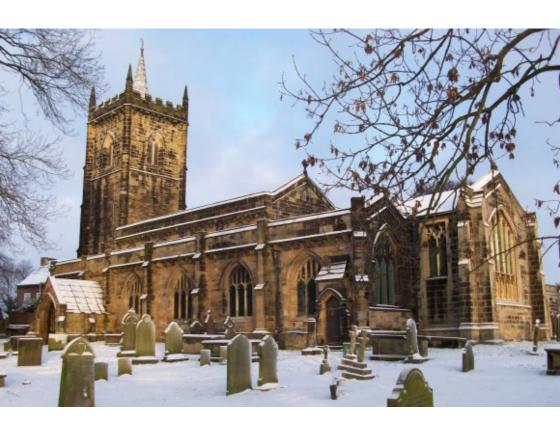


Where all find a welcome and are nurtured in their journey with Christ.



Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday 21 December 2025 7.00 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, or give online by card or directly from your bank by scanning this QR Code with your phone's camera or by visiting wkrk.uk/donate.



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

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Accessible for everyone

We aim to be accessible for everyone. For more information on accessibility at St Mary's please see **wkrk.uk/access** or ask any member of our team.



Our stewards are here to help

Please follow all instructions from our stewards, especially during communion. If you need extra help during a service, or if you would need help to leave the building in an emergency, please let us know.



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.



This service is streamed

We record and live-stream many of our services. If you'd prefer not to appear on camera, please let any member of our team know. You can find more information on streaming, privacy and your rights on our website at **wkrk.uk/sp** or by scanning this QR Code.



Children welcome

We love having children at our services and we want them – and their families – to love being here. If your children need to move around or make noise during the service, please don't feel uncomfortable. We are glad to hear and see them; they are the future of the church!

Toys and activities are available in our Tots' Corner are near the main door, and children are welcome to make use of these either in this area or in their pew. This area is not supervised; children must be always supervised by a responsible adult.

Safeguarding

Our Parish Safeguarding team can be contacted at any time. You can talk to Rev'd Claire or to Janet Blenkinsop, our Parish Safeguarding Officer, you can email **safeguarding@whitkirkchurch.org.uk**, or you can find more information and contact details at **wkrk.uk/safe**.



Join us for refreshments

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

Carols sung by the Choir

Once, as I remember

The words of this carol were written by the English Anglican priest George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934). The lyrics are set to a traditional Italian carol melody. The music arrangement was written by the Irish composer and teacher Charles Wood (1866-1926) whose students included Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells.

The Word made flesh

The text was written by the English playwright and poet Benjamin Jonson (1573-1637). Born in London, he was educated at Westminster School and at St John's College, Cambridge. The music was written by the Pontefract-born composer Philip Wilby (b. 1949) who was educated at Leeds Grammar School and Keble College, Oxford. As well as choral music, Philip Wilby has written compositions for piano, organ, chamber ensemble, and for brass band.

I saw three ships

Traditional English lyrics set to music by the English choral and orchestral conductor Reginald Jacques (1894-1969). From 1932 to 1960 he was the conductor of the Bach Choir and in 1936 he founded the Jacques String Orchestra.

I sing of a maiden

The 15th century words celebrate the Annunciation to Mary and the birth of Jesus. The music was written by the English composer Richard James Shephard (1949-2021). As well as his prolific musical career, Richard Shephard also had a distinguished career in education and was Headmaster of York Minster School from 1985 to 2004.

Il est né, le divin enfant

The music arrangement of this traditional French carol was written by the English composer, conductor, singer, arranger and producer Ben Parry (b. 1965). He is Director of the professional choir 'London Voices' and has worked with many major choirs and orchestras in the United Kingdom and abroad.

Carol of the Bells

This popular carol is based on a Ukrainian folk chant called 'Shchedryk'. It was written in 1904 by the Ukrainian composer Mykola Dmytrovych Leontovych (1877-1921) and it received its premiere in 1916. The carol lyrics that the choir will sing this evening were written in 1947 by Minna Louise Hohmann.

O holy night!

The original words of the carol were taken from a French poem written by Placide Cappeau (1808-1877). The English translation is by the American Unitarian minister John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893). The French composer Adolphe Charles Adam (1803-1856) set the poem to music in 1847. The music arrangement was written by the English organist and composer John Ebenezer West (1863-1929).

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)

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.

Once, as I remember; at the time of Yule, after mid-December. when it bloweth cool, I o'er heard a Mother was a-singing 'Sweet Jesu, La-lullay-lu, La-lullay-lu, Lullay la-lu.'

Near as man was able, on my knee fell I, in the Beth'lem stable where the babe did lie, and the Virgin mother was a-singing 'Sweet Jesu, La-lullay-lu, La-lullay-lu, Lullay la-lu.'

Ox and ass around him, courtier-like did stand: fair white linen bound him, spun by Mary's hand, while the Virgin mother was a-singing 'Sweet Jesu, La-lullay-lu, La-lullay-lu, Lullay la-lu.'

Ever among and o'er us angel quire 'gan sing antiphons in chorus to the new-born King, then the Virgin mother fell a-singing 'Sweet Jesu, La-lullay-lu, La-lullay-lu, Lullay la-lu.'

Words: George R. Woodward (1848-1934) Music: 17th century Italian carol arranged by Charles Wood (1866-1926)

First Lesson

The story of our first disobedience to God's command

(Genesis 3.8-14)

Read by Melvin Herring Churchwarden, St Mary's Church, Whitkirk

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.

Second Lesson

The prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom of peace

(Isaiah 11.1-9)

Read by Councillor Dan Cohen Lord Mayor of Leeds

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

I sing the birth was born tonight, the author both of life and light; the angels so did sound it, and, like the ravished shepherds said, who saw the light, and were afraid, yet searched, and true they found it.

The Son of God, the eternal King, that did us all salvation bring, and freed our soul from danger, he whom the whole world could not take, the Word, which heaven and earth did make, was now laid in a manger.

The Father's wisdom willed it so, the son's obedience knew no 'No'; both wills were in one stature, and, as that wisdom had decreed, the Word was now made flesh indeed, and took on him our nature.

What comfort by him we do win, who made himself the price of sin, to make us heirs of glory!

To see this babe, all innocence, a martyr born in our defence, can man forget the story?

Words: Benjamin Jonson (1572-1637) Music: Philip Wilby (b. 1949)

Hymn

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 men, from heav'n'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 blessèd 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 man, at war with man, hears not the love-song which they bring:

O hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet-bards foretold, when with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold; when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendours fling, and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Words: Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876) Music: English traditional melody adapted by Arthur S. Sullivan (1842-1900)

Please sit.

Third Lesson

The prophecy of the Messiah's birth

(Isaiah 9.2, 6-7)

Read by Maya Harrison Principal Keeper, Temple Newsam House

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

I saw three ships come sailing in, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, I saw three ships come sailing in, On Christmas Day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three? On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, And what was in those ships all three? On Christmas Day in the morning.

Our Saviour Christ and his Lady, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, Our Saviour Christ and his Lady, On Christmas Day in the morning.

Pray, whither sailed those ships all three? On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, Pray, whither sailed those ships all three? On Christmas Day in the morning.

O, they sailed into Bethlehem, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, O they sailed into Bethlehem, On Christmas Day in the morning. And all the bells on earth shall ring, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, And all the bells on earth shall ring, On Christmas Day in the morning.

Then let us all rejoice amain, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, Then let us all rejoice amain, On Christmas Day in the morning! amain: greatly

Words: English traditional text Music: Reginald Jacques (1894-1969)

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 sit.

Fourth Lesson

The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem

(Micah 5.2-4)

Read by Jean Bradley Silver Lining Luncheon Club

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

I sing of a maiden that is makeles, King of all kinges to her sone she ches.

He came all so stille, there his mother was, as dew in Aprille that falleth on the grass.

He came all so stille to his mother's bower, as dew in Aprille that falleth on the flower.

He came all so stille, there his mother lay, as dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden was never none but she; well may such a lady Goddes mother be.

makele: matchless, kinges: kings, sone: son, ches: chose, stille: still, Aprille: April, Goddes: God's

Words: 15th century Music: Richard J. Shephard (1949-2021)

Fifth Lesson

The annunciation to Mary

(Luke 1.26-38)

Read by Lynne Pickersgill Licensed Lay Minister

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

He is born, the holy child, play on the oboes and make a merry noise. He is born, the holy child, let's all sing to praise his birth.

For a thousand years and more, we have heard the prophets' stories, for a thousand years and more, we have waited for this time.

He is born, the holy child, play on the oboes and make a merry noise. He is born, the holy child, let's all sing to praise his birth.

What a lovely child is he! Oh, how gracious and so perfect! What a lovely child is he, such a holy heav'nly boy!

He is born, the holy child, play on the oboes and make a merry noise. He is born, the holy child, let's all sing to praise his birth.

This small stable is his home, this simple manger is his bed, this small stable is his home, all so humble for our Lord.

He is born, the holy child, play on the oboes and make a merry noise. He is born, the holy child, let's all sing to praise his birth.

Dear Lord Jesus, who knows us all, still such a tiny helpless infant; dear Lord Jesus, who knows us all, be our King for evermore.

He is born, the holy child, play on the oboes and make a merry noise. He is born, the holy child, let's all sing to praise his birth.

Words & Music: French traditional carol arranged by Ben Parry (b. 1965)

Sixth Lesson

The birth of Jesus

(Luke 2:1-7)

Read by Darcy Marson St Mary's Messy Church

Please stand.

Hymn

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me for ever, and love me, I pray. bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

Words: 19th century American Music: William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921) arranged by David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)

Please sit.

Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger

(Luke 2:8-16)

Read by Emma Norbury-Robinson 2nd Whitkirk Brownies

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

Ring Christmas bells, merrily ring, tell all the world, Jesus is King.
Loudly proclaim with one accord the happy tale, welcome the Lord.

Ring Christmas bells, sound far and near, the birthday of Jesus is here. Herald the news to old and young, tell it to all, in ev'ry tongue.

Ring Christmas bells, tell loud and long, your message sweet, peal and prolong. Come all ye people, join in the singing, repeat the story told by the ringing.

Ring Christmas bells, throughout the earth, tell the glad news of Jesus' birth.
Loudly proclaim, with one accord, the happy tale, welcome the Lord.

Ring Christmas bells, merrily ring, tell all the world, Jesus is King.
Loudly proclaim with one accord the happy tale, welcome the Lord.

Ring Christmas bells, sound far and near, the birthday of Jesus is here. Herald the news to old and young, tell it to all, in ev'ry tongue.

Ring Christmas bells, tell loud and long, your message sweet, peal and prolong. Come all ye people, join in the singing, repeat the story told by the ringing.

Ring Christmas bells, throughout the earth, tell the glad news of Jesus' birth.
Loudly proclaim, with one accord, the happy tale, welcome the Lord.

Ring Christmas bells, merrily ring. Tell all the world: Jesus is King!

> Words: Minna L. Hohman (written in 1947) Music: Ukrainian folk chant arranged by Mykola D. Leontovych (1877-1921)

Please stand.

Hymn

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, for Jesus Christ our Saviour was born upon this day, to save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray: O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father a blessèd angel came, and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same, how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name:

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

The shepherds at those tidings rejoicèd much in mind, and left their flocks a-feeding in tempest, storm and wind, and went to Bethlehem straightway this blessèd Babe to find:

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

But when to Bethlehem they came, whereat this infant lay, they found him in a manger, where oxen feed on hay; his mother Mary kneeling, unto the Lord did pray: O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place, and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface:

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Words & Music: English traditional carol arranged by David V. Willcocks (1919-2015)

Please sit.

Eighth Lesson

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

(Matthew 2:1-11)

Read by Emma Turnpenny Funeral Director, Co-op Funeral Care

Carol

Sung by the Choir.

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining; it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth!

Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees! O, hear the angel-voices!

O night divine, O night, when Christ was born!

O night divine, O night, O night divine!

Fall on your knees! O, hear the angel-voices!

O night divine, O night, when Christ was born!

O night divine, O night, o night divine!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming, with glowing hearts by his cradle we stand; so, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming, here came the wise men from the Orient land. The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger, in all our trials born to be our friend; he knows our need, he guardeth us from danger; behold your King! before the lowly bend! Behold your King! before the lowly bend! He knows our need, he guardeth us from danger; behold your King; before the lowly bend! Behold your King; before the lowly bend!

Words: John S. Dwight (1813-1893) Music: Adolphe C. Adam (1803-1856) arranged by John E. West (1863-1929)

Please stand.

Ninth Lesson

The Incarnation of the Word of God

(John 1:1-14)

Read by Claire Honess Vicar of St Mary's Whitkirk

Please remain standing.

Hymn

During the following hymn 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,
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,
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.

Wednesday 24 December

Crib Service at 5.00 pm Midnight Mass at 11.30 pm

Thursday 25 December

Sung Eucharist for Christmas Day at 10.00 am

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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

Sanctuary: Second Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm

Sacred Space: Last Thursday of the month at 6.00 pm

Pilgrims in the Park: Last Saturday of the month at 2.00 pm

at Temple Newsam Park

Daily Prayers: Tuesday to Saturday at 8.30 am and 5.30 pm

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**.