

CHRIST CHURCH of Exeter



December 28, 2025
10:00 a.m.

The First Sunday After Christmas
Lessons and Carols

A Service of Five Lessons and Carols

Prelude

The Shepherds at the Manger (In Dulci Jubilo)

Franz Liszt

Welcome

✠ *All stand, as they are able, as the bell tolls.*

Processional Hymn 93

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Regent Square

Bidding Prayer

We have come together as the family of God to celebrate the great Twelve Days 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 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.

Prayers of Penitence

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

✠ *Silence is kept. Stand or kneel.*

Lord of grace and truth,

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

Your Son our Savior was born in poverty in a manger.

Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.
Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.
We have sinned:
Forgive and heal us.

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus the King.
Forgive our reluctance to seek you.
We have sinned:
Forgive and heal us.

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself, and cleanse us from all our sins that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Word of God

✠ *Please sit for each lesson and stand (as you are able) for the singing of each hymn*

First Reading: The prophecy of the Messiah's birth Isaiah 9:2,6,7

Carol 89 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear *Carol*

Collect

Lord our God, on the first day of creation you made the light that scatters all darkness. Let Christ, the light of lights, hidden from all eternity, shine at last on your people and free us from the darkness of sin. Fill our lives with joy as we go out to welcome your Son at his coming. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

Second Reading: The Annunciation to Mary Luke 1:26-38

Carol 81, vv. 1-2 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming *Es ist ein Ros*

Collect

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised Saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Third Reading: The birth of Jesus Luke 2:1-7

Carol 102, vv. 1, 2, 4, 5 Once in Royal David's City *Irby*

Collect

Holy Jesus, to deliver us from the power of darkness you humbled yourself to be born among us and were laid in a manger. Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, and bring us at last to the

joyful vision of your beauty, for you are now alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Fourth Reading: Wise men are led by the star to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-11

Carol 119, vv. 1-4

As With Gladness Men of Old

Dix

Collect

Creator of the heavens, who led the Magi by a star to worship the Christ-child: guide and sustain us, that we may find our journey's end in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Fifth Reading: The Incarnation of the Word of God

John 1:1-14

Collect

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

✠ *The people greet one another in the name of the Lord. The Peace may be expressed by shaking hands, bowing, "fist or elbow bumps", namaste greeting, putting hand over heart, waving, making the peace sign, and by offering a smile.*

Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory Hymn 105

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

God Rest You Merry

✠ *The people stand, as they are able.*

The Great Thanksgiving

BCP p. 367

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

The Presider continues

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus S-128 (*sung by all*)

Ho - ly, ho - ly,

ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the

high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

*Music: William Mathias © 1985 the Church Pension Fund. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.
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✠ *The people kneel or stand, as they are able.*

The Presider continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Presider and People

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Presider continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

The Presider continues

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Presider

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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

✠ *The Presider breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept.*

Presider Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Invitation to Communion

The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Instructions Concerning Communion

You are invited to receive Holy Communion. Following the usher's instructions, we begin with those seated in the side sections, starting with the front pews. Please go to the back of the church and proceed down the center aisle to the communion rail. Return to your seat using the outside aisles of those sections. Those seated in the center sections, please come forward beginning with the back pews using the center aisle and return using the diagonal aisles.

Communion may be received kneeling or standing at the altar rails. The bread is received in the open palm. (Gluten-free wafers are available). You may drink from the cup, or place your hand on the base as a sign of devotion. Intinction, dipping the wafer into the wine, is also acceptable.

Those who do not wish to receive Communion are invited to come forward for a blessing, indicated by crossing your arms over your chest.

Communion can also be brought to you in the pews. Please communicate this request to an usher or the clergy.

Communion Music

The Carol of the Birds
Gretchen McBride, soloist

Catalan Carol

Prayers after Communion

✠ *The people kneel or stand, as they are able.*

Christ, born in a stable, give courage to all who are without a home: Jesus, Savior,
Hear our prayer.

Christ, for whom the angels sang, give the song of the kingdom to all who weep: Jesus, Savior,
Hear our prayer.

Christ, worshiped by the shepherds, give peace on earth to all who are oppressed: Jesus, Savior,
Hear our prayer.

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt, give humility and wisdom to all who govern: Jesus, Savior,
Hear our prayer.

Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger, give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you:
Jesus, Savior,
Hear our prayer. Amen.

Blessing

May the Father, who has loved the eternal Son from before the foundation of the world, shed that love upon you his children. **Amen.**

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, by whose overshadowing Mary became the Godbearer, give you grace to carry the good news of Christ. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Recessional Hymn 107

Good Christian, Friends, Rejoice

In Dulci Jubilo

The Dismissal

Priest Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**

Postlude

Two Verses on *Go Tell it on the Mountain*

J. Janca & J. A. Behnke

This service has been published by the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM). The RSCM Carol Service has been devised by Tim Ruffer, the RSCM's Head of Publishing and The Rev. Peter Moger, the Church of England's National Worship Development Officer. The new service provides an alternative choice to the traditional Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols first drawn up by Bishop Edward Benson of Truro, later to be adopted by the Dean of King's College Chapel, Cambridge in 1918.

Participating in Today's Liturgy:

Presider: The Rev. Nicole Benevenia

Lectors:

(1) Charles Johnson

(2) Nancy Fleming

(3) Lucia Savage

(4)

(5) The Rev. Nicole Benevenia

Eucharistic Ministers: Nancy Fleming

Welcome Team/Usher: Scott Anders

Live Stream Tech: Paul Wainwright

Altar Guild: Diane DiPalermo, Carla Ranks

Flower Delivery: Juliette Gavin

There is no Sunday School or childcare today. There is also no Coffee Hour.

CHRIST CHURCH

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Junior Warden

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