



Where all find a welcome and are nurtured in their journey with Christ.



Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday 15 December 2024
6.00 pm

Welcome to St Mary's

Support our work

St Mary's is a charity which receives no funding from the government and is entirely dependent on donations and fees to keep its doors open, continue its work in the community, and maintain its buildings and outdoor spaces.

If you would like to donate to support us you can give during the service as giving plates are passed around. Alternatively, you can place your offering on the plate by the door as you leave, or tap your contactless card or device.

You can also donate online by card or directly from your bank by scanning this QR Code with your camera or by visiting **wkrk.uk/donate**.



If you'd like to give in some other way, find out more about planned giving, or learn how we use donations then please ask a member of our team.

Join us for refreshments

Join us after this evening's service for tea, coffee, mulled wine and mince pies in our Community Centre.



Hearing loop available

Our building is fitted with an inductive loop system which can be picked up by setting hearing aids to the “T” position.



Follow the instructions of our stewards

Please follow all instructions from our stewards.



Please sanitise your hands

Please clean your hands using the provided hand sanitiser when entering and leaving the building.



Digital order of service available

If you prefer, you can follow our order of service on your own phone or tablet. Just visit wkrk.uk/oos on your browser or scan this QR Code.



Other Christmas services at Whitkirk

Christmas Eve Crib Service

Tuesday 24 December at 5.00 pm

Midnight Mass

Tuesday 24 December at 11.30 pm

Christmas Day Eucharist

Wednesday 25 December at 10.00 am

Carols sung by the Choir

Christmas night

The words and the arrangement of the melody were written by the English composer and conductor John Rutter. The melody is from Arbeau's 'Orchésographie'. John Rutter studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. Much of his early work comprised church music and other choral pieces including Christmas carols. In 1983 he formed his own choir the 'Cambridge Singers'. John Rutter holds a Lambeth Doctorate in Music and was awarded a CBE in 2007 for services to music. Earlier this year he was knighted in the King's Birthday Honours.

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day

The original version of this English traditional carol first appeared in William Sandy's 'Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern' (published in 1833). However, it is thought that the words may date from the 16th century and some have speculated that the phrase "To see the legend of my play" (which appears in the chorus) may be based on an even earlier version associated with a mystery play of the late medieval period. The music was written in 1965 by the English composer John Gardner.

Blake's cradle song

The words were written by the English poet and painter William Blake. In his poem 'Cradle Song' he describes a mother singing to her child, asking the infant to stay asleep through the night. While she looks at her infant's face the mother sees Jesus' face. When she sees the infant smiling, she sees Jesus smiling at her and the world. In the last verse the mother says that heaven and earth are at peace and have harmony when she sees her baby smile. The music was written by the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams whose works include operas, ballets, chamber music, vocal pieces and orchestral compositions.

There is no rose

The words date from the 15th century. The music was written by the English composer Graham Ellis. He studied as an organist with Dr Caleb Jarvis and then with Dr Noel Rawsthorne at Liverpool Cathedral. He has been associated with the musical life of Merseyside for many years and is an experienced conductor of both choral and orchestral music, working with many choral and operatic societies.

Torches

The words were translated from Galician by John Trend. Born in Southampton, John Trend became the first Professor of Spanish at the University of Cambridge. The music was written in 1951 by the South African-born composer John Joubert. As well as sacred music, John Joubert wrote operas, major orchestral works as well as concertos for oboe, bassoon, violin, cello and piano.

Ding dong! merrily on high

The words of this well-known carol were written in the early 1900s by the English writer and church bell-ringing enthusiast George Woodward. The melody was first composed as a secular dance tune in the 1500s by the French cleric, writer and composer Jehan Tabourot. This arrangement of the carol was composed by the organist Stuart Nicholson who is Master of the Music at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

All bells in paradise

The words and the music were written by the English composer and conductor John Rutter. The title line of the text, 'All bells in paradise', is taken from the 15th century 'Corpus Christi Carol'.

In dulci jubilo

The words 'In dulci jubilo' are Latin for 'In sweet rejoicing'. In its original form the carol included German and Latin text, however, this evening's setting has an English translation of the German words. The lyrics are sung to a 14th century German melody. The arrangement of the melody was written by the English composer Bob Chilcott who was a former boy chorister at King's College, Cambridge. Bob Chilcott became a member of the King's Singers in 1985 and sang with them for twelve years.

Festival of Lessons and Carols

*Our worship begins at the sound of the bell, please stand
as the choir and the sacred ministers enter.*

Carol

Choir 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 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 **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.**

All **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 crowned
all in white shall wait around.**

Words: Cecil F. Alexander (1818-1895)

Music: Henry T. Gauntlett (1805-1876)

Verses 1-3 harmonised by Arthur H. Mann (1850-1929)

Verse 4 arranged by David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)

Please remain standing.

Welcome

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, 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 needy world;

for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples
may recognise 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:

**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 those who 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.**

Please sit.

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Softly through the winter's darkness shines a light,
clear and still in Bethlehem on Christmas night.
Round the stable where a virgin mother mild
watches over Jesus Christ the holy child.

Choirs of angels sing to greet his wondrous birth:
Christ our Lord in human form comes down to earth.
'Glory to God in highest heav'n' their joyful strain:
'Peace on earth, goodwill to men' the glad refrain.

Alleluia, let the earth rejoice today!
Christ is born to take our sins and guilt away.
Praise the Lord who sent him down from heav'n above:
holy infant, born of God the Father's love.

Words: John M. Rutter (b. 1945)
Music: Melody from Arbeau's Orchésographie (1588)
arranged by John M. Rutter (b. 1945)

Please stand.

Hymn

**Of the Father's heart begotten,
ere the world from chaos rose,
he is Alpha: from that Fountain
all that is and hath been flows;
he is Omega, of all things
yet to come the mystic Close,
evermore and evermore.**

**O how blest that wondrous birthday,
when the Maid the curse retrieved,
brought to birth mankind's salvation,
by the Holy Ghost conceived;
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
in her loving arms received,
evermore and evermore.**

**Sing, ye heights of heav'n, his praises;
angels and archangels, sing!
Where-so-e'er ye be, ye faithful,
let your joyous anthems ring,
e'vry tongue his name confessing,
countless voices answering,
evermore and evermore.**

*Words: (Latin) Aurelius C. Prudentius (348-413)
translated by Robert F. Davis (1866-1937)
Music: Plainsong melody adapted by
Theodoricus Petrus in 'Piae Cantiones' (1582)*

Please sit.

First Lesson

The story of our first disobedience to God's command

(Genesis 3:8–14)

*Read by Melvin Herring
Church Warden, St Mary's Church, Whitkirk*

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:
I would my true love did so chance
to see the legend of my play,
to call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
this have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,
of her I took fleshly substance;
thus was I knit to man's nature,
to call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
this have I done for my true love.

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,
so very poor this was my chance,
betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,
to call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
this have I done for my true love.

Then afterwards baptised I was;
the Holy Ghost on me did glance,
my Father's voice heard from above,
to call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
this have I done for my true love.

*Words: English traditional text
Music: John L. Gardner (1917-2011)*

Please remain seated.

Second Lesson

The prophecy of the Messiah's birth

(Isaiah 9:2, 6–7)

Read by Cllr Helen Hayden

*Local Councillor; member of the Standing Advisory Council
on Religious Education*

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Sweet dreams, form a shade
o'er my lovely infant's head:
sweet dreams of pleasant streams
by happy, silent, moony beams.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,
all creation slept and smiled;
sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
while o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace,
sweet, babe, once like thee,
thy Maker lay, and wept for me.

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
when he was an infant small,
thou his image ever see,
heav'nly face that smiles on thee.

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;
who became an infant small,
infant smiles are his own smiles;
heav'n and earth to peace beguiles.

Words: William Blake (1757-1827)
Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Verses: harmonised by Giles H. Taylor

Please stand.

Hymn

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.

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.

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

Music: English traditional melody

Verses 1 & 2 arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Verse 3 arranged by Thomas H. W. Armstrong (1898-1994)

Please sit.

Third Lesson

The annunciation to Mary

(Luke 1:26–38)

*Read by Gemma Quarmby
Headteacher, Whitkirk Primary School*

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

There is no rose of such virtue
as is the rose that bare Jesu:
Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was
heav'n and earth in little space:
Res miranda. *

* A wonderful thing

By that rose we may well see
there be one God in persons three:
Pares forma. **

** Of the same form

Then leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyous birth;
Transeamus. ***

*** Let us go

*Words: 15th century carol
Music: Graham J. Ellis*

Please stand.

Hymn

**Virgin-born, we bow before thee:
blessèd was the womb that bore thee;
Mary, maid and mother mild,
blessèd was she in her child.**

**Blessèd was the breast that fed thee;
blessèd was the hand that led thee;
blessèd was the parent's eye
that watched thy slumb'ring infancy.**

**Blessèd she by all creation,
who brought forth the world's salvation,
blessèd they, for ever blest,
who love thee most and serve thee best.**

*Words: Reginald Heber (1783-1826)
Music: 14th century German carol melody*

Please sit.

Fourth Lesson

The birth of Jesus

(Luke 2:1–7)

*Read by Aoife and Amanda Coggan
2nd Halton Guides*

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Torches, torches, run with torches
all the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;
come and sing your song to him!

Torches, torches, run with torches
all the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;
come and sing your song to him!

Ah Roro, Roro, my baby,
ah Roro, my love, Roro;
sleep you well, my heart's own darling,
while we sing you our Roro.

Sing, my friends, and make you merry,
joy and mirth and joy again;
lo, he lives, the King of heaven,
now and evermore. Amen.
Lo, he lives, the King of heaven,
now and evermore. Amen.

*Words: translated from the Galician by John B. Trend (1887-1958)
Music: John P. H. Joubert (1927-2019)*

Please stand.

Hymn

**Unto us is born a Son,
King of quires supernal:
see on earth his life begun,
of lords the Lord eternal.
of lord the Lord eternal.**

**Christ, from heav'n descending low,
comes on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know,
be-cradled in the manger,
be-cradled in the manger.**

**Of his love and mercy mild
this the Christmas story;
and O that Mary's gentle Child
might lead us up to glory,
might lead us up to glory!**

**O and A, and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
let our merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino,
*Benedicamus Domino.***

*Words & Music: from 'Piae Cantiones (1582)
English translation: George R. Woodward (1848-1934)
Music arrangement: David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)*

Please sit.

Fifth Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger

(Luke 2:8–16)

Read by Katy Dyer

Manager, Kids' Planet Day Nursery, Halton

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Ding dong! merrily on high,
in heav'n the bells are ringing.
Ding dong! verily the sky
is riv'n with angels singing
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
let steeple bells be swungen,
and i-o, i-o, i-o,
by priest and people sungen.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
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!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Hosanna in excelsis!
Hosanna in excelsis!

Words: George R. Woodward (1848-1934)
Music: 16th century French melody
arranged by Stuart Nicholson (b. 1975)

Please stand.

Hymn

**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 first saw the sight;
glories stream from heav'n afar,
heav'nly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.**

**Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiance beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace;
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

*Words: Joseph F. Mohr (1792-1848)
translated by John F. Young
Music: Franz Grüber (1787-1863)
arranged by Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)*

Please sit.

Sixth Lesson

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

(Matthew 2:1–11)

Read by Declan Hughes

Funeral Director, Hughes Funeral Services

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Deep in the cold of winter,
darkness and silence were everywhere;
softly and clearly, there came through the stillness
a wonderful sound, a wonderful sound to hear.

All bells in paradise I heard them ring,
sounding in majesty the news that they bring;
all bells in paradise I heard them ring,
welcoming our Saviour, born on earth, a heavenly King.

All bells in paradise I heard them ring:
'Glory to God on high' the angel voices sing.

Lost in awe and wonder,
doubting, I asked what this sign might be:
Christ our Messiah revealed in a stable,
a marvellous sight, a marvellous sight to see.

All bells in paradise I heard them ring,
sounding in majesty the news that they bring;
all bells in paradise I heard them ring,
welcoming our Saviour, born on earth, a heavenly King.

He comes down in peace, a child in humility,
the keys to his kingdom belong to the poor;
before him shall kneel the kings with their treasures,
gold, incense and myrrh, incense and myrrh.

All bells in paradise I heard them ring,
sounding in majesty the news that they bring;
all bells in paradise I heard them ring,
welcoming our Saviour, born on earth, a heavenly King.

All bells in paradise I heard them ring:
Glory to God on high' the angel voices sing.
The angel voices sweetly sing.

Words & Music: John M. Rutter (b. 1945)

Please stand.

Hymn

**In the bleak mid-winter
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 mid-winter
long ago.**

**Our God, heav'n cannot hold him
nor earth sustain;
heav'n and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign:
in the bleak mid-winter
a stable-place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.**

**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.**

*Words: Christina G. Rossetti (1830-1894)
Music: Gustav T. Holst (1874-1934)*

Please remain standing.

Seventh Lesson

The Incarnation of the Word of God

(John 1:1–14)

*Read by the Reverend Dr Claire Honess
Vicar of St Mary's Whitkirk*

Please sit.

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

In dulci jubilo, let us our homage shew;
our heart's joy reclineth *In praesepio*,
and like a bright star shineth *Matris in gremio*.
Alpha es et O, Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule! My heart is sore for thee!
Hear me, I beseech thee, *O Puer optime!*
My prayer let it reach thee, *O Princeps gloriae!*
Trahe me post te, trahe me post te!

O Patris caritas, O Nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained *Per nostra crimina*;
but thou hast for us gainèd *Coelorum gaudia*,
O that we were there, O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia, if that they be not there?
There are angels singing *Nova cantica*,
there the bells are ringing *In Regis curia*:
O that we were there, O that we were there!

*Words: English text translated from German
by Robert L. Pearsall (1795-1856)
Music: 14th century German melody
arranged by Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)*

Please stand.

Hymn

During the next carol a collection, our financial offering in support of the work of the Church both at St. Mary's and across our diocese, is taken.

You can place cash or giving envelopes on the collection plates as they are passed around. If you would prefer, or if you miss the plate, you can also give by scanning this QR Code, or by tapping your contactless card or device on the card reader by the door as you leave.



**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,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!***

**Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!***

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n 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: John F. Wade (1711-1786)
translated by Frederick Oakley (1802-1880) and others
Music: John F. Wade (1711-1786)
arranged by David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)*

Please remain standing.

The Collect

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
whose years never fail
and whose mercies are new each returning day:
let the radiance of your Spirit renew our lives,
warming our hearts and giving light to our minds;
that we may pass the coming year
in joyful obedience and firm faith;
through him who is the beginning and the end,
your Son, Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Blessing

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 yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

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 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 the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:
*Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

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

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and others
Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Verse 3 arranged by David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)*

*Please make your way across to our Community Centre
for tea, coffee, mulled wine and mince pies.*

Please join us again for worship over the Christmas season.

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Our regular services

- Sung Eucharist: Every Sunday at 10.00 am
- Said Eucharist: Every Wednesday at 10.00 am
- Choral Evensong: First Sunday of the month at 6.00 pm
- Compline: First Wednesday of the month at 8.30 pm
Next on Wednesday 5 February
(No service of Compline on New Year's Day)
- Daily Prayers: Tuesday to Saturday at 8.30am and 5.30pm

Contact us

If you'd like to get in touch you can call us on **0113 264 5790**, send an email to **hello@whitkirkchurch.org.uk**, or find more details on our website at **whitkirkchurch.org.uk/contact**.

St Mary's Church, Whitkirk 390 Selby Road Leeds LS15 0AA

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