

# Bristol Masonic Society

£5.00

Province of Bristol  
(Founded 1917)

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*SECRETARY*  
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*SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT*  
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## CAROL SERVICE

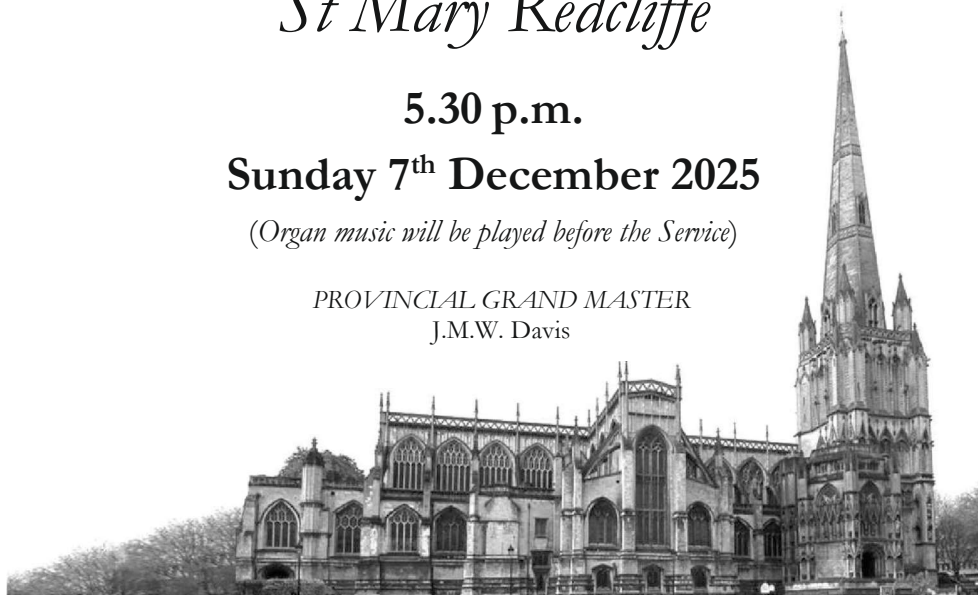
*St Mary Redcliffe*

**5.30 p.m.**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

*(Organ music will be played before the Service)*

*PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER*  
J.M.W. Davis





ST. MARY REDCLIFF, BRISTOL, IN PROCESS OF RESTORATION UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR. G. GOWNS, ARCHITECT.



## **CAROL (Choir and Congregation)**

### **‘Unto Us a Child is Born’**

1. Unto us a child is born,  
King of all creation:  
Came He to a world forlorn,  
The Lord of every nation.
2. Cradled in a stall was He  
With sleepy cows and asses;  
But the very beasts could see  
That He all men surpasses.
3. Herod then with fear was filled:  
‘A Prince’, he said, ‘in Jewry!’  
And all the little boys he killed  
At Bethlem in his fury.
4. Now let Mary’s Son, who came  
So long ago to love us,  
Lead us all with hearts aflame  
Unto the joys above us.
5. Omega and Alpha He!  
Let the organ thunder,  
While the choir with peals of glee  
Doth rend the air asunder.

## **THE FIRST LESSON**

Isaiah Chapter 9 verses 2, 6-7

T.G. Rhys-Davies

*B.M.S. Junior Vice-President*

## **CHOIR ANTHEM (1)**

## **THE SECOND LESSON**

St Luke Chapter 1 verses 26-35

B.S. Bassral, J.P.

*Provincial Senior Grand Warden*

## CAROL (Choir and Congregation)

### ‘O Little Town of Bethlehem’

1. 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.
2. O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth;  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.
3. *How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His Heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.*
4. Where children pure and happy  
Pray to the blessed Child,  
Where misery cries out to Thee,  
Son of the mother mild;  
Where charity stands watching  
And faith holds wide the door,  
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,  
And Christmas comes once more.
5. 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.

### ***Choir Only:***

3. *How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His Heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.*

## THE THIRD LESSON

St Luke Chapter 2 Verses 1-7

A.J. Griffiths

*B.M.S. Senior Vice-President*



## THE FIFTH LESSON

St John Chapter 1 verses 1-14.

J.M.W. Davis

*Provincial Grand Master for Bristol*

### CHOIR ANTHEM (4)

#### CAROL (Choir and Congregation)

##### ‘Hark the Herald Angels Sing’

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 the angelic host proclaim:  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem”.

*Hark! The herald angels sing  
“Glory to the new-born King”.*

Christ, by highest heaven 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 heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Risen 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”.*

#### PRAYER

**The Revd Steven Hawkins**

#### BLESSING

**The Revd Steven Hawkins**

## RECESSIONAL CAROL (Choir and Congregation)

### ‘O Come All Ye Faithful’

1. 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.*

2. 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 ...*

3. 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...*

4. 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...*

5. 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...*

*The Bristol Masonic Society hopes that this service will mark the beginning  
of a happy Christmas season for you and your families.*

*Following this service,  
the Province of Bristol will be pleased to welcome  
Brethren, their families and guests  
to a buffet supper  
held at Freemasons’ Hall, Park Street at 7.00 p.m.*

**N.B. Booking in advance is necessary to allow adequate catering.**

## SOME OF THE LINKS BETWEEN FREEMASONRY AND THE CHURCH OF ST MARY REDCLIFFE

Links are believed to have existed between Freemasonry and the church of St Mary Redcliffe since the earliest times. John Evans, in his *Chronological Outline of the History of Bristol* (1824), states that William Canynges, the younger, the mayor in 1460, and a great patron of the church, rebuilt St Mathyas's Chapel in Redcliffe Street and turned it into a Freemasons' Hall.

We know few details of the early associations until the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Local newspapers record the burial at St Mary Redcliffe of Brother Murch in January 1773, who was 'attended to the grave by a considerable number of the society [of Freemasons] dress'd in their proper habiliments.' The Provincial Grand Lodge of Bristol celebrated the festival of St. John the Baptist in 1785 by walking in regalia to St Mary Redcliffe with the Provincial Grand Master, Thomas Dunckerley, to attend divine service.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Bristol Freemasons took an active part in raising monies for the restoration of the church. In 1846, the first stone of the restoration work was laid by the Mayor, assisted by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. William Done Bushell, in the presence of many Bristol Masons. The Province paid for the complete restoration of the Lady Chapel, and in 1861 a gathering of over 500 Freemasons saw the final stone of the north-east corner laid by W.Bro. Henry Shute, the Provincial Grand Master, assisted by his Deputy, W.Bro. W.A.F. Powell, who was then one of the church wardens. The Rt Hon. the Earl of Limerick, the Provincial Grand Master, and the Brethren celebrated the restoration of the vaulting of the Lady Chapel and the provision of an encaustic pavement, by holding a service of thanksgiving when they returned the beautified chapel to the charge of the Bishop in 1870. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries St Mary Redcliffe was the natural place for Bristol Masons to meet, to give thanks and celebrate such important festivals as the centenary of the Consecration of the Royal Clarence Lodge (No. 68) in 1907. The link was further strengthened when The Redcliffe Lodge (No. 4503) was consecrated in 1923.

A number of the church's organists were active Masons including the first Provincial Organist 1819-1837, Bro. Cornelius Bryan, the organist between 1818 and 1840, who died in 1840 as a result of falling through a trap-door in a theatre, and Bro. Joseph William Lawson (1844-1920), W.M. of The Powell Lodge, (No. 2257) in 1898, the organist between 1862 and 1906, composed a set of evening canticles and a *Nunc Dimitis*. He served as Provincial Grand Organist between 1873 and 1894 and was Provincial Junior Grand Warden in 1902. Bro. Ralph Thompson Morgan (1876-1949) of The Jerusalem Lodge (No. 686) was organist of the church from 1906 to 1949 and the civic organist for two decades; he formed a part of the vicar's extended family resident in Redcliffe Vicarage.

By the 1920s the stonework of the church was in urgent need of repair. The Canynges Society, which was formed in 1848 for collecting money for the restoration of the church, was re-

formed with W.Bro. Arthur Cecil Powell (1868-1949) P.G.D., P.M. 187 & 2076 (later Provincial Grand Master) as treasurer. W.Bro. Powell served as treasurer for twenty-three years and personally paid the whole cost of the restoration of the church's undercroft known as 'Canynges Kitchen'. W.Bro. Powell was an active church warden of St Mary Redcliffe for many years.

The Rt Revd. W.Bro. Dr George Nickson (1864-1949), Bishop of Bristol between 1914 and 1933 (P.M. 686), preached the first annual sermon of the society. The Province of Bristol was a very generous benefactor to the work of restoration between 1927 and 1933, and the Vicar, from 1928-1936, Bro. The Revd Canon Edward Lewis Augustine Hertslet (1878-1936), known as 'Elah', a member of The Jerusalem Lodge (No. 686), held a special Masonic Service of Thanksgiving in 1934 to celebrate the completion of the work. Canon Hertslet's bust was carved in stone, and placed over the priest's door of the church to mark the vital rôle he played in its restoration. Until the 1960s it was customary for the verger to doff his hat every morning to the likeness of his old friend. It is believed that, at the time of the 1934 restoration, likenesses of W.Bro. A.C. Powell and Bro. R.T. Morgan were also carved and added to the fabric.

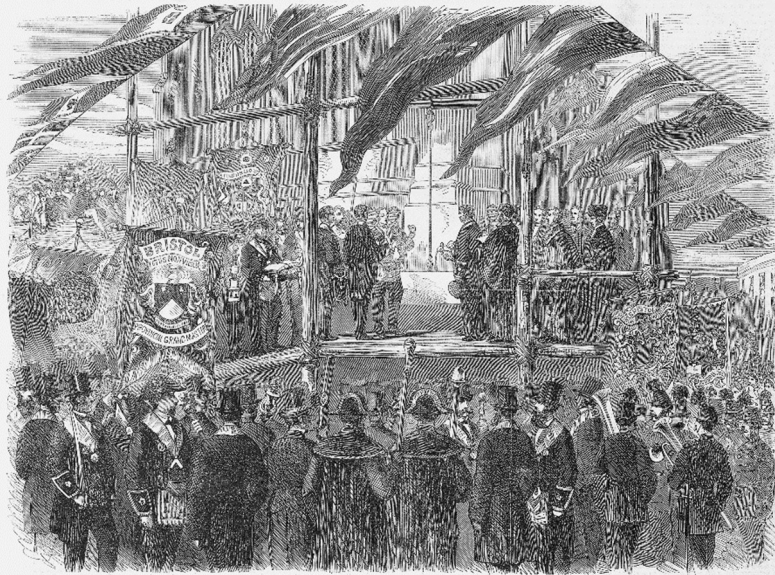
In more recent times W.Bro. the Revd Canon Richard Fox Cartwright D.D. (1913-2009), who was Vicar of St Mary Redcliffe from 1952-1972, and later Suffragan Bishop of Plymouth 1972-1981, was involved in Bristol Masonry. He was a member both of the Royal Sussex Lodge of Hospitality (No. 187), and The Jerusalem Lodge (No. 686). Under his *aegis* a Provincial service was held at St Mary Redcliffe to mark the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in June 1953, and services were held annually thereafter until 1957. The monies raised from these services was put towards the rebuilding of St Mary Redcliffe Schools. The preacher in 1957 was W.Bro. the Revd Canon J.E. Staley, P.A.G. Chaplain, and President of the Canynges Society, who was Chaplain of Redcliffe Lodge and Rector of Stapleton.

In 1961 the church was once again in need of restoration and Canon Cartwright began an extensive fund-raising campaign in Great Britain and America. When the work was completed in 1965, stonemasons carved his likeness which was placed on the tower.

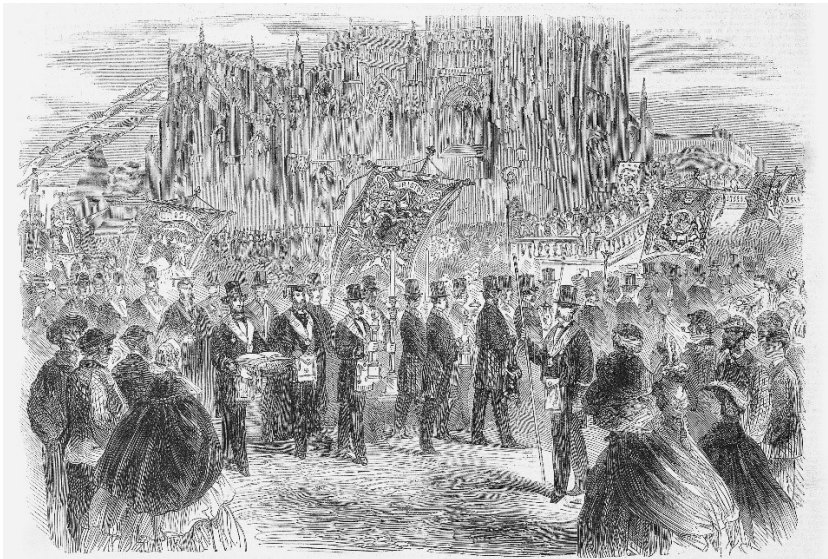
The first Bristol Masonic Society carol service was held at the church of St Thomas the Martyr on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1979. The idea was that of Bro. C.F. Wherlock (1920-1987) of Brunel Lodge (No. 7356), one of the church wardens of St Thomas's. The annual service of December 1982 was the last held at St Thomas the Martyr's, which was subsequently declared redundant. The first service at St Mary Redcliffe, (the mother church of St Thomas's) was held in 1983. This has cemented the close and long-standing association between the church and the Province.

Since the time of Bro. the Revd Benjamin Spry (1741-1806), of the Royal York Lodge and vicar between 1775 and 1806, until the present, vicars, curates, church wardens and parishioners have been actively involved in Bristol Freemasonry.

M.J.C.E.



RESTORATION OF ST. MARY REDCLIFF CHURCH, BRISTOL: PLACING THE LAST STONE AT THE NORTH-EAST CORNER OF THE LADY CHAPEL WITH MASONIC RITES.



MASONIC DEMONSTRATION AT BRISTOL IN CONNECTION WITH THE RESTORATION OF ST. MARY REDCLIFF CHURCH: ARRIVAL OF THE PROCESSION AT THE CHURCH.

**DONATIONS TO CHARITIES  
FROM THE SALE OF CAROL SERVICE BOOKLETS**

2006	Mencap	420.00	
	RMBI 2008 Festival	420.00	<b>840.00</b>
2007	Gurkha Welfare Trust	850.00	
	RMBI 2008 Festival	400.00	<b>1,250.00</b>
2008	Diabetes UK	500.00	
	Cancer Research UK	500.00	
	St. Mary Redcliffe Organ Appeal	200.00	<b>1,200.00</b>
2009	Salvation Army	500.00	
	Bristol Samaritans	250.00	
	St Peter's Hospice, South West	250.00	<b>1,000.00</b>
2010	Friends of Amani (UK)	200.00	
	Help for Heroes	250.00	
	St Peter's Hospice	300.00	<b>750.00</b>
2011	Jessie May Trust	325.00	
	St Peter's Hospice – Bristol	315.00	
	High Sherrif's Appeal	300.00	<b>940.00</b>
2012	Bristol 2019 Masonic Samaritan Fund	450.00	
	BRACE	450.00	
	BRI Prostate Cancer Appeal	450.00	<b>1,350.00</b>
2013	Bristol 2019 Masonic Samaritan Fund	500.00	
	MIND (Mental Health)	490.00	
	Salvation Army – Bristol	490.00	<b>1,480.00</b>
2014	Bristol 2019 Masonic Samaritan Fund	440.00	
	Combat Stress	500.00	
	DEBRA	500.00	<b>1,440.00</b>
2015	Bristol 2019 Masonic Samaritan Fund	1,530.00	<b>1,530.00</b>
2016	Trinity Care	660.00	
	Christchurch Seniors	650.00	
	Clifton Cathedral Corner Club	650.00	<b>1,960.00</b>
2017	Barton Camp	400.00	
	Teddies for Loving Care	400.00	
	Children's Hospice South West	400.00	<b>1,200.00</b>
2018	Churches Conservation Trust	50.00	
	The Green House	950.00	<b>1,000.00</b>
2019	Penny Brohn UK	1,250.00	<b>1,250.00</b>
2020	<i>No Carol Service – Covid-19</i>		
2021	Heswall Disabled Children's Summer Camps	500.00	<b>500.00</b>
2022	Bristol Urological Institute	500.00	<b>500.00</b>
<b>2023</b>			

**TOTAL   £ 18,190.00**