

# ST GEORGE

EAST IVANHOE, MELBOURNE

## **MIDNIGHT MASS**

The Birth of our Lord

FRIDAY 24 DECEMBER 2021, 11PM



## **WELCOME**

St George's is a community committed to making and sustaining connections: with God, with one another, with the local and wider community, and with the environment. We value liturgical worship, encouraging fellowship and community service. We believe in God - the beauty of transcendent holiness, present in our connectedness; and in caring passionately for all in need. All are welcome in this sacred space.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SEASON

The celebration of Christ's incarnation at Christmas is one of the two poles of the Christian year. The wonderful mystery of God's dwelling among us in the fullness of humanity, as Emmanuel, foretold by the prophets and born of Mary, provides the material of the feast:

Hark, hark, the wise eternal word, like a weak infant cries!
In form of servant is the Lord, and God in cradle lies.

(Thomas Pestel)

Christmas is much more then than simply the celebration of Jesus' birth, and neither of the great Christmas morning readings (Hebrews 1 and John 1) is taken from the infancy narratives. The task of the Christmas liturgy is to recall us, amid all the joyful customs and celebrations of Christmas, to this central truth of the Word made flesh for our salvation.

It is, of course, Christ's nativity that has provided the occasion for this festival of the incarnation, since the end of the third century. The Christmas crib and the nativity play can both be said to descend from the tableau of Christ's birth that Francis of Assisi arranged when he celebrated Christmas at Greccio in 1223. Christmas carols are a medieval tradition, which has been notably developed from the end of the nineteenth century. The Festival of Lessons and Carols is itself an influential English creation of the late nineteenth century, made

widespread by the choir of King's College, Cambridge, in the first half of the twentieth.

The Christmas season is often celebrated for twelve days, ending with the Epiphany. Contemporary use has sought to express an alternative tradition, in which Christmas lasts for a full forty days, ending with the Feast of the Presentation on 2 February. The days around 25 December are a principal holiday in the secular calendar of Australia, and commercial pressures have led to much of Christmas celebration being displaced into Advent. It has become a still greater challenge to celebrate as they deserve the saints of the Christmas season: Stephen, who first paid with his life for following the incarnate Lord; John, who was believed to have lived to great old age in profound meditation on the Word made flesh; and the Holy Innocents, who draw our attention to the plight of children in a world where the implications of the birth of the Christ-child are not yet manifest.

#### ORDER OF SERVICE

All remain seated as the choir sings.

#### **INTROIT**

Stille Nacht Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

All stand to sing the processional hymn during which the clergy and servers move to their places.

#### **PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

IRBY 87.87.77

#### ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Melody by Henry John Gauntlett 1805-76 harm. H.J. Gauntlett and Arthur Henry Mann 1850-1929

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.

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.

And through all his wondrous childhood 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.

All remain standing.

## **GREETING**

## The Celebrant says

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

#### And also with you.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; for to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

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 when, like stars, his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

Cecil Frances Alexander 1818-95 alt.

Isaiah 9.2, 6

#### **BLESSING OF THE CRIB**

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father,
on this night
your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary
for us and for our salvation:
bless this crib,
which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth;
may all who see it be strengthened in faith
and receive the fullness of life he came to bring,
who is alive and reigns for ever.

Amen.

#### PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

#### The Deacon says

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

## Silence is kept

God our Father, you sent your Son full of grace and truth: forgive our failure to receive him.

Lord, have mercy.

## Lord, have mercy.

Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger: forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit of love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call: forgive the hardness of our hearts.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

## The Celebrant says

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself, that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, and be cleansed from all your sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.** 

## The ministers move from the crib to the Advent Wreath.

Celebrant: Today we light all the candles of the Advent wreath and the

Christ Candle. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE; the second candle is PEACE; the third candle is LOVE; the fourth candle is JOY. The centre candle is the Christ Candle.

The candles are lit.

Scripture: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government

will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful

Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9.6

Prayer: O God of hope, peace, joy and love. As Mary and Joseph

welcomed you into the world, now help us welcome you into our lives. Give us courage to hope; strength to seek peace. Fill our spirits with joy; and our hearts with love. Through Jesus Christ,

the Lord of all. Amen.

#### **KYRIE ELEISON**

Choir and Congregatioin

Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

The ministers move from the Advent Wreath to the place where the Liturgy of the Word is celebrated.

#### **GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

#### **COLLECT**

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

Silence is kept.

Eternal God, who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth, to see the radiance of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.** 

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### FIRST READING

Isaiah 9.2-7

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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. His authority shall grow continually, 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 onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Hear the word of the Lord,

thanks be to God.

#### **PSALM 96**



- 1. O sing to the Lord a | new | song: sing to the | Lord | all the | earth.
- 2. Sing to the Lord and bless his | holy | name: proclaim the good news of his sal|vation from | day to | day.
- 3. Declare his glory a mong the nations: and his wonders a mong all peoples.
- 4. For great is the Lord and | greatly . to be | praised: he is more to be | feared than | all | gods.
- 5. As for all the gods of the nations | they are . mere | idols: it is the | Lord who | made the | heavens,
- 6. Majesty and | glory .are be|fore him: beauty and | power are | in his | sanctuary.
- 7. Render to the Lord you families | of the | nations: render to the | Lord | glory and | might.
- 8. Render to the Lord the honour | due . to his | name: bring offerings and | come un|to his | courts.
- 9. O worship the Lord in the |beauty . of his | holiness: let the whole earth | stand in | awe of | him.
- 10. Say among the nations that the | Lord is | king: he has made the world so firm that it can never be moved and he shall | judge the | peoples with | equity.

- 11. Let the heavens rejoice and let the | earth be | glad: let the sea | roar and | all that | fills it;
- 12. Let the fields rejoice and | everything | in them: then shall all the trees of the wood shout with | joy be|fore the | Lord
- 13. + For he comes he comes to |judge the | earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the | peoples | with his | truth.

#### SECOND READING

TITUS 2.11-14

A reading from the Letter of Paul to Titus

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Hear the word of the Lord,

thanks be to God.

All stand to sing and remain standing for the Gospel.

## GRADUAL HYMN

While shepherds watched their flocks

Lyngham 86.86 Extended

Thomas Jarman 1776-1861

Luke 2: 8-15

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 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 swaddling clothes 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 to the earth be peace; goodwill henceforth from Heaven to men begin and never cease.'

Nahum Tate 1652-1715 alt.

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

#### Glory to you, Lord Jes-us Christ.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn. In that 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!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

praise to you, Lord Je-sus Christ.

All sit

## **SERMON**

All stand for the Nicene Creed

#### THE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven. was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Father, in this holy night your Son our Saviour was born in human flesh.

Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night there was no room for your Son in the inn. Protect with your love those who have no home and all who live in poverty.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour, brought your Son to birth.

Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness. Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God

## hear our prayer.

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.' Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in all the world.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy. Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger.

Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven.

Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth. Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God

#### hear our prayer.

Father,

in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne.

Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph and the saints through him who is your Word made flesh, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.** 

All stand

### LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

#### THE PEACE

This holy night the angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

LUKE 2.14

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

All remain standing to sing the hymn, during which a collection will be taken up.

#### **OFFERTORY HYMN**

O come all ye faithful

ADESTE FIDELES irregular

Later form of melody probably by John Francis Wade c.1711-1786

Adeste, fideles, laeti, triumphantes

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:

Refrain

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord! True God of true God, Light of light eternal, lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb; Son of the Father, begotten, not created:

Refrain

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

Refrain

Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger, fain we embrace thee with love and awe; who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above, 'Glory to God, glory in the highest';

Refrain

All remain standing

Response to the Offertory prayers:

Blessed be God for ever.

Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing:

Refrain

Possibly by John Francis Wade c. 1711-1786

tr. Frederick Oakeley 1802-80,
William Mercer 1811-73 and others

#### **EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

#### **SURSUM CORDA**



All glory and honour, be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us.

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

By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

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.

Merciful God,

we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

for the sins of the whole world.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,
unite us in the body of your Son,
and bring us with all your people
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you, Father,
in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, 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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. 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.

#### **AGNUS DEI**

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.

#### **GIVING OF COMMUNION**

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.

Lord, give us this bread always.

Communicant members of Christian churches are welcome to receive communion.

During the distribution, the choir will sing.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

#### Silence is kept

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. Amen.

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.

## THE DISMISSAL

All stand to sing

#### **POST COMMUNION HYMN**

HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Mendelssohn

77.77 D and refrain

From a chorus by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809-47 adapted by William Hayman Cummings 1831-1915

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.'

## Refrain

Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn 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 man to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Refrain

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. 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.

Refrain

Charles Wesley 1707-88 alt.

All remain standing for the blessing.

#### THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Christ the Son of God, born of Mary, fill you with his grace to trust his promises and obey his will;

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

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh

In the name of Christ, Amen.

#### **POSTLUDE**

In Dulci Jubilo BWV 729

J.S. Bach (1685-1750) Played by Cyril Thomas

### **THIS WEEK**

**Sunday 26 December** 8am Eucharist

First Sunday after Christmas 10am Eucharist

Details of all our Services and other activities are available at the parish website www.stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org

Our services are live streamed on our YouTube channel (St George Peace Memorial Church East Ivanhoe) and later on our Facebook page @StGeorgesEastIvanhoe.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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The Advent Wreath Liturgy is compiled and written by the Rev. Matthew Kozolowski, Priest Associate, All Saints Church, Chevy Chase, MD.

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## **PARISH DIRECTORY**

CI LAII	/7 W 1:0 D 1	
Church Address	47 Warncliffe Rd East Ivanhoe 3079	www.stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org
Parish Office/ Postal Address	46 Warncliffe Rd East Ivanhoe 3079	P: 03 9497 1290 E: office@stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org
Vicar	Fr John Sanderson	M: 0408 130 864 E: fr.john@stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org
HeartEdge Mission Worker	Kathryn Lynch	M: 0492 911 061 E: klynch@melbourneanglican.org.au
Wardens	Meron Pitcher Barry Wilkes David Morgan, OAM	M: 0416 234 045 P: 03 9457 3351 M: 0430 369 984
Parish Treasurer	Vince Cristiano	M: 0418 322 206
Parish Secretary	Chris Hayward	M: 0423 985 044
Parish Administrator	Abigail Hector-Taylor	M: 03 9497 1290 E: office@stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org
Pew Bulletin & Prayer List	Parish Office	P: 03 9497 1290 E: office@stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org
Director of Music	Roger Brown	M: 0419 390 563
Assistant Organist	Cyril Thomas	P: 03 9444 0468
Head Server	Chris Hayward	M: 0423 985 044
Opportunity Shop	Joan Skene Mary Jones	P: 03 9499 5166 P: 03 9459 0325 M: 0414 385 058
Sacristans	Ann Farquhar	P: 03 9457 3119
Building Maintenance & Emergency Contacts	Alison Smart George Hall Vince Cristiano Barry Wilkes	P: 03 9497 1450 M: 0412 637 856 M: 0418 322 206 P: 03 9457 3351 M: 0423 542 618
Building Manager (Hall Bookings)	Barry Wilkes	P: 03 9457 3351 M: 0423 521 618 E: barrywilkes@optusnet.com.au
Parish Stewardship Recorder	Pam Cristiano	M: 0409 583 559
<b>Chapter House Funerals</b> Office by Appointment	Troy Upfield	P: 03 9855 0155 (24/7 Immediate Assistance)