## INTRODUCTION

Advent is the time for singing. Music flows from the speakers at the local shopping mall and on all imaginable stages in the city. What happens if we listen a little deeper?
Behind Jungle-bells and White Christmas there is another playlist; the original version.

The first Christmas, music breaks out in the most unexpected places. It is not born as ready-made entertainment. It is born out of people's real lives.
In the scandal and anxiety when a young girl becomes pregnant. In the priest's silence and doubt. In the middle of a cold night shift on the fields of Bethlehem. In the arms of an old man who has waited his whole life for a Saviour. These stories culminate in four great songs that are our first and oldest Christmas carols.

Over the next four Sundays, we´ll listen to Christmas's own soundtrack and let it speak directly into our lives.




After four hundred years of prophetic silence, the promise receives a pulse. The story of Mary and Elizabeth is the very bridge between the longing of the Old Testament and the fulfilment of the New Testament.

Here, two women from different generations meet, each with seemingly impossible callings. One was too old and the other too young and also unmarried.
In the midst of their vulnerability, both dare to believe. The promise begins in secret, but when Elizabeth confirms the miracle in Mary, she bursts out in a song of praise. It was not a quiet lullaby but a magnificent hymn. The first song of the Christmas Gospel is an unexpected duet where two hearts dare to believe that God keeps what He has promised.




The priest Zechariah does everything right outwards, but on the inside doubt gnaws at him. He loses his voice for nine months, but God works in silence. Silence is not a punishment but a transforming workshop. What do we do with times of silence in our lives? When God seems to delay or does not respond as we intended?
When the answer to prayer finally comes, the dam breaks. The words that flow out are neither laments nor defences. It is a liberating prophetic song charged with hope.

The doubter's song shows that doubt does not disqualify us from God's promises. When morning breaks, it is not about our perfect faith, but about *"a Sunrise from on high will visit us"* —right there where we sit in darkness waiting.



It is the first time the angels take note and sing for the world. But God does not book the Royal Albert Hall in London or the palaces in Jerusalem. The concert is given under the open sky for a few simple shepherds on nightshift. The angels singing for this kind of audience is no coincidence. It is the Gospel in a nutshell. God meets us from below.

The song's message of peace on earth is a promise to all of us in troubled times, but it begins with those at the bottom of the hierarchy ladder. The deepest joy of Christmas requires neither a VIP ticket nor a perfect facade. The sky sings for us in the middle of the winter night. As long as we dare to stop and listen.




An overture is played before the curtain rises, preparing the audience for what awaits. Simeon carries a lifetime of patient waiting, and one day everything culminates in the temple. Where everyone else sees a tiny infant, Simeon immediately recognizes who the child is—the Savior. There is no loud concert but the deepest overture of the heart. God's entire plan of salvation is contained in the small bundle Simeon holds in his arms, and he exclaims with a broken voice; *My eyes have seen the Savior.*

On the threshold of Christmas Eve, we face the same possibility: To recognize the original version amid all the grand Christmas carols. To prepare the heart and receive – for God has come near.