



St James's
PICCADILLY

The Eucharist for the First Sunday of Christmas

**Sunday 28th December 2025
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.

ORDER OF SERVICE

OPENING HYMN

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

**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.

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 priest says

The word of God is living and active.
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
trusting in Christ's promise of forgiveness and healing.

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.

God in Trinity,
eternal unity of perfect love:
gather the nations to be one family,
and draw us into your holy life
through the birth of Emmanuel,
our Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Please sit.

FIRST READING

1 Corinthians 1.26-29

A reading from the Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

Listen for what the Spirit is saying.

Thanks be to God.

During the next carol, the Gospel is carried in procession down the central aisle of the church where it is read among the people. Please turn and face the Gospel as it passes.

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.

Please remain standing.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 2.13-18

The cantor sings and all repeat

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

The reader says

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

The cantor sings and all repeat

Glory to you O Lord. **Glory to you O Lord.**

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph^{*} got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,^{*} he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.^{*} Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

'A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

The cantor sings and all repeat

Praise to you O Christ. **Praise to you O Christ.**

The cantor sings and all repeat

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

SERMON

The Revd Lucy Winkett

A period of silence is kept for personal reflection.

Please stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(from the Iona Community)

**We believe in God,
maker and sustainer of all life.**

**We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ,
the word made flesh,
born of a woman, servant of the poor,
tortured and nailed to a tree.
A man of sorrows, he died forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven,
to be everywhere present,
and his kingdom will come on earth.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church,
Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of eternal life.
Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Led by a member of the congregation.

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.

THE PEACE

The priest says

May the God of peace make you holy,
ready for the coming of Christ Jesus.

The deacon says

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Please share the Peace with your neighbours if you are in the building, and in the YouTube chat box if you are online.

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

The tap donation machine is set to £10. If you would like to give a different amount, please use the machines at the entrance.

£10 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 22.

OFFERTORY HYMN

[Tune: Humility; Words: Edward Caswell (1814-1878) alt.]

See, amid the winter's snow,
born for us on earth below,
see, the tender Lamb appears,
promised from eternal years.

Refrain:

*Hail, thou ever-blessèd morn,
hail, redemption's happy dawn.
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

Lo, within a manger lies
he who built the starry skies;
he, who, throned in heights sublime,
sits amid the cherubim.

Say, you holy shepherds, say,
what your joyful news today?
Wherefore have you left your sheep
on the lonely mountain steep?

'As we watched at dead of night,
there appeared a wondrous light:
angels, singing "Peace on earth,"
told us of the Saviour's birth.'

Sacred infant, all divine,
what a tender love was thine,
thus to come from highest bliss,
down to such a world as this!

Virgin mother, Mary, blest,
by the joys that fill thy breast,
pray for us, that we may prove
worthy of the Saviour's love.

PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

The priest says

God of light:

look on us in mercy not in judgement;

draw us from hatred to love;

from sorrow to feasting.

Make the frailty of our prayers

a dwelling place for your glory.

Amen.

GATHERING CHANT

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, please join in singing 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** (*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.

All 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 for ever 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

All are warmly invited to receive Communion or a Blessing.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Heavenly God,

whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth

the life of an earthly home:

help your Church to live as one family,

united in love and obedience,

and bring us all at the last to our home in heaven;

through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Amen.

Notices are given by the congregation, wardens and clergy.

HYMN

[Tune: Puer Nobis (from Piaie Cantiones (1582); Words: 15th Century, trans. Percy Dearmer (1867-1936) alt.]

**Unto us a child is born!
King of all creation;
came he to a world forlorn,
the Lord of ev'ry nation,
the Lord of ev'ry nation.**

**Cradled in a stall was he,
watched by cows and asses;
but the very beasts could see
that he the world surpasses,
that he the world surpasses.**

**Then the fearful Herod cried,
'Pow'r is mine in Jewry!'
So the blameless children died
the victims of his fury,
the victims of his fury.**

**Now may Mary's Son, who came
long ago to love us,
lead us all with hearts aflame
unto the joys above us,
unto the joys above us.**

**Omega and Alpha he!
Let the organ thunder,
while the choir with peals of glee
shall rend the air asunder,
shall rend the air asunder.**

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.

O Morning Star

Sunday 4th January at 6pm

Join us for an intimate evening of music for Epiphany, as voices trace the journey of light and wonder through the winter night. Spanning the centuries, this programme celebrates the guiding star that leads to revelation and hope.

Performed by the St James's and St Pancras Music Scholars, the concert weaves a luminous tapestry of stillness, mystery, and radiant song.

Organists: Angelina Ding, Michael Haslam, Douglas Tang

Director: Harrison Knights

Programme:

O Radiant Dawn – MacMillan • *Christus* – Mendelssohn
Northern Lights – Gjelio • *Sure on the Shining Night* –
Lauridson • *Lux Aeterna* – Trotta • *Winters Light* – Joanna
Forbes Lestrangle • *Hail, Gladdening Light* – Wood
Lighten Our Darkness – Walker • *Dream a Little Dream/Clair
de Lune* – arr. Beck • *Seek him that maketh the seven stars* –
Dove • *Underneath The Stars* – Rusby

Tickets at: www.sjp.org.uk/whats-on/o-morning-star/





St James's Christmas For All Appeal

In 1684 Sir Christopher Wren's vision of St James's as a place of beauty and justice became a reality.

We often use words like home and family when we talk about Christmas, as we gather to celebrate with love and joy.

Yet, we should remember that for others there is no home, and many feel little love or joy at this time of year.



This Christmas, we invite you to support our work and help us continue to bring hope and comfort to those who need it most.

Your donation will make a difference in our community.

Donations may be made by visiting www.sjp.org.uk/christmas, by scanning the QR code, or by using one of the tap donation points in the church.



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