



St Mary Redcliffe

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

**Saturday 13th December &
Sunday 14th December 2025
5.30pm**



Spread the gift of joy this Christmas!

To reduce our use of paper we are printing fewer copies of this order of service. If someone near you doesn't have an order of service, scan this QR code to download it and pass this one to them!

Christmas at St Mary Redcliffe 2025

Tuesday 16 December

7.30pm Carol Service with Salvation Army

Celebrate Christmas with the band of the Salvation Army

Sunday 21 December

5.30pm Blue Christmas

This is a service for those who find Christmas difficult. Whether remembering a loved one who has died or finding things tough for any reason, Blue Christmas offers a peaceful space, with gentle music and readings.

Monday 22 December

1.00pm Carols at Lunchtime

Carols for all to sing, sacred and secular, with poems and readings.

Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service

Family favourite all-age service with popular carols and a nativity tableau. Children are invited to come dressed in costume.

11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

The traditional late-night Christmas service.

Christmas Day

10.30am Family Eucharist

Family-friendly for all ages. Bring your presents!

Welcome

On Saturday please return this booklet for use tomorrow

St Mary Redcliffe

To learn more about what we do in the church and the local community, please have a look at our website:

www.stmaryredcliffe.co.uk

Sunday Services

8.00 am	Holy Communion (from Lent onwards)
9.30 am	Choral Mattins
10.30 am	Sung Eucharist <i>with Children's Church</i>
5.30 pm	Choral Evensong

Today's Collection

Please celebrate Christmas by giving generously to the church and its work in the Redcliffe community.

There is a **cash collection** at the end of the service and contactless donation points at the doors, or you can give while you wait via the QR code or using [this link here](#).



Thank you for your contribution to our life together

Order of Service

Welcome from the clergy and as the lights dim for the start of the service, please stand.

Congregational Carol

Solo 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 through all his wondrous childhood
 He would honour and obey,
 Love and watch the lowly maiden,
 In whose gentle arms he lay:
 Christian children all must be
 Mild, obedient, good as he.

 For he is our childhood's pattern,
 Day by day like us he grew,
 He was little, weak, and helpless,
 Tears and smiles like us he knew:
 And he feeleth for our sadness,
 And he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

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;
Where like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

Words
Music
Descant

C. F. Alexander
H. J. Gauntlett (arr. A. H. Mann)
David Willcocks

Please remain standing

Bidding Prayer

The minister leads the congregation in prayer, at the end of which we all say:

**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.**

The Almighty God bless us with his grace:
Christ give us the joys of everlasting life:

and unto the fellowship of the citizens above
may the King of Angels bring us all.
Amen.

Please sit

Choir Carol *Ding Dong Merrily on High*

First published in 1924, G.R.Woodward's carol is set to music written by the 16th Century cleric, Thoinot Arbeau. It evokes peals of bells, heard on the organ in this arrangement by David Willcocks.

*Words
Music*

*G.R.Woodward
Arr. David Willcocks*

First Lesson *from the Book of Genesis*

*God announces the consequences of human sin in the
Garden of Eden
(Genesis 3 verses 8 to 15)*

Please stand

Congregational Carol

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 power
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...

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...

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...

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...

Please sit

Second Lesson *from the Book of Genesis*

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall
all the nations of the earth be blessed.
(Genesis 22 verses 15 to 18)*

Choir Carol

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

The 20th Century English composer, Elizabeth Poston had a busy career as a musician, collaborating with writers such as Dylan Thomas. Possibly her most well-known work, this carol sets words first published in the 18th Century, referencing both the apple tree in the Song of Solomon, and Luke's Gospel with references to the tree of life.

Words
Music

Attrib. Richard Hutchins, from the collection of Joshua Smith, New Hampshire
Elizabeth Poston

Third Lesson

from the Prophet Isaiah

*The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.
(Isaiah 9 verses 2,6,7)*

Please stand

Congregational Carol

See amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below;
See the tender Lamb appears,
Promis'd from eternal years.

*Hail, thou ever-blessed morn
Hail, redemption's happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies;
He who, throned in height sublime,
Sits amid the cherubim.

Hail, thou ever-blessed morn...

Sacred infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss
Down to such a world as this;

Hail, thou ever-blessed morn...

Teach, O teach us, Holy Child,
By thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble thee,
In thy sweet humility:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn...

Words
Music

E. Caswall
John Goss

Please sit

Fourth Lesson ***from the Prophet Isaiah***
The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.
(Isaiah 11 verses 1 to 9)

Choir Carol ***Angelus ad Virginem***
Written in the late 13th century or early 14th century, this medieval carol originated in France, before being brought to England. It is mentioned in Chaucer's 'The Miller's Tale', and tells of Gabriel's visit to Mary. Words Anon, Music Anon

Choir Carol ***Resonemus Laudibus***
Also with medieval origins, this lively carol has been referred to as a 'Christmas song of joy', telling both of the coming of Jesus, and of God's creation of all things.
David Willcocks' arrangement includes a celebratory organ accompaniment,
reminiscent of medieval instrumentation. Words Anon, Music 14th Century Carol, Arr. David Willcocks

Fifth Lesson ***from the Gospel of St Luke***
The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.
(Luke 1 verses 26 to 38)

Please stand

Congregational Carol

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.

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 wond'ring love.

Choir 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.

All 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
Music
Descant

Bishop Phillips Brooks
English trad. Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams
Thomas Armstrong

Please sit

Sixth Lesson ***from the Gospel of St Luke***
St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus
(Luke 2 verses 1 to 7)

Choir Carol ***My Lord has Come***

With words and typically rich, lush music by the contemporary composer, Will Todd, this carol tells of the shepherds and wise men discovering God's love as they seek the baby Jesus in the stable. Words Will Todd, Music Will Todd

Please stand

Congregational Carol

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 you and all mankind.

‘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 on the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.’

Words	Nahum Tate
Music	Este's Psalter
Descant	David Willcocks

Please sit

Seventh Lesson ***from the Gospel of St Luke***
The Shepherds go to the manger.
(Luke 2 verses 8 to 16)

Choir Carol ***What sweeter Music***

The words of this carol, lyrically set by John Rutter, were written by the 17th Century English poet, Robert Herrick, whose work has been widely set to music. They are words of hope, telling how the birth of Jesus transforms darkness to light, and winter to spring.

Words	Robert Herrick
Music	John Rutter

Eighth Lesson ***from the Gospel of St Matthew***
The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.
(Matthew 2 verses 1 to 12)

Choir Carol ***Mirabile Dictu***

The opening song from the 2009 song cycle 'The Manchester Carols', this tells of the awe and wonder of the Christmas story, with composer and soprano Sasha Johnson Manning setting words by Carol Ann Duffy. 'Mirabile Dictu' translates as 'wonderful to relate'.

Words
Music

Carol Ann Duffy
Sasha Johnson Manning

Please stand

Ninth Lesson ***from the Gospel of St John***

*St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.
(John 1 verses 1 to 14)*

Congregational Carol

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...

Words	<i>Adeste Fideles, Translated by F. Oakeley, W. T. Brooke and others</i>
Music	<i>J. F. Wade</i>
Descant	<i>Norman Harper</i>

Please remain standing as the minister says

Collect for Christmas Eve

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of thy only Son, Jesus Christ:
Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him,
when he shall come to be our judge;
who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy
Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen

Blessing

May he who by his Incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Recessional Carol

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 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 th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark! the herald Angels sing...

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun 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...

Words
Music
Descant

Charles Wesley
Felix Mendelssohn
David Willcocks

Organ Voluntaries

In Dulci Jubilo BWV 729 *J.S.Bach (1685-1750)*

Saturday

Grand Choeur in D, Op.18.no.1

Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Sunday

Final from Symphonie 1 Op.14

Louis Vièrne (1870-1937)



Merry Christmas from everyone at
St Mary Redcliffe Church

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