Epiphany Carol Service
sung by
Lichfield Cathedral
Chamber Choir

Sunday 7th January 2024
at 18:00

Lichfield Cathedral is called to live and proclaim the transforming love of God. Through the fullness of its life in the Spirit, it seeks to be a sign of the friendship and freedom that God in Jesus Christ has given the whole world to enjoy.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to Lichfield Cathedral. It is wonderful to have so many people in the Cathedral today, but for everyone’s comfort and safety, please read and take note of the following information.

SAFETY
In the unlikely event of an emergency, please remain quiet and respond calmly and promptly to the directions of the stewards.

Photography and Livestreaming
Whilst we ask that members of the congregation do not take photographs or video of our worship, please note that at some of our services our Cathedral volunteer photographers will be taking photographs. We are also livestreaming to Facebook or YouTube many of our services. Whilst we do our best to not film the congregation for the livestream, please do let us know if this is a particular issue for you and we will assist by letting you know where you can sit so that you do not appear on screen.

RECORDINGS AND MOBILE ‘PHONES
You are kindly requested not to take photographs during the service or to make sound or video recordings in the Cathedral. Please ensure that mobile ‘phones are switched off.

LAVATORIES can be found in the Old Stables. Please ask a steward for directions.

OFFERINGS
We have been immensely grateful to members of our worshipping community for their continued generosity. Your gifts are vital in sustaining our mission and worship. A collection will be taken by the Stewards during the offertory hymn. Additionally, there are electronic giving points where you can tap a debit or credit card; if you are unfamiliar with these devices please do ask a steward or verger for assistance. For those worshipping at home, you can text SPIRES to 70191 to give £10, or visit www.lichfield-cathedral.org/donate

MUSIC
This evening’s service is sung by Lichfield Cathedral Chamber Choir directed by the Assistant Director of Music, Martyn Rawles. The Cathedral organ this evening is played by Liam Condon.
The Feast of the Epiphany begins another movement, or rather, series of movements in our continuing celebration of the Christmas season.

In the Western churches, the Epiphany (‘manifestation’) became an occasion to celebrate one element in the story of Christ’s birth, the visit of the far-travelled magi, understood as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Matthew’s account speaks simply of ‘wise men from the east’... In this perspective the first of three movements comes into focus because Epiphanytide is an apt season to pray for the worldwide mission of the Church. The feast of the Conversion of St Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, appropriately falls in the Epiphany season, as does the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

However, second and third movements reveal themselves. In the Eastern churches the Epiphany is, rather, the celebration of Christ’s baptism at the hands of John, when the heavens were opened and a voice from heaven declared Jesus to be God’s beloved Son. The miracle of Cana in Galilee, where Jesus ‘first manifested his glory’, follows immediately:

   Manifest at Jordan’s stream, Prophet, Priest, and King supreme; and at Cana wedding-guest in thy Godhead manifest.

   Christopher Wordsworth

The season of joyful celebration that begins at Christmas now continues through the successive Sundays of Epiphany, and the festal cycle ends only with the Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas). The child who has been manifested to the magi at his birth is now recognised by Simeon and Anna, when he comes to be presented in the Temple according to the Law of Israel. He is both ‘a light to lighten the Gentiles’ and ‘the glory of God’s people Israel’. But the redemption he will bring must be won through suffering; the Incarnation is directed to the Passion; and Simeon’s final words move our attention away from the celebration of Christmas and towards the mysteries of Easter. We do hope that as well as joining us for worship on the following Sundays of Epiphany, you will also come and share in our Candlemas Carol Service on Sunday 28th January 2024 at 18:00 when the Cathedral Choir will lead us in our conclusion to our celebration of Christmastide.

   Adapted from Common Worship: Times and Seasons.

The congregation joins in all sung and spoken material that is printed in bold type.
At 17:50 the Rt Revd Jan MacFarlane, Interim Dean, welcomes the congregation, following which everyone is very still, and silence is kept.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Remain seated as the poem BC : AD by U A Fanthorpe is read

Stand, if you are able, to sing

PROCESSIONAL HYMN NEH 33 Divinum Mysterium

during which the clergy process to the Nave with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh

1. Of the Father’s heart begotten, ‘ere the world from chaos rose, He is Alpha: from that Fountain all that is and has been flows; He is Omega, of all things yet to come the mystic Close, Evermore and evermore.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. O how blest that wondrous birthday when the Maid the curse retrieved, Brought to birth mankind’s salvation by the Holy Ghost conceived; And the Babe, the world’s Redeemer, in her loving arms received, Evermore and evermore.

5. This is he, whom seer and sibyl sang in ages long gone by, This is he of old revealèd in the page of prophecy; Lo! He comes, the promised Saviour, let the world his praises cry! Evermore and evermore.

6. Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises; Angels and Archangels, sing! Wheresoe’er ye be, ye faithful, let your joyous anthems ring, Ev’ry tongue his name confessing, countless voices answering Evermore and evermore.

Anon. arr. Sir David Willcocks
THE BIDDING

*Remain standing as the Interim Dean invites us to pray*

In the name of Christ, who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, to be a kingdom of priests to our God, we welcome you. Grace to you and peace.

As we rejoice in the Word made flesh, who comes among us to reveal God’s glory, so we pray that his kingly reign may be acknowledged throughout the world. And so we pray for the unity and mission of Christ’s Church, for the ministers of the Gospel of Christ, and for all for whom we bear witness.

We pray for this world, which is already Christ’s, that we may have reverence for the natural order and respect for every person, made in the image and likeness of God. And we pray for those who stand in need, for the lonely, the fearful, the anxious, for the unemployed and those for whom the future holds dread, for the sick and the bereaved, and all who have no-one to pray for them.

May God our Father take us and use us in his service; may he open our eyes to see his glory, and equip us to bless his people, now and at all times. Amen.

We say together the prayer Jesus himself 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.*

*Sit*
The choir sings

NOËL NOUVELET
French Trad., arr. Andrew Lumsden (b.1962)

Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.   Let us sing here a new Christmas song.
Dévoutes gens, crions à Dieu merci!  Devout people, let us give thanks to God!
Chantons Noël pour le roi nouvelet.  Let us sing a Christmas song for the new king.

Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.   Let us sing here a new Christmas song.

L’ange disait ‘Pasteurs, partez d’ici,  The angel said ‘Shepherds, leave this place,
L’âme en repos et le cœur réjoui;  with peaceful souls and joyful hearts;
En Bethléem trouvez l’agnelet.’  in Bethlehem you will find the little lamb.’

Bientôt les rois par l’étoile éclaircis   Soon the kings, by the shining star in the East,
De l’Orient dont ils étaient sortis,  from whence they had come,
A Bethléem vinrent un matinet.   arrived in Bethlehem one morning.

Voici, mon Dieu, mon sauveur Jésus Christ,  Here is my Lord, my saviour Jesus Christ,
Par qui sera le prodige accompli  Through whom the prophecy has been fulfilled
De nous sauver par son sang vermeillet!  to save us through his crimson blood.

FIRST READING
Isaiah 60.1-6, 19-20

Stand

HYMN 84 Epiphany

1. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

2. Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining;
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

3. Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
odours of Edom, and offerings divine,
gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?
4. Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
vainly with gifts would his favour secure:  
richer by far is the heart’s adoration,  
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

5. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;  
star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Reginald Heber 1783-1826

Sit

SECOND READING
Matthew 2.1-12

Remain seated

BETHLEHEM DOWN
Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

‘When He is King we will give Him the Kings’ gifts,  
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,  
Beautiful robes’, said the young girl to Joseph  
Fair with her firstborn on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight  
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,  
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music  
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When He is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,  
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,  
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary  
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,  
Close-huddled oxen to keep Him from cold,  
Mary for love, and for lullaby music  
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

Bruce Blunt (1899-1957)

Remain seated
THIRD READING
Matthew 2.13-23

Remain seated

COVENTRY CAROL (LULLY, LULLA)
Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988)

Lully, lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.
Lullay, thou little tiny Child,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.
O sisters too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do sing
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.
Herod, the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight,
All children young to slay.
That woe is me, poor Child for Thee!
And ever mourn and sigh,
For thy parting neither say nor sing,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.

Stand

HYMN Puer Nobis

Unto us is born a son,
king of choirs supernal:
see on earth his life begun,
of lords the Lord eternal
of lords the Lord eternal.

2. Christ, from heav'n descending low,
comes on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know
now cradled in a manger
now cradled in a manger.

3. This did Herod sore affray,
and grievously bewilder,
so he gave the word to slay,
and slew the little childer
and slew the little childer.
4. Of his love and mercy mild
hear the Christmas story:
O that Mary's gentle child
might lead us up to glory
might lead us up to glory!

5. Omega and Alpha he!
Let the organ thunder,
While the choir with peals of glee
Doth rend the air asunder,
Doth rend the air asunder.

Latin 15th century, tr. George Ratcliffe Woodward 1838-1934 (v.1-4); Percy Dearmer (v.5)

Sit

**FOURTH READING**
Ephesians 3.1-12

A *collection* is taken to support the mission and ministry of the Cathedral. Please give as generously as you are able and, if you are a UK taxpayer, use the GiftAid envelopes provided.

**HYMN 89 Was Lebet**

1. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name.

2. Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

3. Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

4. These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

5. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!

Offering of the Gifts

At the offering of the gold:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever!
As gold in the furnace is tried and purified seven times in the fire,
so purify our hearts and minds
that we may be a royal priesthood
acceptable in the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

At the offering of the incense:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever!
As our prayer rises up in your presence as incense,
so may we be presented before you
with penitent hearts and uplifted hands
to offer ourselves in your priestly service.
Blessed be God for ever.

At the offering of the myrrh:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever!
As you give medicine to heal our sickness
and the leaves of the tree of life for the healing of the nations,
so anoint us with your healing power
that we may be the first-fruits of your new creation.
Blessed be God for ever.

Sit
IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER
Becky McGlade (b. 1974)

In the bleak midwinter, 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 midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

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.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Remain seated

FIFTH READING
John 1.19-34

Stand


**Offering of Water**

This day Jesus is revealed as the Christ in the waters of baptism.

I will take you from the nations,
and gather you from all the countries.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you,
and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness.

A new heart I will give you,
and put a new spirit within you.

You shall be my people,
and I will be your God.  

*cf Ezekiel 36*

At the offering of the water:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
You bring waters out of stony rock.  
For with you is the well of life, and in your light shall we see light.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

Let us pray

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;  
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.**

The water is poured into the font

God in Christ gives us the water welling up for eternal life.  
With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

**Lord, give us this water,**  
and we shall thirst no more.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, for your gift of water in creation
we give you thanks and praise.

For your Spirit, sweeping over the waters,
bringing light and life
we give you thanks and praise.

For your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
baptized in the River Jordan
we give you thanks and praise.

For your new creation,
brought to birth by water and the Spirit
we give you thanks and praise.

For your grace bestowed upon us your children,
washing away our sins
we give you thanks and praise.

So, Father, accept our sacrifice of praise.
By the power of your life-giving Spirit
bless these waters of your new creation.

Lord, receive our prayer.

May we your servants who have been washed in them
be made one with your Son,
who took the form of a servant.

Lord, receive our prayer.

May your Holy Spirit,
who has brought us to new birth in the family of your Church,
raise us in Christ, our anointed Lord, to full and eternal life.

Lord, receive our prayer.

For all might, majesty and dominion are yours, now and for ever.

Alleluia. Amen.
Remain standing as the choir sings whilst the people are sprinkled with the water from the font reminding them of their baptism

**EPHANY**

*Judith Bingham (b.1952)*

Deep midwinter, the dark centre of the year, Wake, O earth, awake.
Out on the hills, a star appears, Wake, O earth, awake.
Here lies the way for pilgrim Kings, Three Magi on an ancient path,
Black hours begin their journeyings. Wake, O earth, awake.
Their star has risen in our hearts, Empty thrones, abandoned fears,
Out on the hills their journey starts, In dazzling darkness, God appears.

*Sit*

The poem *Journey of the Magi* by T S Eliot is then read.

*Stand*

**THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star to find the Christ,
the Light from Light, lead you in your pilgrimage 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 your hearts
and fill your lives with his joy and peace. **Amen.**

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

*The Interim Dean says*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**
HYMN 83  Dix

1. 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 evermore be led to thee.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 for ever may we sing alleluias to our King.

William Chatterton Dix 1837-1898
Last verse arrangement: Sir David Willcocks

The procession then returns to the vestibule.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY
Prelude and Fugue in C BWV 547
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

You are invited to sit to listen to the Organ Voluntary.
An Epiphany tradition - ‘Chalking the Doors’

On or near the feast of the Epiphany, and conveniently close to the beginning of a New Year, the tradition has been to ask God’s blessing on homes and mark the door post or lintel with chalk that has been blessed for that purpose. The doors are chalked with the legendary names or initials of the three Magi, and the numerals of the New Year, connected with a series of crosses.

The initials C, M, and B commemorate the Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, but also stand for the Latin prayer-request *Christus Mansionem Benedicat:* “May Christ bless this house.” In this way, the door of a house would be marked as follows:

\[20+C+M+B+24.\]

*Both chalk and a leaflet with this explanation and the prayers are available for you to pick up as you leave church this evening.* It is also something that you might consider offering to do for your families, friends and neighbours. Having this marking near your front door will certainly be a talking point with those who call to see you; people will want to know what it means!

**CHRISTMASTIDE CELEBRATION CONTINUES...**

**Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**

**Sunday 28 January 2024**

18:00  **Candlemas Carol Service**  
*Through words and through music sung by the Cathedral Choir, we celebrate Jesus the Light of the World.*

**Friday 02 February 2024**

19:30  **Solemn Eucharist for the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**  
*Christmas concludes with this Solemn Eucharist when the light of the white candle representing the infant Jesus is transferred to the Paschal candle reminding us of the risen Christ. This service points us from the celebration of the Incarnation and points us toward Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter.*

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