



St James's  
PICCADILLY

# Midnight Mass



**Tuesday 24th December  
2024 at 11.30pm**

With a congregation in the church  
and live on YouTube



## *Welcome to St James's Church, Piccadilly!*

Since 1684, Londoners and visitors have come to this holy place to celebrate Christmas. We warmly welcome you to this church to hear the story of the birth of Jesus, and to celebrate the universal themes of light in the darkness, and of hope in our hurting world. In today's city, we celebrate diversity and make no assumptions about your background or beliefs.

You are also warmly invited to support St James's work with people who are going through a really hard time this season. The meaning of Christmas is love, divine and human, for the whole world. St James's Church offers food, clothing and a listening ear every day to people who need it most. We also work together to build a strong and diverse, inclusive community in a fragmented and often fractious society. We do this through our church services, our projects with people going through homelessness and the asylum system, and our year-round music and visual arts programme. You can help build this community together at Christmas and beyond. There are opportunities to volunteer, to learn more about St James's, and to donate to support our work. When the collection plate comes round, or at the tap donation points in the church, please be as generous as you can.

We are here at Christmas to celebrate what unites us, which is always so much more than what divides us. And so we hope you have a wonderful time filled with music, joy, and, above all, love. *Happy Christmas from everyone at St James's!*

*Tonight, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we gather for one of the most significant and poignant celebrations of the Eucharist in the Christian year. At this deepest midnight, the light shines in the darkness and as the gospel of John reminds us, the darkness cannot overcome it.*

***We wish you a blessed and happy Christmas.***

*Before the service, Dominic will play music inspired by the Incarnation from 11pm to 11.20pm then silence will resume.*

*At 11.30pm, the choir sings:*

## **INTROIT**

**Hodie Christus Natus Est** (Gregorian)

Hodie Christus natus est:  
Hodie Salvator apparuit:  
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,  
laetantur Archangeli  
Hodie exsultant iusti, dicentes:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Alleluia.

*Today Christ is born:  
Today the Savior appeared:  
Today on Earth the Angels sing,  
Archangels rejoice:  
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:  
Glory to God in the highest.  
Alleluia.*

*During the introit, the Cross and Gospels are brought in and the altar is censed.*

## OPENING CAROL

[Tune: Irby; Words: Cecil Frances Alexander, Michael Forster]

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.

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.

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.

## OPENING RESPONSES

*The priest says*

Grace, mercy and peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you.

**And also with you.**

*The priest welcomes everyone and introduces the service.*

Eternal God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden;  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

*The deacon says*

As we gather with the shepherds before the new born  
Christ-child,  
let us open our hearts in penitence and faith.

## PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

Ever-loving God,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy  
forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be,  
that we may do justly,  
love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you our God.  
Amen.

## THE ABSOLUTION

*The priest says*

May the God of mercy and truth forgive you and set you free.  
May you take God's forgiveness to heart and be at peace.

**Amen.**

## THE GLORIA

*The choir sings*

### **Gloria In Excelsis**

from the Spatzen-Messe by W.A. Mozart K.220 (1776)

Glória in excélsis Deo  
et in terra pax homínibus bonae voluntátis.  
Laudámus te,  
benedícimus te,  
adorámus te,  
glorificámus te,  
grátias ágimus tibi propter magnam glóriam tuam,  
Dómine Deus, Rex caeléstis,  
Deus Pater omnípotens.

Dómine Fili unigénite, Jesu Christe,  
Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Fílius Patris,  
qui tollis peccáta mundi, miserére nobis;  
qui tollis peccáta mundi, súscipe deprecatióem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserére nobis.

Quóniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dóminus, tu solus  
Altíssimus,  
Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spíritu: in glória Dei Patris.  
Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest  
and peace on earth to all men of good will  
we praise you  
we bless you*

*Lord, begotten son, Jesus Christ  
Lord God, lamb of God, son of the father  
take all sins from the world, have mercy on us  
take all sins from the world, receive our invocation  
you who are seated at the right of the father, have mercy on us.*

*Because only you are Holy, only you are Lord, only you are  
Highest Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God  
the Father.  
Amen.*

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

### **The Collect**

*During this prayer, the final candle on the Advent Wreath is lit.*

*The priest says*

Let us pray.

Eternal God,  
in the stillness of this night  
you sent your almighty Word  
to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation;  
give to the earth the peace that we long for  
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven  
through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

*Please sit.*

## FIRST READING

### Hebrews 1.1-14

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,  
'You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you'?  
Or again,  
'I will be his Father,  
and he will be my Son'?  
And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,  
'Let all God's angels worship him.'  
Of the angels he says,  
'He makes his angels winds,  
and his servants flames of fire.'  
But of the Son he says,  
'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,  
and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.  
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;  
therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'



And,  
'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands;  
they will perish, but you remain;  
they will all wear out like clothing;  
like a cloak you will roll them up,  
and like clothing they will be changed.  
But you are the same,  
and your years will never end.'  
But to which of the angels has he ever said,  
'Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'?  
Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for  
the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Listen for what the Spirit is saying.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

## **CAROL**

[Tune: Mendelssohn; Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)  
et al.]

**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.'**

*Refrain:*

***Hark! The herald-angels sing  
glory to the new born King.***

**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, th'incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel:**

**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 we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth:**

*Please remain standing.*

## **THE GOSPEL**

### **John 1.1-14**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was

life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

*Please sit.*

## **SERMON**

The Revd Dr Ayla Lepine

*A period of silence is kept for personal reflection.*

*Please stand.*

## THE NICENE CREED *(from the 4th century)*

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge  
the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with Father and Son  
is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*The deacon says*

Let us pray for the world, for the church,  
for all in need and for those who have asked for our prayers.

*Please kneel or sit for prayers led by a member of the  
congregation.*

## **THE PEACE**

*The priest says*

The angels sang 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to all in whom God takes delight!'

*The deacon says*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*The priest says*

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*Please share the Peace in a socially distanced way if you are in  
the building, and in the YouTube chat function if you are  
online.*

*During the offertory carols, a collection will be taken for St James's **Christmas for All** appeal.*

*Opportunity for cash or tap donations will be passed around the audience. £10, £20 or more will make a huge difference to the work St James's does with people who need a listening ear, hot food or clothing at this time of year and will support music and arts education programmes too.*

*Please also use the QR code on page 23.*

### **FIRST OFFERTORY CAROL**

[Tune: Silent Night; Words: J. Mohr]

**Silent night! holy night!  
all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child:  
holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace;  
sleep in heavenly peace!**

**Silent night! holy night!  
shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar:  
heavenly hosts sing, 'Alleluia,  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born'.**

**Silent night! holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light:  
radiant beams from thy holy face  
with the dawn of saving grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

## SECOND OFFERTORY CAROL

[Tune: Noel; Words: Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810-1876)]

It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
'Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,  
from heaven's all gracious King!'  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heav'nly music floats  
o'er all the weary world:  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hov'ring wing;  
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love-song which they bring:  
O hush the noise of mortal strife,  
and hear the angels sing!

For lo, the days are hast'ning on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
comes round the age of gold;

**when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and all the world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.**

## **PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE**

*The priest says*

Word made flesh, life of the world,  
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:  
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

**Amen.**

## **GATHERING**

*All are invited to gather round the altar. Should you need to sit, please use any of the benches or seats around the altar at the front of the church. While moving to the altar, we sing the Taizé chant ...*

**Jubilate Deo, jubilate Deo. Alleluia.**

*(Rejoice in God. Alleluia.)*

*The priest leads the Church's Thanksgiving for Creation and Redemption in Christ ...*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**



*The priest continues the Church's prayer of thanksgiving ...*

**SANCTUS and BENEDICTUS**

from the Spatzen-Messe by W.A. Mozart K.220 (1776)

*The choir sings*

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Osanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

*The prayer of consecration continues recalling Christ's  
command to his disciples at the Last Supper, ending with:  
"... as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me"*

*The cantor sings*

Great is the mystery of faith.

*Sing after the cantor*

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*The prayer continues. At the end of the prayer, sing after the cantor . . .*

**Blessing and honour,  
glory and power,  
be yours forever and ever.  
Amen.**

*Silence is kept.*

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*You are invited to pray in your own language.*

*The priest says*

Let us pray in the words that Jesus gave us.

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the  
glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

*The Bread is broken and the priest says*

We break the bread of life.  
And that life is the light of the world.

God here among us,  
light in the midst of us,  
bring us to light and life.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*The priest says*

This is the table of Christ.

It has been made ready for those who love God,  
and those who want to love more.

So come; you who have much faith and you who have little.

You who have been to this sacrament often  
and you who have not been for some time.

You who have tried to follow Christ and you who have failed.

Come. It is Christ who asks us to meet him here.

## THE COMMUNION

*During Communion, the Lay Singers and Singing Scholars will sing **Es ist ein Ros Entsprungen**, words and music Anon. 14th century. English words: J.M. Neale; music arr. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), and **The Shepherds' Farewell**, words and music by Hector Berlioz; English words by Paul England.*

### ***A Prayer for Spiritual Communion***

*inspired by Richard of Chichester (1198-1253)*

*Thanks be to you, Christ Jesus,  
for all the benefits you have given me for all the pains and  
insults you have borne for me.*

*Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
I ask you to be present with me spiritually in my heart.*

*O most merciful redeemer,  
friend and brother,*

*may I know you more clearly,  
love you more dearly,  
and follow you more nearly,  
day by day.  
Amen.*

### ***Prayers for use during Communion***

*Christ Jesus, you promised in your gospel  
'I am with you always'. Be with me as part of  
this community today in this Eucharist;  
Hear my prayers for others and for myself.  
May I bind myself to you, in communion with  
all that lives this day, knowing that nothing can separate me  
from your love.  
Amen.*

*O God, help me to trust you,  
and to know that you are with me now.  
Help me to know that all are yours,  
and you are ours,  
in this Eucharist and for ever.  
Amen.*

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**Eternal God,  
in this night you have made known to us again  
the coming of our Redeemer Jesus Christ;  
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on you,  
until the day dawns  
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.  
Amen.**

## FINAL CAROL

[Tune: Adeste fideles; Words: John Francis Wade (1710-1786)]

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:

*Refrain:*

*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:

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;  
glory to God in the highest:

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning,  
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n:  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

## THE BLESSING

*The priest says*

Christ, who by the incarnation gathered into one  
things earthly and heavenly,

fill you with joy and peace on this holy night.  
And the blessing of God almighty:  
Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit  
be with you this Christmas and for ever.

**Amen.**

*The deacon says*

Go in peace.

Proclaim the Word made flesh.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Christmas Day Lunch

Wednesday 25th December at 1pm in the church

On Christmas Day after the Eucharist, we welcome everyone to a community lunch in the church. There will be turkey and vegetarian options, served with all the trimmings. No need to



book, just turn up!

The lunch costs £8-£10 per head (for 100-120 guests). If you would like to make a donation towards the cost, that would be wonderful and deeply appreciated.

You can do this online at [www.sjp.org.uk/giving](http://www.sjp.org.uk/giving) or with cash or contactless payment in church, and if you would like to

ask any questions or let us know about your donation, please email [associaterector@sjp.org.uk](mailto:associaterector@sjp.org.uk)



## Let's make Christmas special for all

Since this church was built in 1684, generations of Londoners and visitors have gathered to celebrate Christmas here. We often use words like 'home' and 'family' when we talk about Christmas, as people gather to celebrate with love and joy.

For many, this season is not a joyful or an easy time. For many, homelessness or heartbreak make Christmas difficult to celebrate.

St James's supports thousands of people every year, providing warmth and offering comfort to those who need it most. Most importantly, we welcome all into the community at St James's. We invite everyone to support the work of St James's this Christmas alongside people of all faiths and none. Your donation, whatever you can afford, will help us bring joy and hope into every heart this winter, together.

### Ways to donate:

Using your phone, text the word ALL£10 to the number **70490**

Tap your card on a contactless giving device located in the church.

Visit our website at:

[www.sjp.org.uk/christmas](http://www.sjp.org.uk/christmas)

or scan this code QR code.





St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL  
Tel: 020 7292 4860 • [www.sjp.org.uk](http://www.sjp.org.uk) • @StJPiccadilly