



St James's
PICCADILLY



The Eucharist for Christmas Day

Wednesday 25th December
2024 at 11am

With a congregation in the church
and live on YouTube



Welcome to St James's Church, Piccadilly!

Whether you are with us in person or joining us online, you are very welcome.

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. We invite you to join in the carols enthusiastically!

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!****

Everyone is warmly invited to receive communion or a blessing so please do come forward at the appropriate time.

Before the service, Dominic will play music inspired by the Incarnation.

ORDER OF SERVICE

INTROIT

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

*The Lay Singers and Scholars will sing **Vom Himmel Hoch**, words: Martin Luther; music: J.S. Bach*

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her.
Ich bring' euch gute neue Mär,
Der guten Mär bring ich so viel,
Davon ich sing'n und sagen will.

*From heaven above to earth I come
To bear good news to every home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
Whereof I now will say and sing.*

OPENING HYMN

[Tune: Forest Green; Words: Philip Brooks (1835-1893)]

**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.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all the earth.
For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.

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.

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.

OPENING RESPONSES

The priest says

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

And also with you.

A hallowed day has dawned upon us.
Let us pray in wonder and awe.

For a great light has shone on the earth!

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 own 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

Shout For Joy (Personent Hodie)

All sing

**Shout for joy, loud and long,
God be praised with a song!
To our God we belong—
Children of our maker,
God the great life giver!**

Refrain:

***Shout for joy, joy, joy!
Shout for joy, joy, joy!
God is love.
God is light.
God is everlasting!***

**By God's word all was made;
Heav'n and earth, light and shade,
Nature's wonders displayed.
We to tend creation
From its first foundation.**

**So we stand with our song!
We will work all as one
For the kingdom we long:
We will sing together,
With our God for ever!**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Collect

The priest says

Let us pray.

Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder
at heaven touching earth;
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Redeemer and our eternal God.

Amen.

Please sit.

FIRST READING

Titus 3.4-7

A reading from the Letter of Paul to Titus

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of

righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Listen for what the Spirit is saying.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

HYMN

[Tune: Winchester Old; Words: Nahum Tate (1652-1715)]

**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 humankind.**

**'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 forthwith
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 earth
begin and never cease.'**

Please remain standing.

THE GOSPEL

Luke 2.1-20

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
Glory to you O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone

around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

Please sit.

SERMON

The Revd Lucy Winkett

A period of silence is kept for personal reflection.

Please stand.

THE NICENE CREED *(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

Christ is born, the Prince of Peace.
Let us rejoice and be glad.

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 two 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: Cranham by Gustav Holst; Words: Christina Georgina Rossetti]

**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.**

**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.**

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
Cherubim and Seraphim
throngèd the air.
But only his mother
in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved
with a kiss.

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.

SECOND OFFERTORY CAROL

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

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.**

**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;
there his children gather round
bright like stars, in glory crowned.**

PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Blessed are you
O Christmas Christ,
that your cradle was so low
that shepherds,
poorest and simplest of earthly folk,
could kneel beside it and look level-eyed
into the face of God.
Come to us in bread and wine.
Come to us like child.

Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

*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** (*Williams*)

Sing each phrase after the cantor

Holy, holy, holy Lord

God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna,

Hosanna,

Hosanna in the highest.

The cantor sings

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Sing after the cantor

Hosanna,

Hosanna,

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 Scholars will sing
Nativity Carol, words and music: John Rutter (b.1945)
and **Gaudete** (words and music: Anon. 15th/16th century).*

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,
whose Word has come among us in bread and wine
and in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith shine in our lives
through the one who is Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

HYMN

[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 his incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
bless you on this day of days
and give you peace.

And the blessing of God: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The deacon says

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Christmas Lunch - today at 1pm in the church

Everybody is welcome to a community Christmas lunch in the church at 1pm today. There will be turkey and vegetarian options, served with all the trimmings.

No need to book, just turn up!

Christmas lunch costs £8-£10 per head (for 100-120 guests).

If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of the lunch, that would be wonderful and deeply appreciated.

Donations may be made online at www.sjp.org.uk/giving or with cash or contactless payment in the church.





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

or scan this code QR code.





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