

Order of Service

Sunday 24th December 2024



Carols by Candlelight

Please use 'T' on your hearing aid if you need to use the Hearing Loop.

The organ is played by: **Robert Cooper**

Piano & Choral direction: **Lee Michael Walton**

Flute: **Gill Cubitt**

Service led by **Fran Boto**

It is a joy to welcome you to this service!

If you do not attend a church elsewhere, do join us in Sunday worship and other activities – see www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

Feel free to spend time before worship for quiet preparation, especially once the music begins. We light a candle at the start to remind us all of Christ's message of peace.

The Reformed Church recognises God's Word as its supreme authority; **please stand as the Bible is brought in** at the start of worship, **and again as it is taken out after the blessing.**

We pray that you will know God's presence as we worship – here, at home, online, outdoors, at work, school; in all places.

PLEASE NOTE: We are mindful of safety at St Paul's. Elders have a risk assessed the dangers of naked flames as we share the Peacelight. If you prefer to share the light 'symbolically' we offer battery candles. We use candle guards to protect the flame before we pass them along the pews. Please be extra careful if you or your children have long hair, synthetic clothes, scarves etc and if you spot a problem raise the alarm quickly and loudly!
Thank you.

First Carol: Once in Royal David's City (167 - verses 1,2&4)

Welcome & Notices

Lighting of the Advent Candle

**We who dwell in a land of great shadows, O God
light these candles to celebrate Your light and life.
For in the gloom of oppression You have freed Your people
bringing salvation to all and showing Your glory
in the cries of a vulnerable helpless baby
in whom our redemption draws ever nearer. Amen.**

Call to Worship

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:2,6-7 (*The prophets foretold*)

Read by Joyce Brissett

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ 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.

Second Carol: Come, thou long expected Jesus (138 - tune Stuttgart)



2nd Reading: Luke 1:26-38 (*The Angel Gabriel visits Mary*)
Read by Natalie Martinelli

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."^[29] But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² 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. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ 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. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Third Carol: The Angel Gabriel “Gabriel’s message” (139 unison)

3rd Reading: Luke 2:1-7 (*The Birth of Jesus*)

Read by Joshua Dean

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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.

Piano music O Holy Night Adolphe Adam. Arr. Lee Michael Walton

Offertory & Offertory Prayer

All donations will go to St Christopher's Hospice. There are Gift Aid envelopes to add 25% to your gift if you are a taxpayer. See back page for how to donate online or by card.

Fourth Carol: Infant holy, infant lowly (149)

4th Reading: Luke 2:8-16 (*The Shepherds go to the Manger*)
Read by John Wagstaff

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" ¹⁵ 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." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

Fifth Carol: Hark the Herald Angels sing (159)

Message by Fran *Held Together*

Prayers for others (*Christine Spurgeon*)

The Lord's Prayer

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

Peace light arrival and explanation (Chris Dean)

Sharing of the Light – Prayer for the four corners of the world.

5th Reading: John 1:1-14

Read by Celia Blackburn

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the

will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ 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.

Sixth Carol: O come all ye faithful (160, verses 1,2 & 6)

Blessing & Dismissal

If you'd like to support the work of St Paul's but have no cash for the collection, you can donate by card via <https://bit.ly/ForStPauls> or our card reader on request. We're registered for gift aid – see leaflets at the exits. Most members have a regular standing order in place. Please talk to any of the elders for more details.



All are welcome to the large hall for mulled wine, coffee, mince pies and a chat.



With grateful thanks for all who made this service possible, - the welcomers, the candle distributors including the 7/12th Croydon Scouts, the readers, the singers particularly those from St Peter's Church, SCUC, New Life and friends of Fran

- **Christmas Day service:** Joint service at 10am with South Croydon United Church, 7 Aberdeen Road Croydon 1EQ
- **Next Sunday's service will be led by John Ponsford** (to continue the story at the Epiphany Service) 10.30am
- **Epiphany Service:** Sunday 5th January 2025, led by the Junior Church

For all future events and activities please see our website

Croham Park Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 7HF

www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

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