

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH
LOWESTOFT



Midnight Mass



Christmas Eve 2024
11.30pm



Welcome to St Margaret's Church

During the service you are welcome to stand or sit as you feel most comfortable.

Congregational responses are in bold type

Deacon Sarah

Preside & Preacher Canon Simon Stokes

Glory to God in the highest:
And peace to his people on earth.

Carol No 10: Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Please stand)

*1. Hark! the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn 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 newborn King!"*

*2. 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 newborn King!"*

*3. 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 we 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 newborn King!"*

Lighting of the Advent Candles (Please sit)

Christ is our hope, our joy, our peace,
Our source of love and light.

Praise to Christ our light

The Advent candles are lit.

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
Born in David's city of Bethlehem.
Born like him to be a king:
Be born in our hearts this Christmas time,
be King of our lives today.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph:
'You shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.'
Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

CONFESSION

Lord of grace and truth,
we confess our unworthiness
to stand in your presence as children.

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 Saviour
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.

The ABSOLUTION

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver *us* from all *our* sins,
confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness,
and keep *us* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Carol No. 11: Joy to the world (Please stand)

***1. Joy to the world, the Lord has come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.***

***2. Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks,
hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.***

***3. He rules the world with truth and grace,.
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, and wonders of His love.***

COLLECT - Please remain standing

Eternal God,
in the stillness of this night
you sent your almighty Word
to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

READING: Hebrews 1:1-4 (Please sit)

'Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.'

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Carol No. 14: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (Please stand)

***1. 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 Heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.***

***2. Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled.
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.***

***3. Yet, with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angels' 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.***

***4. 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 send back the song
which now the angels sing.***

Please remain standing

Alleluia, Alleluia. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory. **Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READING: John 1: 1-14 (Please remain standing)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (Please sit) Canon Simon

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Please stand)

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION Led by Christine
(Please sit or kneel)

Response to 'Lord in your mercy'

All **Hear our prayer**

At the end of the prayers:

**Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen.**

THE PEACE (Please stand)

Unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace

Offertory Carol 20: On Christmas Night all Christians Sing

The offering will be split between the Childrens society and church funds

During the hymn the Altar is prepared

***1. On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring;
On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.***

***2. Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad:
When from our sin He set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.***

***3. When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and we with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.***

***4. All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night;
All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen."***

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER (Please sit)

The Lord is here

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

All glory and honour

be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever living God.

We give you thanks and praise
for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who for love of our fallen race
humbled himself,

was born of the Virgin Mary
by the power of the Holy Spirit
and lived as one of us.

In this mystery of the Word made flesh
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of your glory
in the face of Jesus Christ.

In him we see our God made visible
and so are caught up
in the love of the God we can not see.

Therefore with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise...

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, in the highest.***

We praise and bless you,
loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood
of your dear Son.

On the night before he died
he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, 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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence
his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life
and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ has risen:

Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours,
O loving Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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 that 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.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

THE COMMUNION

The Agnus Dei is sung

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BREAD AND WINE

All are welcome to come forward to receive the bread wine and a blessing.

During the sharing of the bread and wine these two hymns will be sung (Carol words on following pages)

Carol No 13: Silent Night

Carol No. 2: In the bleak mid-winter

Carol No 13: Silent night

1.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

2.Silent night, holy night.

Shepherds quake at the sight,

Glories stream from Heaven afar

Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia:

Christ, the Saviour is born

Christ, the Saviour is born

3.Silent night, holy night

Son of God, Love's pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face

With the dawn of redeeming grace

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth

Carol No. 2: In the bleak mid-winter

***1. 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.***

***2. Our God,
heaven cannot hold him
nor earth sustain;
heaven 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.***

***3. Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air,
but only his mother
in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved
with a kiss.***

***4. 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.***

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

**God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star
rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.**

Carol No. 12: O come all ye faithful (Please stand)

1. O Come All Ye Faithful

**Joyful and triumphant,
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,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**

**3. 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,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**

**4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.**

THE BLESSING

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Mary and Joseph,
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.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ.
Amen.

Merry Christmas
from everyone at St. Margaret's Church

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Please do join us
Christmas Day morning
for our 10am Informal Family Holy Communion

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