



*St Paul's*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

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# Order of Service

*Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021*



*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

*Welcome to St Paul's!*

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

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This morning's service is being led by the Junior Church.

The Organ is played by: **Edward Rook**

We extend a very warm welcome to you. If you do not attend a church elsewhere, we invite you to join regularly with us in our Sunday worship and other activities – see [www.stpaulsurc.org.uk](http://www.stpaulsurc.org.uk)

You are welcome to use the time before worship for quiet preparation, especially once the music begins. We light a candle at the start of the service to remind us all of Christ's message of peace.

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

### Important notes:

- It is a joy to welcome you to this service!  
St Paul's URC has a **full Covid-19 Risk Assessment**, to help keep us all safe, so please follow the notices and advice you are given in church.
- Please continue to **maintain social distancing** where possible and we encourage people to **wash and sanitise their hands regularly.**
- In line with new government guidance **you are required to wear a face covering indoors unless exempt.** Please bear with one another to keep us all safe.
- The hymns and responses are in this **Order Sheet**, **but feel free to pick up a Hymn book or Bible should you wish.**
- **Offertory** – we circulate the collection bag for contributions to the church's work, but standing orders and bank transfers are preferred (please ask an elder or welcomer for details) and we have a credit card reader if you prefer that..
- We pray that you will know God's presence as we worship – in church, at home, online, outdoors, at work, school; in all places.

## Welcome & Notices

### Advent 4 – Mary

Jesus said, ‘Anyone who does what my Father in heaven wants is my brother or sister or mother.’

**I am the servant of the Lord.**

**Let it be to me according to his word.**

*The fourth candle is lit and this response is used*

Jesus is the light of the world.

**A light no darkness can ever put out.**

*We sing:*

Advent candles tell their story as we watch and pray,  
longing for the Day of Glory,

‘Come, Lord, soon,’ we say.

Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness  
changed for gladness, on that Day.

Mary’s gift, beyond all telling, was to give Christ room.

Timeless God as human dwelling in a mother’s womb

Who could guess the final story?

- cross and glory; empty tomb!

## Call to Worship

Leader: In the midst of darkness, God brings a new light.

**Response: Thanks be to the God of light.**

Leader: In the midst of confusion and fear, God brings hope and peace.

**Response: Thanks be to the God of peace.**

Leader: In the midst of trouble and stress, God comforts and quietens our minds and bodies.

**Response: Let us praise God who truly loves us and brings us new life. AMEN.**

## Hymn – In the Bleak Mid-Winter 162 R&S

In the bleak mid- winter 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 mid-winter, long ago.

Our God, heav'n cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign,  
in the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;  
enough for him, whom angels fall down before,  
the ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
But his mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

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.

# Prayers of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

## Lord's Prayer

### Reading Micah 5 2-5

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labour has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of  
the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;

<sup>5</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

## Hymn – O Little Town of Bethlehem 145 R&S

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in the 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,  
goodwill and peace 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, Immanuel.

### Reading Isaiah 60 1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.  
<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.  
<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses'  
arms.  
<sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,<sup>[a]</sup>

because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,

the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

<sup>6</sup> A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

## **Hymn – Away in a Manger 146 R&S**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the world's children in your tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

## **God's Gift**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

## **Offertory and Prayer**

## Hymn- It Came upon a Midnight Clear 144 R&S

It came upon a midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
'Glory to God! On earth by peace,  
from heaven's all gracious King'.  
the world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lonely plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long,  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and we, at bitter war, hear not  
the love-song which they bring:  
O hush the noise and end the strife,  
to hear the angels sing.

For lo! The days are hastening on,  
by prophet bards foretold,  
when with the ever-circling years  
comes round the age of gold;  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

## Blessing

# Information & Notices

*We extend a very warm welcome to you!*

## **United Prayer Time Fridays at 7:30-8pm**

*for St Paul's and South Croydon United Church*

*'Zoom' Meeting ID: 845 5391 2820*

**This week** – *we open to visitors to the Christmas Tree Festival on  
Tuesday – 4-6pm    Thursday 7-9pm  
Wednesday there is a carol service for families from 5.30pm*

**Christmas Eve Carol Service** – *Friday at 6.30pm*

**Christmas Day** – *9.15am, South Croydon United Church*

**Boxing Day** – *There will be NO SERVICE at St Paul's.*

**Book Club** -*Is currently reading Piranesi by Susanna Clarke. .  
Discussion Thursday 6 January 12.30-2pm. Coach House Café,  
Coombe Lane.*

*For future events and activities please see our website  
[www.stpaulsurc.org.uk](http://www.stpaulsurc.org.uk)  
and posters in the corridor.*



**St Paul's United Reformed Church**

*Croham Park Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 7HF    [www.stpauls.org.uk](http://www.stpauls.org.uk)*

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