

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH

LOWESTOFT



Service of Holy Communion



For the Season
of
Christmastide & Epiphany

Sunday 28th December 2025

Sunday after Christmas

Deacon: Sarah

Presiding & Preaching: Canon Simon

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

(Please remain seated)

Opening prayer

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.



CAROL NO 25 - Christians awake.

**1 Christians, awake! Salute the happy morn
whereon the saviour of the world was born;
rise to adore the mystery of love
which hosts of angels chanted from above!
With them the joyful tidings were begun
of God incarnate and the virgin's Son.**

**2 Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,
who heard the angelic herald's voice: 'Behold,
I bring good tidings of a Saviour's birth
to you and all the nations on the earth!
This day hath God fulfilled his promised word;
this day is born a saviour, Christ the Lord!'**

**3 To Bethlehem straight the happy shepherds ran
to see the wonder God had wrought for man;
and found, with Joseph and the blessed maid,
her son, the saviour, in a manger laid.
Amazed, the wondrous story they proclaim,
the earliest heralds of the Saviour's name.**

**4 Oh, may we keep and ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind!
trace we the babe, who hath retrieved our loss,
from his poor manger to his bitter cross;
tread in his steps, assisted by his grace,
till our imperfect state God doth replace.**

**5 Then may we hope, the angelic throngs among,
To sing, redeemed, a glad triumphal song;
He that was born upon this joyful day,
Around us all his glory shall display.
Saved by his love, incessant we shall sing
eternal praise to heaven's almighty King.**

Arise, shine, for the Light of the World has come!
Praise to Christ our light

INTRODUCTION TO CONFESSION

The grace of God
has dawned upon the world with healing for all.
Though we have grieved him,
yet he will heal us if we confess our sins
in penitence and faith.

Confession (please sit or kneel)

A moment of Silence

When we fail to see Christ
In friend and stranger
Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

When we fail to see Christ
In the miracle of your good earth
Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

When we fail to see Christ
In the secrets of our own hearts
Lord have mercy
Lord have mercy

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

THE COLLECT

(Prayer of the week – found on the pew sheet)

God in Trinity,
eternal unity of perfect love:
gather the nations to be one family,
and draw us into your holy life
through the birth of Emmanuel,
our Lord Jesus Christ.

CAROL NO 1 - O little town of Bethlehem.

*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 all on earth
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love*

*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.*

*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.*

GOSPEL READING Matthew 2: 13-23 Read by Kathryn

(Please remain standing)

Alleluia, alleluia. Christ was revealed in flesh, proclaimed among the nations and believed in throughout the world. **Alleluia.**

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

After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.’ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, ‘He will be called a Nazorean.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Canon Simon

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (please stand)

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

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

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – Led by Rev Jim (Please sit or kneel)

These responses may be used:

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

at the end

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

CALLING OF BANNS OF MARRIAGE, NOTICES AND TIME OF SHARING

THE PEACE

(If you would like to, please stand)

Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and Prince of Peace. Let him rule our hearts now, as one day he will rule the world.

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

Deacon: Let us offer one another a sign of peace

OFFERTORY CAROL NO 8 - See amid the winter's snow

(During the offertory hymn the bread and wine and collection are brought to the Altar)

*See amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the lamb of God appears,
Promised 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!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

*Say, ye holy shepherds, say
What your joyful news today;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

*As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light;
Angels singing peace on earth
Told us of the Saviour's birth.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

*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!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

*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!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

Lord, accept your people's gifts,
not gold, frankincense or myrrh,
but hearts and voices raised in praise
of Jesus Christ, our light and our salvation.

Amen

EUCARISTIC PRAYER (please sit or kneel)

The Choir may remain standing

The Lord be with you
and also with you

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 honour and praise be yours ever-living God, for your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of your Spirit and lived as one of us.

We give thanks for your glory made present in our midst.

In the coming of the Magi the King of all the world was revealed to the nations.

In the waters of baptism Jesus was revealed as the Christ, the Saviour sent to redeem us.

In the water made wine the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.

Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.

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, Hosanna, Hosanna, in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, 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 is 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

Believing the promises of God, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break the bread of life
And that life is the light of the world
**God here among us
Light in the midst of us
Bring us to light and life**

The Agnus Dei

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

This is the table of our Lord, where hurts are healed, and all is made new in the love of God. Come not because it is I who invite you, it is our Lord; It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

All are welcome to come forward to receive the bread and the wine or a blessing. It is helpful for us if you say your name when you come to the front.

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.

CAROL NO 5 - The first Nowell.

[please remain seated]

**The First Nowell the Angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night
that was so deep.**

***Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!***

**They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light
and so it continued both day and night
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!**

**And by the light of that same star,
Three Wise men came
from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!**

**This star drew nigh to the north-west
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!**

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught
And with his blood mankind hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly
home:
help your Church to live as one family,
united in love and obedience,
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.
Amen.

CAROL NO 12. - O come, all ye faithful

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

*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 God the Father, who led the wise men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, lead us also in our journey to find the Lord. **Amen.**

May God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, give us a place with the saints in light in the kingdom of his beloved Son. **Amen.**

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shine in our hearts and fill our lives with his joy and peace. **Amen.**

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

THE DISMISSAL

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

Or

By the power of the Spirit, we take into our community the peace and love of God.

In the name of Christ. Amen.