



GLOUCESTER  
CATHEDRAL

**A Festival of Lessons and Carols**  
Sunday 21, Monday 22, Tuesday 23 December  
6.00 p.m.

# Safeguarding

Gloucester Cathedral is committed to being a **safe** and **welcoming** place for **all**. The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in the life of the Cathedral is everyone's responsibility.

**If someone is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999.**

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Please turn off any mobile devices.



For safeguarding, photography and videography are not permitted during services.



An induction loop is available for those using hearing aids. Please turn your hearing aid to the 'T' position.



Large print booklets are available on request. Please ask a steward.

Cover image: The Nativity

Fra Angelico 1425

*The Foundation Choir of Gloucester Cathedral is conducted by the Director of Music, Adrian Partington.*

*The organ is played by the Assistant Director of Music, Jonathan Hope.*

*Before the service begins, the organist plays*

Prelude and Fugue in C major B.W.V. 547

J. S. Bach 1685-1750

¶ *The congregation is invited to join in the words printed in **bold**.*

*Before the service begins, a welcome is given.*

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# ORDER OF SERVICE

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¶ At 6.00 p.m., the congregation stands for the procession, during which is sung



*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.

**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, Cecil Frances Alexander 1818-1895*

*Tune, IRBY; H. J. Gauntlett 1805-1876*

*Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*



# Bidding

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Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and let us make this Cathedral Church glad with our carols of praise.

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and concord within the Church he came to build, and especially in the dominions of our sovereign Lord King Charles and within this Diocese of Gloucester.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; all who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love. Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them 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.**

May 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.**

¶ *The congregation sits.*

## Reading

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*In the poem 'Daughter of Eve' the poet Christina Rossetti echoes the story of the Fall, expressing regret at her loss of innocence and surrender to temptation.*

A fool I was to sleep at noon,  
And wake when night is chilly  
Beneath the comfortless cold moon;  
A fool to pluck my rose too soon,  
A fool to snap my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept;  
Faded and all-forsaken,  
I weep as I have never wept:  
Oh it was summer when I slept,  
It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future spring  
And sun-warm'd sweet to-morrow:—  
Stripp'd bare of hope and everything,  
No more to laugh, no more to sing,  
I sit alone with sorrow.

## Anthem

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Adam lay ybounden,  
Bounded in a bond;  
Four thousand winter  
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,  
An apple that he took,  
As clerkès finden written  
In their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,  
The apple taken been,  
Ne had never Our Lady  
A-been heavené queen.

Blessed be the time  
That apple taken was.  
Therefore we moun singen  
Deo gratias!

*Words, 15<sup>th</sup> century English  
Music, Boris Ord 1897-1961*

## Reading

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*The prophet Isaiah foretells the coming of the Saviour.*

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders,  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Great will be his authority,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

9.2, 6–7

Thanks be to God.

## Anthem

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*The choir sings*

O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice: come, shine  
on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Isaiah had  
prophesied, the people who walked in darkness have seen the great light  
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. Amen.

*Words, 'O Oriens'; Vespers Antiphon for 21 December  
Music, James MacMillan 1959-*

# Reading

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*In the poem 'Advent Calendar', the poet Rowan Williams reflects on the unexpected nature of Christ's coming.*

Advent Calendar.

He will come like last leaf's fall.  
One night when the November wind  
has flayed the trees to the bone, and earth  
wakes choking on the mould,  
the soft shroud's folding.

He will come like frost.  
One morning when the shrinking earth  
opens on mist, to find itself  
arrested in the net  
of alien, sword-set beauty.

He will come like dark.  
One evening when the bursting red  
December sun draws up the sheet  
and penny-masks its eye to yield  
the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come,  
will come like crying in the night,  
like blood, like breaking,  
as the earth writhes to toss him free.  
He will come like child.





## Reading

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*The angel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

*Luke 1.26–35; 38*

Thanks be to God.

## Anthem

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*The choir sings*

Rejoice, ridebat,  
rejoice, exultabat cum videbat.  
rejoice, ridebat,  
rejoice in the birth of Mary's Son.

O quam laeta et beata  
Fuit illa immaculata  
Mater unigeniti!

*O how jubilant and blessed  
was the immaculate  
Mother of the only-begotten.*

Quae gaudebat et ridebat,  
Exultabat cum videbat  
Nati partum incliti.

*O how happy and laughing  
And exultant did she watch  
The birth of her divine Son.*

*Words, 'Stabat Mater', 13<sup>th</sup> century hymn to the Blessed Virgin Mary  
Music, Katherine Parton 1982-*

# Reading

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*St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

2.1-7

Thanks be to God.

# Anthem

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*The choir sings*

Sleep, baby, sleep! The Mother sings:  
Heaven's angels kneel and fold their wings.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

With swathes of scented hay Thy bed  
By Mary's hand at eve was spread.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

At midnight came the shepherds, they  
Whom seraphs wakened by the way.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

And three kings from the East afar,  
Ere dawn came, guided by the star.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

They brought Thee gifts of gold and gems,  
Pure orient pearls, rich diadems.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

Thou who liest slumbering there,  
Art King of Kings, earth, ocean, air.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

*Words, John Addington Symonds 1840-93*

*Music, Ian Venables 1955-*

*World Premiere on Sunday 21 December*

¶ *The congregation stands to sing*



*All*           **Of the Father's heart begotten,  
Ere the world from chaos rose,  
He is Alpha, from that Fountain  
All that is and hath been flows;  
He is Omega, of all things,  
Yet to come the mystic Close,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Upper voices*   **By His Word was all created  
He commanded and 'twas done;  
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,  
Universe of three in one,  
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,  
All that breathes beneath the sun,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Lower voices*   **He assumed this mortal body,  
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,  
That the race from dust created,  
Might not perish utterly,  
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced  
In the depths of hell to lie,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Upper voices* **O how blest that wondrous birthday,  
When the Maid the curse retrieved,  
Brought to birth for us salvation  
By the Holy Ghost conceived,  
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer  
In her loving arms received,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Lower voices* **This is he, whom seer and sibyl  
Sang in ages long gone by;  
This is he of old revealed  
In the page of prophecy;  
Lo! He comes the promised Saviour;  
Let the world his praises cry!  
Evermore and evermore.**

*All* **Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;  
Angels and Archangels, sing!  
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,  
Let your joyous anthems ring,  
Every tongue his name confessing,  
Countless voices answering,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Words, Prudentius 348-c.413; tr. J. M. Neale 1818-66*

*Tune, DIVINUM MYSTERIUM; melody from Piae Cantiones 1582*

*Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

¶ *The congregation sits.*

## Reading

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*The Shepherds go to the Manger.*

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

*Luke 2.8-16*

Thanks be to God.

## Anthem

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*The choir sings*

Quem vidistis, pastores?

Dicite, annuntiate nobis, in terris quis apparuit.

Natum vidimus et choros angelorum collaudantes Dominum, Alleluia.

*Whom did you see, shepherds?*

*Speak and tell us: who has appeared on earth?*

*We saw the new-born and choirs of angels praising the Lord. Alleluia.*

*Words, Cantica Sacra, Antwerp, 1618*

*Music, Richard Dering c.1580-1630*

## Reading

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*In the poem 'The Journey of the Magi', poet T. S. Eliot  
portrays the Magi's difficult journey to witness Christ's birth.*

'A cold coming we had of it,  
Just the worst time of the year  
For a journey, and such a long journey:  
The ways deep and the weather sharp,  
The very dead of winter.'  
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,  
Lying down in the melting snow.  
There were times we regretted  
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,  
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,  
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,  
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:  
A hard time we had of it.  
At the end we preferred to travel all night,  
Sleeping in snatches,  
With the voices singing in our ears, saying  
That this was all folly.  
Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,  
And three trees on the low sky,  
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.  
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,  
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,  
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins,  
But there was no information, and so we continued  
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon  
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.



All this was a long time ago, I remember,  
And I would do it again, but set down  
This set down  
This: were we led all that way for  
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.  
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.  
I should be glad of another death.

## Anthem

---

*The choir sings*

As with gladness men of old  
Did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, most gracious Lord, may we  
Ever more be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped,  
Saviour, to thy lowly bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
Thee whom heaven and earth adore,  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare  
At thy cradle rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day  
Keep us in the narrow way,  
And when earthly things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright,  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
Thou its sun, which goes not down;  
There forever may we sing  
Alleluias to our King.

Words, W Chatterton Dix 1837-98  
Music, C V Stanford 1852-1924

# Reflection

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21 December

The Dean of Gloucester  
The Very Reverend Andrew Zihni

22 December

The Bishop of Tewkesbury  
The Right Reverend Robert Springett

23 December

The Bishop of Gloucester  
The Right Reverend Rachel Treweek

¶ *The congregation stands to sing*



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:

See how the shepherds,  
Summoned to his cradle,  
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with holy fear;  
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:

**Lo! Star-led chieftains,  
Magi, Christ adoring,  
Offer him incense and gold and myrrh;  
We to the Christ-child, bring our heart's oblations:**

**Sing, choirs of Angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God in the highest:**

*Words, Latin 18th century; translated, Frederick Oakeley 1802-80 and others*

*Tune, ADESTE FIDELES; melody probably by J. F. Wade 1711-86*

*Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

¶ *The congregation sits.*

## **Anthem**

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*The choir sings*

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.

Then why should men 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?

When sin departs before his grace,  
Then life and health come in its place.  
Angels and men with joy may sing  
All for to see the new-born King.

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!'

*Words and music, English traditional  
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

# Reading

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¶ *The congregation stands.*

*St John unfolds the mystery of the incarnation.*

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 overtake 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.

*1.1-14*

Thanks be to God.

¶ *The congregation sits.*

# Anthem

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*The choir sings*

Procedenti puero, Eya, nobis annus est!  
Virginis ex utero: Gloria! Laudes!  
Deus homo factus est et immortalis.

Sine viri semine, Eya, nobis annus est!  
natus est de virgine: Gloria! Laudes!  
Deus homo factus est et immortalis.

Sine viri copia, Eya, nobis annus est!  
natus est ex Maria: Gloria! Laudes!  
Deus homo factus est et immortalis.

In hoc festo determino, Eya, nobis annus est!  
benedicamus Domino! Gloria! Laudes!  
Deus homo factus est et immortalis.

*A boy comes forth, Eya, our time is come!  
from the Virgin's womb: Glory! Praise!  
God is become man and yet immortal.*

*Without a man's seed, Eya, our time is come!  
he is born of a virgin: Glory! Praise!  
God is become man and yet immortal.*

*Without the means of man, Eya, our time is come!  
he is born of Mary: Glory! Praise!  
God is become man and yet immortal.*

*On this appointed Feast, Eya, our time is come!  
let us bless the Lord. Glory! Praise!  
God is become man and yet immortal.*

Words, from Sloane MS. 2593, time of Henry VI  
Music, Peter Warlock 1894–1930

¶ *The congregation stands to 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 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 the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with us 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 Sun 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 us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth:**

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

*Words, Charles Wesley 1707-88  
Tune, MENDELSSOHN; F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809-47  
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

## The Collect and Blessing

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O God, who makest us glad by 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.**

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God almighty, + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

¶ *The congregation remains standing for the procession, during which the organist plays*

Carillon de Westminster

Louis Vierne 1870-1937



# Christmas at Gloucester Cathedral

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## **Cathedral Carol Service**

**Sunday 21, Monday 22, Tuesday 23  
December, 6.00 p.m.**

*A traditional service of lessons and carols with music from our world class choirs.*

*An additional service has been added in response to popular demand. As space is limited, seating will be first-come, first-served. Please arrive early.*

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## **Family Carol Services**

**Tuesday 23, Wednesday 24 December  
2.30 p.m.**

*Our Family Carol Services are among the most loved events in our calendar, as people of all ages sing together our favourite carols and tell the story of Christ's birth.*

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## **Midnight Mass**

**Wednesday 24 December, 11.15 p.m.**

*An atmospheric celebration of Holy Communion with carols, to mark the start of Christmas Day. The preacher will be the Dean of Gloucester.*

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## **Christmas Day Eucharist**

**Thursday 25 December, 10.15 a.m.**

*All are welcome to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ at this joyful Eucharist. The preacher will be the Bishop of Gloucester.*

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## **Eucharist for Epiphany**

**Sunday 4 January, 10.15 a.m.**

*Celebrate the visit of the Three Kings to the baby Jesus and welcome the new year with this special revelation of Christ to the world.*

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## **Candlemas Carol Service**

**Sunday 1 February, 6.00 p.m.**

*Mirroring our Advent Service, we move from East to West proclaiming Christ's light to the waiting world.*

