



THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY

St Nicholas Family Service



7th December 2025

5.30pm

Nave

Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Service

In the fourth century, Nicholas was Bishop of Myra in modern-day Turkey. He was a very kind man and had a reputation for helping the poor and giving secret gifts to people in need.

There are many legends about Nicholas, the most famous one you will hear in this service. Because of his kindness and goodness Nicholas was eventually made a saint.

Livestreaming

This service will be livestreamed and you may be seen on camera, although we will not deliberately take any close-ups of the congregation.

By attending you agree to be seen in this way.

If you have any concerns please speak to a member of the clergy.

The music before and after the service is played by
The Training Band of the 1st Whitstable Scout Group

The Children's Choir is made up of singers from the following schools:

Wickhambreaux Church of England Primary School
St Nicholas at Wade Church of England Primary School
St John's Church of England Primary School (Singing Partner School)
Ramsgate Holy Trinity
Wincheap Foundation Primary School (Singing Partner School)
The Canterbury Primary School (Singing Partner School)
Lorenden Preparatory School
Chilham St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Herne Church of England Junior School
Ashford St Mary's Church of England Primary School
St Eanswythe's Church of England Primary School Worship Leaders
Bridge & Patricxbourne Church of England Primary School (Singing Partner School)
St Thomas' Catholic Primary School, Canterbury
Blean Primary School
Barham Church of England Primary School
Stowting Church of England Primary School
Wingham Primary School

We are enormously grateful to all the school staff who have worked hard to prepare the children and who have come today to our service.



Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off. No form of visual or sound recording, or any form of photography, is permitted during Services. Thank you for your co-operation.



An induction loop system for the hard of hearing is installed in the Cathedral. Hearing aid users should adjust their aid to T.



Large print orders of service are available from the stewards and virgers. Please ask.

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Produced by the Music & Liturgy Department:
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ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome

The Dean

God in Christ has revealed his glory.

Come let us worship.

From the rising of the sun to its setting

the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.

O praise the name of the Lord!

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.

Please remain seated while the Children's Choir sings – please look out for our special visitor coming in with the clergy from the Great West Doors.

A Joyful Song!

by Mary Lynn Lightfoot

Cantate Domino!

Sing a new song, sing a joyful new song!

Cantate Domino!

Sing a joyful, joyful new song, sing a new song...

Cantate Domino!

Cantate Domino!

Please remain seated

Reading

Deuteronomy 15.7-11

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards your needy neighbour. You should rather be kind, willingly giving enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.

Do not have a mean thought and give nothing. Give generously and be ungrudging when you do so, so the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you do. Since there will never stop being some people in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbour in your land.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

We stand to sing



Sailors tossed in the wind and the storms of the sea,
Saw a vision of Nicholas who guided them free.
Now patron of sailing, they remember him yet.
Many icons and pictures with fisherman's net.

Giving money to poor girls, so marry could they,
Made our Nicholas famous, remembered today.
With dowry in hand, soon they were wed.
"God bless you and keep you," St Nicholas said.

Kid's patron in Germany, Netherlands, too.
Asks that presents be given to children like you.
Their customs are different: they put out their shoes—
Filling them with toys, his coming's good news!

Here stockings are hung by the chimney with care,
In hope that St Nicholas soon will come there.
Dressed as bishop or Santa, he's one and the same—
Jolly, friendly, good man, we're glad that he came.

Call him "Santa" or "saint," they both mean the same,
For his nickname is Claus, short for Nicholas' name.
Giving gifts was his custom—we still do today.
Deeds done in Jesus' name forever will stay.

Bishop Nicholas still is a hero to all.
Christmas Day, and all others we follow his call,
Bringing gifts and some joy to children in need.
Follow Nicholas today—do a good deed.

The congregation remains seated to sing

A Song for St Nicholas

*Sung by the Children's
Choir only*

*Let us sing the song of Nicholas,
The saint we celebrate;
We are happy to remember him,
His legends they are great;
He delivers joy and happiness
To girls and boys who wait:
St Nicholas we cheer!
Glory, glory, hallelujah (repeat x3)
St Nicholas we cheer!*

All join in!

²As he saved the girls from poverty,
The sailors sailed free;
And the soldiers all were innocent –
His miracles we see;
Those three bags of gold he carries
Show his generosity:
St Nicholas we cheer! (Chorus)

³Let us follow his example
As for Christmas we prepare;
Soon in Bethlehem we'll see the baby
In his Mother's care;
Soon the greatest gift of all will come
To children everywhere:
St Nicholas we cheer! (*Chorus*)

Words: Jim Rosenthal and others

Homily

Carol

Peace, Perfect Peace by Kevin Mayhew

Peace, perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Peace, perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.
Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.
Love, perfect love, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.
Hope, perfect hope, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.
Joy, perfect joy, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Peace, perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Peace, perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord.
Thus, says the Lord, will the world know my friends.
Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ our Lord.

Prayers

Led by children, with this response

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Loving God, protect with your love those who have no home
and all who live in poverty.

Healing God, hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.

All-caring God, bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

All-powerful God, strengthen those who, like St Nicholas work for peace and
justice in all the world.

Father God, bless our homes and all whom we love.

Compassionate God, hold in your hand all those who have passed through
death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

God of all time and eternity, as Christians the world over prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

The prayers end with

Almighty Father, who chose your servant Nicholas to be a bishop in the Church, that he might give freely out of the treasures of your grace: make us mindful of the needs of others and, as we have received, so teach us also to give; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please remain seated as the Children's Choir sings

Song One Candle, One Flame *by Linda Sobo*

Light one candle, light one flame.

Light one candle on a long winter's night.

In a world full of darkness, in a world full of pain,
All it takes is a sparkle, all it takes is a flame,
To make joy out of sadness, to bring hope to a life,
Like the promise of the dawn on as long winter's night.

If you light up the shadows then you won't be afraid,
If you offer your kindness you'll get back what you gave.
It takes one little candle to turn darkness to light
Like the promise of the dawn on a long winter's night.

Make the sun rise tomorrow with your faith in today,
You can soften a sorrow if you just light the way.
All it takes is a candle to turn darkness to light
Like the promise of the dawn on a long winter's night.

Light one candle, light one flame.

Light one candle on a long winter's night.

Stand for

Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always;
Amen.

During the singing of the next carol, the clergy, and St Nicholas, will move to the Great West Doors, where they will have baskets of chocolates for the children to collect as they go out. Clergy will also be at the other doors with chocolate, so you won't miss out whichever door you choose!

Remain standing to sing

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

²O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to all on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

³How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

⁴O 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 Emmanuel.

Tune: FOREST GREEN

There is a retiring collection for the work of the Cathedral

The Training Band of the 1st Whitstable Scout Group will play at the end of the service

Children at Canterbury Cathedral

Family Crib Service

Wednesday 24th December 10.00am

*A short service for children and all the family telling the Christmas story
with carols and a journey to the Christmas Crib*

Children's Church

Meets in the Community Studio (near the shop) every Sunday in term time from
10.30am onwards, for children from birth to 12 years.

NEW!!!! **Canterbury Youth Choir** NEW!!!!

- Launching January 2026
- For children in Years 3-6 who love to sing
- Wednesdays 4-5:15pm
- Canterbury Cathedral Community Studio
- It's FREE!

For more information and to reserve a space, email:

SPL@canterbury-cathedral.org