



## Let us listen out for the Angels

A Christmas Message from the Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron

My Christmas carol for 2020 is going to be *It came upon a midnight clear*. I suspect many of you will know it, and sing it this Christmas, but it says something very appropriate. The carol, written in 1849 by Edmund Sears, speaks of the darkness of the world, but bids us listen to the message of the angels:

*O rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing!*

2020 has been a terrible year: the virus has cost us a lot, in lives, in livelihood, in lifestyles, and with news of the new lockdown we all probably feel very weary. Yet, perseverance must be our watchword, and, hopefully, 2021 will see the end of the tyranny of the virus as the vaccination programme rolls out.

Acknowledging the weariness, the carol bids us listen to the message of the angels, in the same way that, according to the Bible, the shepherds, cold in the fields and working night shifts, were surprised by a chorus of angels speaking words of good news and peace to them.

We are unlikely to be surprised by a heavenly host, but “hearing the angels sing” can have meaning for us – to concentrate and reflect upon the GOOD news of this year, of the bravery and dedication of those who have served us in the medical world, of the compassion and care offered by folk to their neighbours, of the love of friends and relatives. For me, as a Christian, it will also be to reflect on the birth of a child who is God’s gift to us, Jesus, in whose teaching we find the way of life, and in whose life we find the possibility of renewed love, joy and peace. Let us listen out for the angels: “Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to all people of good will.”

+gregory/cameron