

PARISH OF ESHER
Christ Church, Esher with St George's, West End

**FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS
CHRIST CHURCH, ESHER**

Sunday 20 December & Monday 21 December 2020



'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.'

John 1.14a

Welcome to our Festival of Lessons & Carols

As we gather on these darkest days of the year we bid you the warmest of welcomes to Christ Church Esher and to this Festival of Lessons & Carols.

Much has changed in the past twelve months and this service has had to change too. Sadly, there can be no congregational singing this year, and we cannot offer our traditional after-service hospitality.

Nonetheless, the fundamental pattern of this evening's liturgy remains the same - based, as it is, on the one first developed in Truro Cathedral some 140 years ago. Here, this evening, we will hear again - through words and music - the familiar story of the coming of the Messiah: the Fall, Promise, Prophecy, Annunciation, Birth, Shepherds, Magi and the Incarnation of the Word of God.

It's a narrative which culminates in the Ninth Lesson and its audacious and world-altering claim that the 'true light' - that light which is greater than all of us and yet present in each one of us - has 'dwelt among us' in the person of Jesus Christ. May that light - a light no darkness can overcome - illuminate our hearts and lives this Christmas.

Christmas Candle

Please take the candle home - it's our Christmas gift to you.

Opening Music

Leading up to the start of the service, instrumental music will be played, concluding with organ improvisations on some familiar Christmas carols.

Carol: Once in royal David's city

[please stand]

1. 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.
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.
3. And through 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.
4. For he is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew:
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.
5. And our eyes at last shall see him
Through 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.
6. 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;
Where, like stars, his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

*Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)
Music: Henry John Gauntlett (1805-1876)*

Bidding Prayer, and the Lord's Prayer:

[please remain standing]

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

[please be seated]

First Lesson: Genesis 3.8-15, 17-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

Carol: O little town of Bethlehem

The choir will sing verses 1 and 4. The congregation is invited to recite verses 2 and 3.

There will be organ improvisations between the verses.

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
2. O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him,
still the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray:
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today!
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

*Words: Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)
Music: English traditional (arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams)*

Second Lesson: Genesis 22.15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed

Instrumental: Trumpet Concerto in D, 1st movement (Allegro) - Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709)

Adam Meyer, trumpet and Oliver Macfarlane, organ

Third Lesson: Isaiah 9.2, 6, 7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour

Carol: The Linden Tree Carol

1. There stood in heav'n a linden tree,
But, though 'twas honey-laden,
All angels cried, 'No bloom shall be
Like that of one fair maiden.'
2. Sped Gabriel on winged feet,
And pass'd through bolted portals
In Nazareth, a maid to greet,
Blest o'er all other mortals.
3. 'Hail Mary!' quoth the angel mild,
'Of woman-kind the fairest:
The Virgin ay shalt thou be styled,
A babe although thou bearest.'
4. 'So be it!' God's handmaiden cried,
'According to thy telling.'
Whereon the angel smartly hied
Up homeward to his dwelling.
5. This tidings fill'd his friends with glee:
'Twas pass'd from one to other,
That 'twas Mary, and none but she,
And God would call her Mother.

*Words: Traditional, trans. G R Woodward
Music: Old German tune (arr. Reginald Jacques)*

Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 11.1-3a, 4a, 6-9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown

Carol: Angels from the realms of glory

The congregation is invited to hum all the refrains.

1. Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*
2. Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light:
*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*
3. Sages, leave your contemplations;
brighter visions beam afar:
seek the great Desire of Nations;
ye have seen his natal star:
*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*
4. Though an infant now we view him,
he shall fill his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him;
ev'ry knee shall then bow down:
*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Words & Music: English traditional (arr. Sir David Willcocks)

Fifth Lesson: Luke 1.26-35, 38

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

Instrumental: *Bells Across the Meadows* - Albert Ketelbey (1875-1959)

Diana Johns, piano

Sixth Lesson: Luke 2.1, 3-7

Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus Christ

Carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

1. In the bleak midwinter
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
3. Enough for him, whom cherubim
worship night and day,
a breastful of milk
and a mangerful of hay:
enough for him, whom angels
fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel which adore.
4. What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part,
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

*Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)
Music: Harold Darke (1888-1976)*

Seventh Lesson: Luke 2.8-16

The Shepherds go to the Manger

Hymn: The first Nowell

The choir will sing verses 1 & 4 and all the refrains. The congregation is invited to recite verses 2 & 3.

1. The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*
2. Then wise men from a country far
looked up and saw a guiding star;
they travelled on by night and day
to reach the place where Jesus lay:
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*
3. At Bethlehem they entered in,
on bended knee they worshipped him;
they offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense:
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*
4. Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of naught
and with his blood mankind hath bought.
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

Words & Music: English traditional (arr. Sir David Willcocks)

Eighth Lesson: Matthew 2.1-12

The Wise Men are led by the Star to Jesus Christ

Instrumental: O Holy Night - Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

Annabelle Doolan, harp

Ninth Lesson: John 1.1-14

Saint John unfolds the great Mystery of the Incarnation

[please stand]

Collect & Blessing:

[please remain standing]

O God, who makest us glad
with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of thy only Son, Jesus Christ:
Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him,
when he shall come to be our judge;
who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end.

Amen.

Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill,
and make you partakers of the divine nature;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Carol: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

The congregation is invited to hum all the refrains.

1. 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 the angelic host proclaim:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!*
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
*Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!*
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
*Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!*

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Closing Organ Voluntary
Carillon de Longpont - Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

The congregation is kindly requested to remain seated until the conclusion of the organ voluntary.

Rector

Revd Darren McCallig

Readers

Sunday 20 December: David Stark, Peter Bedford, Janie McCulloch, Jennifer Meade, Stewart Henderson, Isabel & Lily Jordan, Margaret Dane & Ven David Gerrard

Monday 21 December: Brian Elliott, Stuart Whatton, Jamie Warner, Jan Sayer, Carol Henderson, Jane Tyrrell, Joan Howell-Jones & Helen Coulson

Music

Director of Music: Stuart Whatton FRCO

Organists: Keith Howell-Jones & Oliver Macfarlane

Trumpet: Adam Meyer Piano: Diana Johns Harp: Annabelle Doolan

Vocal Soloists: Isabel Jordan, Polly Jordan & Keith Chapple

Choir: Alison Bownes, Helen Coulson, Alice Coulson, Belinda Doolan, Annabelle Doolan, Thomas Doolan, Carol Henderson, Polly Jordan, Isabel Jordan, Jan Sayer, Jane Tyrrell, Keith Chapple, Owen Doerfler & Brian Elliott

CHRIST CHURCH SERVICE NOTES

Welcome! It's great to have you here. A few things to remember:

Please take the Order of Service home with you.

Please take the candle home with you - it's our Christmas gift to you.

Individuals, households and support bubbles are asked not to 'mingle with others' before, during or after the service.

Sadly, congregational singing is still not permitted. The choir will raise their beautiful voices on our behalf and we will join in reciting and/or humming some verses as indicated.

The toilet (at the back of the church) is open, but please use only if necessary.

Our service will be live-streamed on our Parish Facebook page.

The camera is angled so that only the priest, the choir and those speaking from the lectern can be seen.

Face coverings/masks are required by law. Exemptions are for those leading worship; children under 11; those unable use to a face mask because of a physical or mental illness or disability; those for whom wearing a mask will cause severe distress; and anyone assisting someone who relies on lip-reading to communicate.

Just as you used the hand sanitiser on the way in, please use it again on the way out.

It's wonderful to have you here - thank you for coming!

May the joy and peace of Christmas be with you.

The retiring collection will go towards the running of our churches and our work in the community.

If you can, please do use a Gift Aid envelope. Thank you.

**PARISH OF ESHER
CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

*Please do join us. All are welcome.
Booking via the parish office is required unless otherwise stated.*

Thursday 24 December

CHRISTMAS EVE

4.00pm - Crib Service at Christ Church, Esher
11.30pm - Midnight Mass at Christ Church, Esher

Friday 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY

9.00am - Christmas Communion at St George's, West End
10.30am - Christmas Communion at Christ Church, Esher

Sunday 27 December

9.00am - Holy Communion at St George's, West End
10.30am - Parish Communion at Christ Church, Esher
No need to book for the 10.30am service.

MUSIC ON THE GREEN

2021 Lunchtime Concerts Programme

Concerts now start at 1.15pm.

Jan 20 Alex Hart, guitar
Feb 17 Trio Pierné, (flute, cello, piano)
Mar 17 Fibonacci String Quartet
Apr 21 Diphonon Duo (viola & accordion)

Beethoven 250th Anniversary Celebrations

Special events at Christ Church are currently planned for Saturday 20 February (three Beethoven symphonies in the historic Scharwenka transcriptions for piano duet) and Palm Sunday, 28 March (a performance of Beethoven's only oratorio, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*) - all subject to the pandemic; please keep checking our website.

PARISH OF ESHER

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Festival of Lessons & Carols 2020