

ST. LUKE'S &
CHRIST CHURCH
CHELSEA



St Luke's, Chelsea
Sunday 17 December 2023
6.30pm

CHRISTMAS 2023
St Luke's & Christ Church, Chelsea

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday 24 December

4.00pm Crib Service at both churches
11.30pm Parish Midnight Eucharist at St Luke's

CHRISTMAS DAY

Monday 25 December

8.00am Holy Communion at St Luke's
10.30am Christmas Eucharist at St Luke's
11.00am Christmas Eucharist at Christ Church

CLERGY

The Reverend Prebendary Dr Brian Leathard
The Reverend Dr Sam Hole
The Reverend Baxter McRolston

MUSIC

Prof Jeremy Summerly, Director of Music
The Reverend Dr Rupert Jeffcoat, Organist

www.chelseaparish.org

Organ music before the service:

Noels
Es ist ein Ros entsprungen
Vom Himmel hoch
Der Tag, der ist so Freudenreich
In dulci júbilo
Christmas Cradle Song

French trad. arr. Rupert Jeffcoat
Johannes Brahms
J. S. Bach
Dieterich Buxtehude
Percy Buck
Alfred Hollins

Processional Hymn

Solo

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.

Choir only

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.

All stand to sing:

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.

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.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above,
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

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 crown'd
All in white shall wait around.

Remain standing whilst the priest invites the congregation to pray:

Beloved in Christ, at this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this our diocese of London.

And because this would rejoice His heart, let us remember, in His name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are one for evermore.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

**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 them that 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.**

The First Lesson

Genesis 3.8-15

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

The choir sings:

Adam lay ybounden

Boris Ord (1897-1961)

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 clerkes finden written in their book.
Ne had the apple taken been, the apple taken been,
ne had never our lady a-been heavenè queen.
Blessed be the time that apple taken was.
therefore we moun singen: *Deo gracias!*

The Second Lesson

Genesis 22.15-18

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

All stand for the hymn:

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest thy virgin-birth:
Let ev'ry age adoring fall,
Such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,
But of the Spirit, thou art still
The Word of God, in flesh arrayed,
The Saviour, now to man displayed.

From God the Father he proceeds,
To God the Father back he speeds,
Runs out his course to death and hell,
Returns on God's high throne to dwell.

O equal to thy Father, thou!
Gird on thy fleshly mantle now,
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness glow with new-born light,
No more shall night extinguish day,
Where love's bright beams their pow'r display.

O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee
Eternal praise and glory be,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

All sit

The Third Lesson

Isaiah 9.2-7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

The choir sings:

In the stillness

Sally Beamish (born 1956)

In the stillness of a church where candles glow,
In the softness of a fall of fresh white snow,
In the brightness of the stars that shine this night,
In the calmness of a pool of healing light,
In the clearness of a choir that softly sings,
In the oneness of a hush of angels' wings,
In the mildness of a night by stable bare,
In the quietness of a lull near cradle fair,
There's a patience as we wait for a new morn,
And the presence of a child soon to be born.

The Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 11.1-9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

The choir sings:

Lullaby baby

Richard Rodney Bennett (1936-2012)

*Lullaby baby, lullaby baby,
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be.*

*Be still, my sweet sweeting, no longer do cry;
Let dolours be fleeting, I fancy thee, I ...
To rock and to lull thee I will not delay me.*

*What creature now living would hasten thy woe?
See for thy relieving the time I bestow
To dance and to prance as prettily as may be.
God be thy shield and comfort in need,
He give thee good fortune and well for to speed,
And this to desire I will not delay me.*

All stand for the hymn:

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind
"glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.

"To you, in David's town, this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands
and in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph: and forwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,
and on the earth be peace;
good-will henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease
All sit

The Fifth Lesson

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Luke 1.26-38

The choir sings:

Gabriel's message

arr. Edgar Pettman (1866-1943)

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame:
'All hail', said he, 'thou holy maiden Mary'. Most highly favoured lady, *Gloria!*
For know, a blessed mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honour thee.
Thy son shall be Emmanuel by seers foretold, most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!*
Then gentle Mary humbly bowed her head: 'To me be as it pleases God', she said,
'My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name'. Most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!*
Of her, Emmanuel—the Christ—was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn.
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say: 'most highly favoured lady'.
Gloria!

The Sixth Lesson

Matthew 1.18-23

St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

The choir sings:

Gaudete!

13th/16th century German

*Gaudete! Gaudete!
Christus est natus
ex Maria Virgine!*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!
Christ is born
of Mary the Virgin!*

Tempus adest gratiae,
hoc quod optabamus;
Carmina laetitiae
devote redamus.

A gracious time,
just as we have wanted;
So, verses of joy
let us devoutly return.

Deus homo factus est,
natura mirante;
Mundus renovatus est
a Christo regnante.

God has become man,
nature marvelling;
The world is renewed
by reigning Christ.

Ezechielis porta
clausa pertransitur;
Unde lux est orta,
salus invenitur.

Ezechiel's shut gate
has been negotiated;
From the light-source
comes salvation.

Ergo nostra concio
psallat iam in lustro;
Benedicat Domino:
Salus Regi nostro.

So may our group
now sing in lustre;
Let us praise the Lord:
'Hail to our King!'

Anon. 13th century

All stand for the hymn:

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy!
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:
O tidings...

And when to Bethlehem they came
Where our dear Saviour lay,
They found him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray;
O tidings....

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface:
O tidings....

All sit

The Seventh Lesson

Luke 2.8-16

The shepherds go to the manger.

The choir sings:

Sussex Carol

arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before Thy grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
'Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore, Amen!'

The Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2.1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

The choir sings:

Ding dong merrily on high

Charles Wood (1866-1926)

Ding dong! merrily on high in heaven the bells are ringing:

Ding dong! verily the sky is riven with angels singing.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,

And io, io, io by priest and people sungen.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;

May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

All stand

The Ninth Lesson

John 1.1-14

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Remain standing for the hymn:

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the King of Angels:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:
O come....

See how the shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:
O come....

Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:
Glory to God
In the highest.
O come....

Remain standing for the collect:

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with thy spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

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 Ghost, one God, world without end.

Amen.

Remain standing for the hymn:

Hark! the herald Angels sing
Glory to the new-born 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 host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come
Offspring of a virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:
Hark...

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...

Blessing

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Organ Postlude

Dieu parmi nous (God amongst us)
From 'La Nativite du Seigneur'
Olivier Messiaen

Thank You

O'Keefe Landscapes for supplying the Christmas trees

Front Cover Image

The Nativity, Sandro Botticelli

Columbia Museum of Art



Image: Fra Angelico *The Nativity* 1439-1443, Convent of San Marco, Florence

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