lands, processions of young girls (and boys) appear on 13 December, dressed in white robes with red sashes, wearing candles on their heads or bearing them in their hands. They sing one of the traditional St Lucia songs:

'The night treads heavily around gardens and house, in places in reached by the sun; the shadows brood; into our dark homes she comes, bearing lighted candles, St Lucia, St Lucia' (Natten går tunga fjät). Saffron buns (lussekatter) are shared, and consumed with coffee (or mulled wine, on a cold Nordic day).

The tradition's origins lie not in Scandinavia, but in a legend from further south. The story is of a young girl, Lucy of Syracuse, who, in the Diocletianic persecution, is condemned to death and martyred for her Christian faith. It is said that the lit flame at the stake would not burn

against her, and she was stabbed to death.

In time, her story travelled north, carried by missionary monks/ priests, or traders, or even Vikings. And there it finds a home, a story of light in the darkness of a Nordic winter. Nowadays, this is perhaps less apparent in the well-lit, even light-polluted, streets of Stockholm. The power of light in darkness was much clearer to me on a mid-winter day/ night on Svalbard in the far north when the sun did not rise above the horizon. In the midst of such overwhelming darkness, the light comes.

The Lucy of St Lucia's Day today wears the white robe of her baptism by martyrdom; the red sash proclaims her shedding of her blood for her faith; the candles (now often battery-powered) symbolise the Light of the world in Christ. NFS Grundtvig, the Danish priest and hymn writer, writes for the Advent season of 'Christmas night when our Saviour was born, then light split the darkness and brought the morn'. The procession has attendant girls with candles, and 'star' boys, reminding us of the stars seen by the shepherds: 'God's angels bright, from heav'n's high halls descending in wonderful sunshine-ropes attired to earthly shadows bending' (NFSG).

Lucys were formerly elected or selected or a competitive prize. Now, in egalitarian Scandinavia, it is very often by random draw - so Lucy is no longer a figure apart, but rather one of us. 'You are [all] the light of the world' (Matthew 5:14).

Jesus bids us shine,
Then, for all around
Many kinds of darkness
In this world are found -
Sin, and want, and sorrow;
So we must shine ... (Warner, 1868)

A prayer of St. Francis of Assisi:

fulfilment of all that is written. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress on the earth and wrath against this people; they will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken away as captives among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 'There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.'

Veni Veni Emmanuel can be heard here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRi1GDoaQu4>

Reflection

Those who like preaching from this passage are probably a little odd! Apocalyptic passages like this disturb us and are a far cry from the normal Advent and Christmas messages of peace and goodwill. Yet Jesus knew how to read what Pope John Paul II called "the signs of the times." In the passage he warns his hearers to flee the terrible judgement the Romans would bring when they ended any semblance of a Jewish state.

As we read the signs of our own time we can see, again, the need for the Lord to come. We listen again to the haunting words of the great Advent hymn, today in Latin yesterday in English, and recognise the longing for our world to change. 2020 has been a tumultuous year; we've been struck low by a pandemic which has had a devastating impact on the lives of millions of people around the world. Wars continue whilst the world looks away; despots cling to power like alcoholics to bottles and, here in the UK the press teaches us to treat refugees as dangerous whilst it struggles to portray a government it wants to support as anything approaching competent.

seven names for Christ, which have been mined from the prophecies of Isaiah, to express our longing and our hopes.

Nor is it surprising that these have been amalgamated into the great advent hymn 'O come, O come, Immanuel. This voices our hopes and longings for God to come amongst us and for the day of the Lord to come. We who sing it, know that God has already come amongst us, is with us now day by day, and yet, as we wait to celebrate Christ's birth once again, we still long for the day of the Lord. For God's kingdom has yet to come in all its fulness.

The depth of our longing is no less great than that of our ancestors. Our hope is no less great. But we have learned that God works with us and through us. We are called not simply to long or to hope but also to strive for God's kingdom to come here and now in all its glory.

Prayer

God with us,
May we catch the vision of your kingdom once again this Advent.
May we catch too the zeal and the love that led you to come amongst us
That we may be your instruments in striving for fulness of life for each of us and for all of us
Thanks be to God. Amen.

[Friday 18th December Veni, Veni Emmanuel](#)

The Rev'd Andy Braunston ministers with four churches in and around Glasgow.

St Luke 21: 20-28

'When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those inside the city must leave it, and those out in the country must not enter it; for these are days of vengeance, as a

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

[Monday 14th December Of the Father's Heart Begotten](#)

The Rev'd Dr Matthew Prevett, Chaplaincy Coordinator, Newcastle University

This ancient hymn was adopted by the Spanish Church in the 9th Century to be used on 1st January when Jesus' circumcision was marked. The tune comes from the 16th Century and we contrast Matthew's genealogy with the idea that Jesus was lineage is heavenly.

St Mathew 1: 1-17

An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos[f] the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to

Babylon.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

Of The Father's Love Begotten
Aurelius Clemens Prudentius Tr J M Neale

You can hear the hymn here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-8pRqfl0kg>

Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the Source, the Ending he,
of the things that are,
that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore!

2 O that birth forever blessed,
when the Virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race;
and the babe, the world's
Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore!

3 This is he whom heav'n-taught singers sang of old with one accord,
whom the Scriptures of the prophets promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long expected; let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!

3 O come, O come,
great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

5 O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe for us
the heavenward road
and bar the way to death's abode.

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem,
unto your own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
& give them victory o'er the grave.

6 O come, O Bright & Morning Star,
and bring us comfort from afar!
Dispel the shadows of the night
and turn our darkness into light.

7 O come, O King of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease and be yourself our King of Peace.

You can hear Enya's striking version here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPHh3nMMu-I>

Reflection

Advent is full of hope and longing mixed with preparation and penitence. In some ways, it mirrors Lent, as we strive to ready ourselves, as disciples, for the coming of God amongst us. This necessarily involves a consciousness of how far we still have to go on our discipleship journeys. The hope and the longing are, therefore, both for what the world can be and for what each of us can be.

The first part of the book of Isaiah was written in the lead up to the fall of Jerusalem and the subsequent exile of many of its people. It, too, is an intriguing mixture of judgement, hope and longing for 'the day when [God will] act' (Malachi 4.3). It's no wonder, therefore, that the traditional Vespers' liturgy for the period from 17th to 23rd December incorporates the seven 'Os'. These are seven antiphons addressed to

Thursday 17th December O Come O Come Emmanuel

The Rev'd Jacky Embrey is a minister in the Bolton and Salford Missional Partnership

In looking forward to Jesus' coming again we also look back to the ancient prophecies of His coming. Monastic communities would sing different prophecies of Jesus' coming each day between now and Christmas eve. These have been made popular in today's haunting Advent carol.

Isaiah 7:4; 11:10; 22:22

And say to him, Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smouldering stumps of firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah...

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious...

I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open.

Malachi 4:2

But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

O Come O Come Emmanuel
18th Century based on the ancient Advent Antiphons

O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go.

4 O ye heights of heav'n,
adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing:
all dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring,
evermore and evermore!

5 Christ, to thee,
with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn & chant & high thanksgiving
and unwearied praises be,
honor, glory, and dominion
and eternal victory,
evermore and evermore!

Reflection

Whenever I find myself at the Communion Table, leading God's people in the sacrament of Holy Communion, I am always in awe. There is a mystery about what we do, grounded in the history of what happened at that first Communion. The look into history, shared by those with us, helps us to look towards the future. Past, present, and yet to come are each combined in the story of bread broken and wine outpoured.

For some years I resented the possibility that I might become known in any way as a Church historian. History is made up of not only the large narrative of what happened and when, but the detailed minutiae that fill the story. For Church history, this is a 2000 year story of schism and conflict, of dynasties, doctrines and dissolution. History points to the Church of the past, and would mean nothing for the Church of the future.

Yet as I've found myself reading and writing Church history I've become more closely connected to the heritage of our faith, the story of our present, and the challenge and hope for the future. I've found history makes us who we are and that really does inform where we may seek to travel.

When we gather at Communion we remember the past: the action of God in creation; the voice of those who cried out prophetic word; and the story that led to the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. We look back. And yet we also meet around a table, in

Communion, and in hope for the future.

Of the Father's love begotten speaks of past, present and to come – the history of Christ, the present of Christ, and the future of Christ. It is a Eucharistic prayer which can guide us into knowledge of God and into closer communion with each other. When it's sung, it tells the story, invites us in, and sends us out: 'evermore and evermore'.

Prayer

Of love begotten, not made,
your incarnate Word lived our lives,
shared our world, broke bread, turned tables, held hands.
Help us to see your past is our story,
our present is your table,
our future years are your evermore,
and evermore shall we know ourselves to be your people. Amen.

[Tuesday 15th December This is the Truth Sent From Above](#)
The Rev'd Sarah Moore serves as Transition Champion for the National Synod of Scotland

The origins of this carol are unknown but it tells the history of salvation in verse form. It's more often sung by choirs than congregations.

Genesis 2:7, 15-18, 21-25

Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being....

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

summit of God's creation, came to live in moral squalor. When the story was first told, war, violence, poverty, jealousy and all the petty foibles of our race were clear. How could this have happened? The rabbis of old told the story of human free will leading to our condition. Christian theologians later then used the story to teach that it isn't just our own free will that leads to sin but that humanity itself is flawed due to the original sin of our progenitors.

Many contemporary Christians find the explanation for our flaws as being due to Adam and Eve's sins rather simplistic but the truth behind the story that we are marvellous yet broken, glorious yet flawed, wonderfully and fearfully made yet fallen all too clear.

The anonymous author of the carol, as a good medieval Christian gives thanks for the Fall as that led to Mary becoming Queen of Heaven having Jesus' mother. Not many URC folk would describe Mary in quite that way nor, seek to give thanks for the Fall! The beauty of the music and the simplicity of the words, however, reminds us of how stories, like that of the Fall, remain rich sources of theology and draw people into the life of God's own self.

Prayer

Come O God and free your people,
who lay bound in the squalor of sin.,
Free us from
 our inhumanity,
 our callousness, and,
 our indifference.
Come, O God, unbind us,
that we may see the restoration of your creation,
crowned with your love
after long dark winter of sin.
Amen.

the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Adam lay y bounden
Traditional

You can hear this carol here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORTbT-MYLHK>

Adam lay ybounden, Bounden in a bond; Four thousand winter Thought he not too long. And all was for an apple, An apple that he took, As clerkës finden written In their book.	Nor had one apple taken been, The apple taken been, Then had never Our Lady A-been heaven's queen. Blessed be the time That apple taken was. Therefore we may singen Deo gratias!
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Reflection

Following on from yesterday's reflection on salvation history we turn to the story of the Fall near the start of that history and how the 15th Century hymn Adam Lay y bounden deals with it in relationship to the saving work of Jesus Christ. One can see why but the rather unhelpful "and all was for an apple" rather reduces the story to its bare bones rather than the truth it was trying to convey.

The Adam and Eve story was designed to explain how humanity, the

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.'...

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

'This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.'

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

This is the Truth Sent from Above
Traditional

You can hear this carol here
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5M_8vjqWYmM

This is the truth sent from above, The truth of God, the God of love; Therefore don't turn me from your door, But hearken all, both rich and poor.	3. Then after this, 'twas God's own choice To place them both in Paradise, There to remain from evil free Except they ate of such a tree.
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2. The first thing, which I do relate, That God at first did man create The next thing, which to you I tell, Woman was made with him to dwell.	4. But they did eat, which was a sin, And thus their ruin did begin; Ruined themselves, both you & me, And all of their posterity.
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5. Thus we were heirs to endless woes,

Till God the Lord did interpose
For so a promise soon did run
That He'd redeem us with a Son.

Reflection

At some stage in my theological and vocational formation, I recall someone suggesting that the entirety of salvation history should be represented in the prayer of thanksgiving whenever the Church celebrates the sacraments of Baptism or of Holy Communion.

Many published prayers do exactly that, which is why at a Baptism or Communion service the person presiding might refer to the beginnings of creation, to Adam and Eve or Noah, to the covenant with Abraham and Sarah, to the prophets ending with John the Baptist. The story often culminates in the birth of Jesus, his life and ministry, death, resurrection and ascension and then shifts again to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. These themes are echoed in a traditional progression through Advent with the lectionary readings on each successive week including these themes ending with one of the annunciation stories to Mary or Joseph on the Sunday before Christmas Day. There is a sense in which the whole of Advent is one long Great Prayer of Thanksgiving that comes to a crescendo in the birth narratives of the gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the Prologue of the Gospel of John.

This reading from Genesis, an example of myth being used to communicate a truth, and this carol spark the story of salvation into being. There is a sense in which Advent is about judgement and death, heaven and hell, and it is a season in which we remember while creation and humanity as a part of it started perfect it did not remain that way. We know that the world is broken. If we are honest we acknowledge our own brokenness and our tendencies to ruin ourselves and that which is good.

As we remember how God has been active in creation and continues to be so, we both remember and look forward to the coming of the Christ;

the incarnation of the One who will make us, and all things, new.

Prayer

We offer you thanks....

From the beginning you have made yourself known...

Yet from our first days we have disobeyed your will.

Long ago you called to yourself a people
to shine as light to guide all nations to your presence.

You led them to freedom;

you revealed to them your Law

and taught them through your prophets.

Finally you sent your promised Son, Jesus Christ,

who shared our human nature and understood our weakness...

[from, 'First Order of Holy Communion' in Worship from The United Reformed Church, London, The United Reformed Church (2003) p. 9]

[Wednesday 16th December - Adam Lay Y Bounden](#)

The Rev'd Andy Braunston serves with four churches in and around Glasgow.

This carol, again more often sung by choirs than congregations, dates, we think, to the 15th Century and tells the story of the Fall.

Genesis 3: 1-8

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to