

## Rumours Of Angels and the Music of Christmas Angels

It all started as an idea of creating a Christmas decoration that was more than the Christmas Tree in the corner and the offer of some free very old and dusty hymn books. Well! there was more to it than that but it's as good place to start this angelic story. Lynne had seen a design and instructions of how to make angels, and she shared her idea and enthusiasm the result was a host of angels came into being through a group activity of fun, laughter but with a purpose of creating a focus for our celebration of Christmas. It would be a way and a way of sharing our story with others. It is a reminder that there are many ways to share our faith stories

Who are angels and what are their tasks? Angels come from the Greek word 'angelos' meaning messenger, a messenger from God, a divine presence and these are the most familiar meanings given to the word angel and Gabriel is probably the most familiar of the angels.

Angels figure in the Old and New Testament, from Genesis to the visions of the book of Revelation. In the Gospel of Luke (1:26-38) we read of the encounter between Gabriel and Mary. It is a short dialogue where Mary receives the news that she will give birth to a son. This short dialogue ends with Mary humbly accepting Gabriel's message.

Angels have inspired hymn writers across the millennia be low are the first two verses of the song by Graham Kendrick Rumours of Angels 1994 ([www.grahamkendrick.co.uk](http://www.grahamkendrick.co.uk))

Rumours of angels  
Visions of light  
New star appearing  
Piercing the night  
Town full of strangers  
Sleeps in the gloom  
God comes among us  
There is no room

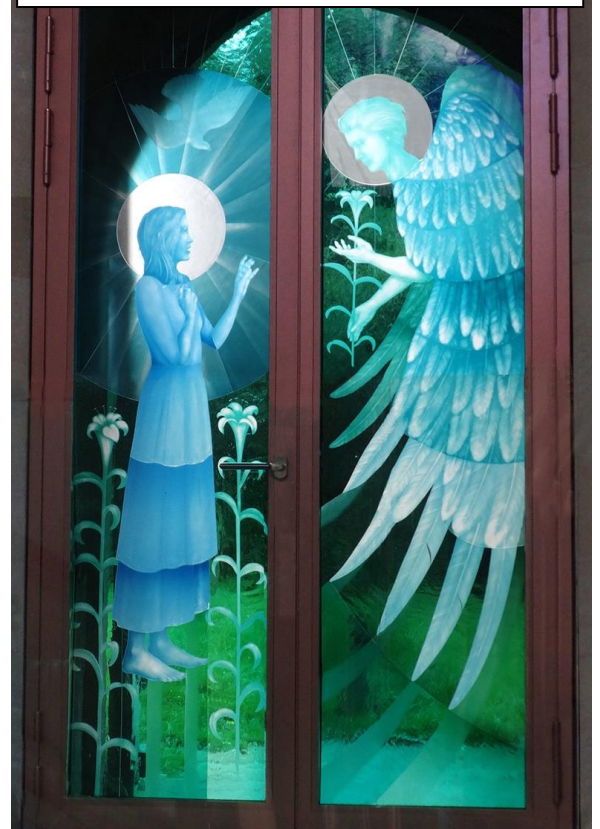
Rumours of angels  
Songs in the night  
Deep in the danger  
Unquenchable light  
World full of strangers  
Sleeps in the gloom  
God comes among us  
There is no room

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You can listen to Rumours of Angels (all verses) by clicking

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/JyYoEMshPQ0>

St Mary's Church, Kenardington, Kent.  
Windows engraved by Alison Kinnaird.  
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## The Music of Christmas Angels

The music of the angels became the basis of ten of the eleven angel displays. The carols Come all ye Faithful, It was on a Starry Night, The Angel Gabriel, In the Bleak Midwinter, Angel from the Realms of Glory, Hark the Herald Angel Sing and Everywhere's Still. Three of John Rutter's were also an inspiration, The Angels' Carol, Candlelight Carol and the Star Carol. The eleventh was the Christmas Tree created by children from local primary schools and our Messy Church.

In total over 400 angels were created. Some old, no longer used hymns books were being disposed of and the pages became angels, even the gold hymn books the angels held have the words of 'Hark the Herald Angels'.

Below and right Hark the Herald Angels







Left  
**O Come all ye  
 Faithful**

Below  
 The Angels' Carol

Let us gaze at the angels as we listen to the angel voices ever singing and this be our quiet time of preparation for celebrating the Nativity of our Lord.

Overleaf are two carols to listen to and or join in.



**Hark the herald** with lyrics for congregations sung by the Chet Valley Churches



<https://youtu.be/1IGP68i3JvU?si=4pnOeK-MaKfuQ-4>

**Hark! the herald angels sing,**

"Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain: Hark! the herald angels  
sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel. [Refrain]

3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth. [Refrain]  
Charles Wesley / George Whitefield

**The Angels' Carol - Sir John Rutter**

John Rutter - Angels' Carol lyrics © Oxford University Press



<https://youtu.be/rYYT52KIuzs?si=NWuJCcq3ofsIzrcL&t=1>

Have you heard the sounds of the angel voices  
Ringing out so sweetly, ringing out so clear?  
Have you seen the star shining out so brightly  
As a sign from God that Christ the Lord is here?  
Have you heard the news that they bring from Heaven  
To the humble shepherds who have waited long?

Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Hear the angels sing their joyful song

He is come in peace in the winter's stillness  
Like a gentle snowfall in the gentle night  
He is come in joy like the sun at morning  
Filling all the world with radiance and with light  
He is come in love as the child of Mary  
In a simple stable, we have seen his birth

Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Hear the angels singing Peace on Earth

He will bring new light  
(He will bring new light) to a world in darkness  
Like a bright star shining in the skies above  
He will bring new hope  
(He will bring new hope) to the waiting nations  
When he comes to reign in purity and love

Let the Earth rejoice  
(Let the Earth rejoice) at the Saviour's coming  
Let the Heavens answer  
(Let the Heavens answer) with the joyful mourn

Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Gloria in excelsis, Deo  
Hear the angels singing, Christ is born

Hear the angels singing, Christ is born

## **Christmas Blessing**

May our Lord Jesus Christ, who revealed his glory with the songs of angels to the shepherds who visited the manger, bless us. Amen.

May he, who in mercy took the form of a human infant for us, protect and defend us in all things. Amen.

May he, who is our Lord and Redeemer preserve us with his favour forever. Amen.

Through the mercy of our God, who is blessed, and lives and rules all things, now and forever. Amen.

*Fr Derek Akker*

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### **Acknowledgements.**

While I seek to use only reliable sources when using websites, I cannot guarantee that the content on these websites is or will remain accurate or appropriate. I also have no control over the advertisements that accompany the YouTube links.

(Derek is a retired Anglican Parish Priest and a member of the congregations of All Saints & St James and St Stephen's, Elton Prior to his ordination he was accredited as a Methodist Preacher in 1968 and served within the Methodist Church until returning to the Anglican Church in the mid 1980's)

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Dual Parishes of Kirklees Valley, Bury, (All Saints, Elton & St James, Woolfold) and St Stephens, Elton are in the Diocese of Manchester. Vicar of the two parishes - Revd Sam Eccleston OP