

St Mary's Church, Walkley



The Church on the Road:
Inclusive, Eucharistic, a safe place to be with God

A voice cries out:

*'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

*Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.*

*Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'*

Christmas Carol Service

18th December 2022

Officiant: Kath, Reader at St Mary's

The Preparation

We remain seated as the cantor sings and candles around the church are lit.

Minister I welcome you, on behalf of all here at St Mary's, both those gathered in the building and those on the livestream.

We have come together to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of carols.

As we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save:

for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy Wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a world in need;

for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognize their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace everywhere;

for all in special need, the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful and the bereaved, that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:

All **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.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing:

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, let us adore him...

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, let us adore him...

Lo, star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
we to the Christ child
bring our hearts' oblations:
O come, let us adore him...

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the highest:
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

Words: Latin, 18th century
Tune: Adeste fideles

Bethlehem, from you shall come forth a ruler

Micah 5. 2 - 4

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Micah.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labour has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing number 377 from the green hymn book.

We sit.

Your Father judged the cause of the poor

Jeremiah 22. 13 - 16; 23. 5, 6

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness,
and his upper rooms by injustice;
who makes his neighbours work for nothing,
and does not give them their wages;
who says, 'I will build myself a spacious house
with large upper rooms',
and who cuts out windows for it,
panelling it with cedar,
and painting it with vermilion.

Are you a king
because you compete in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
and do justice and righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
then it was well.
Is not this to know me?
says the Lord.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

The singing group: I wonder as I wander
We remain seated as the choir sing.

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse
Isaiah 11. 1 - 9

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing number 439 from the green hymn book.

We sit.

A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord Isaiah 40. 1 - 5

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

The singing group: Cloth for the cradle
We remain seated as the choir sing.

The Annunciation of Jesus to Mary
Luke 1. 26 - 38

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol
We stand and we sing number 471 from the green hymn book.

We sit.

The birth of Jesus

Luke 2. 1 - 7

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

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.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing:

**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 all of 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 to the earth be peace;
goodwill henceforth from heaven to all
begin, and never cease.’**

Nahum Tate, 1652-1715

The shepherds journey to the manger

Luke 2. 8 - 20

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

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.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing number 537 from the green hymn book.

The visit of the Magi

Matthew 2. 1 - 11

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The singing group: Sing lullaby

We remain seated as the choir sing.

We remain seated or kneel.

The Prayers

Intercessor In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Christ, born in a stable,
give courage to all who are homeless.

All Holy God,
hear our prayer.

Intercessor Christ, for whom the angels sang,
give the song of the kingdom to all who weep.

All Holy God,
hear our prayer.

Intercessor Christ, worshipped by the shepherds,
give peace on earth to all who are oppressed.

All Holy God,
hear our prayer.

Intercessor Christ, before whom the Magi knelt,
give humility and wisdom to all who govern.

All Holy God,
hear our prayer.

Intercessor Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger,
give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you.

All Holy God,
hear our prayer.

Intercessor Father,
angels and shepherds worshipped at
the manger throne.
Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary,
Joseph and the saints
through him who is your Word made flesh,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

The prayers conclude with the following:

All **Lighten our darkness,
Lord, we pray,
and in your great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The Collect

Minister Lord 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 Saviour and our eternal God.

All **Amen.**

Christmas Carol

We stand and we sing number 199 from the green hymn book.

The Blessing

Minister May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be ours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

All **Amen.**

All are welcome for mulled wine served at the back of church after the service.

Christmas services:

Christingle – 4pm on 24th December

Midnight Eucharist – 11:30pm on 24th December

Christmas Day Eucharist – 10:30am on 25th December

For more information: stmaryswalkley.co.uk

