

ST PAUL'S

KNIGHTSBRIDGE



MIDNIGHT MASS OF THE INCARNATION

Thursday 24th December 2020
11.00 p.m.

Information for visitors/worshippers

The safety of our congregation, visitors and staff is paramount. Please use common sense and don't come to church if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 - a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

We have done everything possible to make the building and the experience of worship safe, and have modified the way in which you will be welcomed. Please will you play your part by:

1. Wearing a face covering during your time in the building;
2. Using the hand sanitizer gel on entering the building;
3. Picking up your own service paper from the table at the back;
4. Putting your offering into the collection plate OR using the contactless payment machine (as there will be no collection during the service), before
5. Finding a seat that maintains appropriate social distancing.
6. Not mingling with people from outside your household or support bubble.

When it comes to the time for Holy Communion, we have also done everything possible to make that experience safe (including rigorous hygiene behind the scenes and hand-cleansing before any of the vessels or elements are touched).

Please will you play your part by:

1. Following the directions you will be given about where to move and stand;
2. Receiving the Sacrament in one kind (the bread only), standing;
3. Returning to your place by way of the centre aisle, maintaining social distancing.
4. If you feel anxious, stay in your place and pray rather than coming up to receive – and make a 'spiritual communion' in your heart.

Track and trace

In order to support the national track and trace system, we invite you use the NHS COVID19 APP to check-in to St Paul's using this QR code.



*Cover image:
The Nativity at Night
by Geertgen tot Sint Jans (c.1455-95)*

The National Gallery, London

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Introductory Rite

At 10.55 p.m. the lights are dimmed and the candles of the congregation are lit.

At 11.00 p.m. a bell is rung. All stand as the server and clergy enter.

The organist plays:

CHORALE PRELUDE

In dulci jubilo, BWV 729

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

THE GREETING

When all are in their places the Celebrant says:

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

THE PRAYER OF PREPARATION

**Almighty God,
unto whom all hearts be open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hid:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love thee,
and worthily magnify thy holy name;
through Christ, our Lord.**

Amen.

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph:

'You shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.'

Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

All kneel. A time of silence and recollection is kept.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against thee and against our neighbour,
in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault. We are heartily sorry and repent of all
our sins. For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive
us all that is past, and grant that we may serve thee in newness of life to
the glory of thy name. Amen.**

The Celebrant says:

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in
all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

All remain kneeling. The choir sings:

KYRIE ELEISON

Kyrie eleison. *Lord, have mercy upon us.*
Christe eleison. *Christ, have mercy upon us.*
Kyrie eleison. *Lord, have mercy upon us.*

*All stand. After the intonation of Gloria in Excelsis Deo all sit, taking their lead
from the Celebrant. The choir sings:*

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te. Gratias
agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens, Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. Domine
Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad
dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus Sanctus. Tu solus
Dominus. Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria
Dei Patris. Amen.

*Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, goodwill towards men. We praise
thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy
great glory, O Lord God, heavenly king, God, the Father almighty. O Lord, the
only-begotten son, Jesus Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that
takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the
sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the
Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou
only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art the most high, in the glory of God the
Father. Amen.*

Missa Sancti Nicolai – Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

All stand when the Sacred Ministers stand.

THE COLLECT

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray.

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

Amen.

All sit.

THE FIRST READING

A reading from the prophecy of 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.

Isaiah 9: 2-7

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

CHORALE PRELUDE

played by Timothy Wakerell

Gelobet seist du Jesu Christ, BWV 604

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we have seen his glory.

Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL READING

The Lord be with you

And with thy spirit.

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

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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!'

Luke 2: 1-14

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE SERMON

The Reverend Alan Gyle

Vicar

THE CREED

All stand with the Celebrant, who says: Let us make affirmation of our faith.

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of light,
very God of very God, begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead:
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified,
who spake by the prophets.
And I believe One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The Celebrant says:

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

All kneel.

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 sit.

THE NOTICES

THE PEACE

The Celebrant says:

Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and with thy spirit.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Kindly refrain from sharing the peace by the customary handshake.

All sit.

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Choir sings:

Lully, Lulla, thou little tiny child,
By, by, lully, lullay,
Lully, thou little tiny child, lully, lulla, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day?
This poor youngling, for whom we sing,
by, by, lully, lullay!

Herod the king, in his raging,
Charg'd 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 say,
For thy parting nor say nor sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.

Kenneth Leighton (1929-88)

*Words: 15th Century, Coventry
from the pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors*

The altar is prepared and the gifts of bread and wine, the altar, and the sanctuary party is censed. When the Thurifer approaches, all stand to be censed and remain standing for the Eucharistic Prayer.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee,
O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God,
through Jesus Christ, thine only Son, our Lord.
For he is thy living Word;
through him thou hast created all things from the beginning,
and fashioned us in thine own image.
Through him thou didst redeem us from the slavery of sin,
giving him to be born of a woman,
to die upon the cross, and to rise again for us.
Through him thou hast made us a people for thine own possession,
exalting him to thy right hand on high,
and sending forth through him thy holy and life-giving Spirit.

And now we give thee thanks because,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
he took our nature upon him and was born of the Virgin Mary,
his mother, that, being himself without sin,
he might make us clean from all sin.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we laud and magnify thy glorious name,
evermore praising thee and saying:

The Choir sings:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth,
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua, Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

Missa Sancti Nicolai – Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of thy Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine may be unto us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread;
and when he had given thanks to thee,
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise after supper he took the cup;
and when he had given thanks to thee, he gave it to them, saying:

Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of his kingdom
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ, thy Son, our Lord.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of thy divine majesty,
renew us by thy Holy Spirit, inspire us with thy love,
and unite us in the body of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be unto thee,
O Father almighty, world without end.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All kneel.

**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.**

THE FRACTION

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

THE GIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

By way of invitation to receive the Sacrament the Celebrant says:

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof,
but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.**

Currently we are distributing only the bread of Holy Communion, which is Christ's body. All who normally do so in their own Church are invited to receive the Sacrament. Those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion are invited to approach the altar to receive a blessing, carrying this booklet in their hands as an indication to the Priest.

The Choir sings:

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Missa Sancti Nicolai – Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

CAROLS DURING COMMUNION

I wonder as I wander out under the sky,
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die.
For poor on'ry people like you and like I.
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from the heavens a star's light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.

Appalachian carol
arr. John Rutter (b.1945)

Words: Traditional

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb,
He is meek, and he is mild,
He became a little child.
I, a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

John Tavener (1944-2013)

Words: William Blake (1757-1827)

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God love's pure light.
Radiant beams thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at thy birth.

Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer.

Let us pray.

All kneel.

God our Father,
who in this night hast made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the dawning of the day
when Christ the Morning Star shall rise in our hearts;
to whom be glory both now and for ever.

Amen.

**Almighty God,
we thank thee for feeding us
with the body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer thee our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of thy Spirit
to live and work to thy praise and glory.
Amen.**

All stand.

THE BLESSING & THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant says:

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Christ, who by his incarnation
gathered into one all things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with peace and goodwill
and make you partakers of the divine nature;
✠ 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 the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

All remain standing as the Servers and Sacred Ministers depart.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY
played by Timothy Wakerell

Toccata-Gigue on the Sussex Carol

George Baker (b.1951)

*Please take this order of service away with you,
or place in the recycling bin as you leave the church*

Isaiah 9:2-7

In the preceding verse, Isaiah has recalled “the former time” when the northern territories, Zebulun and Naphtali, were conquered by the Assyrians. But, he writes, “in the latter time” God will return these lands to Israel: “he will make glorious [i.e. honour] ... Galilee”. Israel, the northern kingdom, and Syria attacked Judah, the southern kingdom, in an attempt to secure Judah’s help in throwing off Assyrian domination, but (against Isaiah’s advice) King Ahaz of Judah formed an alliance with Assyria. The result was that Assyria annexed Zebulun and Naphtali (including Galilee) and Judah paid a hefty annual tribute to Assyria. Judah also acquiesced to some Assyrian religious practices.

In its historical context, today’s reading may relate to the birth of Ahaz’s son, Hezekiah. Good things were expected of him; he was expected to be the light at the end of the tunnel; but Hezekiah did not fulfill the expectations expressed here. Isaiah later (11:1-9) transfers his hopes to a future, undefined, time.

Vv. 1-4 foresee Ahaz’s heir restoring the northern territories. As when Gideon led the people of Israel to defeat the Midianites (v. 4), a vastly superior force, with God’s help (Judges 7:15-25), the people will be freed from Assyrian oppression. Gideon’s war was a holy one, and so will be the one with the Assyrians; in a holy war, the victor takes no bounty, so the spoils of war will be “burned” (v. 5). Then v. 6: the child, born to “us” (Judah), is a gift from God, powerful (“authority rests upon his shoulders”), a counsellor himself (so he will not be led astray as Ahaz was – by false counsellors), a caring and loving father to his people, and a king who brings peace and prosperity (as promised by God to David in 2 Samuel 7:16.) V. 7 reaffirms God’s covenant with David regarding his dynasty. This kingdom will, through God’s “zeal”, be eternally based on justice and godliness. To us, Christ fulfills this promise.

Luke 2:1-14

Luke is concerned to place Jesus in the time-line of history, as a real human being. We know of Augustus’ attempt to clean up the taxation system: as well as requiring more reasonable practices of tax collectors, he introduced a truly equitable tax: a poll-tax. Every 14 years, a census was held: people were required to present themselves in their ancestral towns, to register for the tax. Records are fragmentary but we do know that a census was held by “Quirinius” (v. 2) of Syria in 6-7 AD. Perhaps Judea was included in a census of 8-7 BC, “the first registration”. From Matthew 2:16, we know that Herod the Great sought to kill Jesus by slaughtering all children aged two or less. Because Herod died in 4 BC, Jesus was born no later than 6 BC. The dates agree. Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, the city of David, to “to be registered” (v. 5). Jesus is born in Bethlehem in fulfilment of the prophecy of Micah 5:2-5: a shepherd-king is to be born there.

In v. 7, Jesus is treated like any other newborn of the time: he is wrapped in cloths , but there may be a message in his being born in “a manger”: animals normally fed from it; Jesus is sustenance for the world. In vv. 8-14, we learn the meaning of Jesus’ birth. Those who hear the pronouncement by the angel are “shepherds” (v. 8),

lowly people. David too was a shepherd; in Luke, Jesus comes to the poor, the lowly. The message of Christ's birth is indeed a joyful one – for all.

V. 11 mentions our great claims as to who Jesus is: "Saviour", "Messiah" and "Lord". As "Saviour", he restores us to wholeness, rescues us from sin and alienation from God. In Jesus, God is present with sinners and saves us from destructive self-isolation to union with him, in a nurturing community. As "Messiah", he inaugurates the era of heavenly peace: the end-time has begun. As "Lord", he is God come in human form. The kingdom is for all those whom God has chosen (v. 14b).

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

In dulci jubilo (BWV 729) – Bach

The constant and rapid alternation between hymn-like sections and passagework in Bach's chorale prelude on *In dulci jubilo* (BWV 729) has been generally associated with the young composer's manner of accompanying congregational singing. Not only did Bach frequently use rather audacious harmonies in this piece, but he also added short recitativo elements at each phrase end. This practice apparently caused considerable distress amongst Arnstadt's church goers, so that Bach was reprimanded by the city's Consistory Court for playing 'many curious variations in the hymns' and for 'mingling in a "wandering" [i.e. unstable] key.' What may have caused disapproval three centuries ago is exactly what makes this setting of *In dulci jubilo* so appealing today. The element of harmonic variety and surprise, blended with a fair amount of virtuosity, makes this piece one of the most iconic organ pieces of the Christmas Season, not least for being customarily played as the first postlude at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College Cambridge.

Missa Sancti Nicolai - Haydn

The period in which Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809) received his musical formation and spent his most productive years as a composer was a time of relative stability and intellectual freedom in the Habsburg Monarchy. A climate of intellectual openness, cosmopolitanism and innovation (e.g. free school education provided by an imperial grant for all inhabitants of the realm) provided the right environment for Haydn to create a musical idiom that was easily accessible to people from all classes. It is therefore that Haydn, later in life, would say with considerable satisfaction and pride that his music 'could be understood in the whole world.' The unpretentious musical language of the *Missa Sancti Nicolai* gives clear testimony of this ideal.

Biography and style

Joseph Haydn was born in the small town of Rohrau near the border to modern-day Hungary. While singing as a choirboy at St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, Haydn received his first substantial musical training in one of the most eminent musical centres of Europe at the time. From 1756 onward, Haydn served several noble Viennese families as a musician, and from 1761 until his death, Haydn was employed by the Esterházy family, one of the great landowner magnates of the Kingdom of Hungary. As Haydn had to work for the Esterházy's in their relatively isolated residences in Eisenstadt and Esterháza, the composer had to develop his musical style independently from the trends of the musical metropolis Vienna, a

constraint that should ultimately prove to be the fertilizer for the manifold musical innovations, as well as the renowned musical jokes in Haydn's piano sonatas, string quartets and symphonies. During those catalytic years of music production, Haydn also wrote the *Missa Sancti Nicolai*, Hob. XXII:6.

The work

The Nicolai Mass was likely written in 1772 to celebrate the nameday of Haydn's patron, Prince Nicolaus Esterházy on the 6th of December. Several scholars agree that the reason for Haydn to write a mass setting for that occasion was the composer's wish to thank Prince Nicolaus for having allowed his court musicians to return home to their families after a prolonged stay in the remote country residence Esterháza. The plea of the disenchanted musicians wanting to go home has been immortalised in the last movement of Haydn's *Farewell Symphony*.

The Nicolai Mass itself is among Haydn's most compact mass settings. The work resembles Mozart's concise yet rich idiom more than most other of Haydn's mass settings. A characteristic, lilting 6/4 metre in the Kyrie sets a peaceful, almost bucolic tone. It has been noted by scholars that this Kyrie is the only account where Haydn begins with the ensemble of soloists rather than the customary full choir. The Gloria is a triumphant outburst of energy with a gentle soprano aria (*Gratias agimus*) and the chordal *Qui tollis* as contrasting elements. Had it been the metre of 6/4 in the Kyrie, it is a continuous chain of sextuplets in the Sanctus that allows to make musical connections with Prince Nicolaus nameday on the 6th of December. A fugal build-up accompanied by the sextuplets and a vivacious *Pleni sunt caeli* and *Osanna* lead to the *Benedictus*, which like in many of Mozart's masses, is reserved to the quartet of soloist. Finally, the dark and dramatic *Agnus Dei*, set in G Minor, is gradually lightened up to prepare for a recapitulation of the 6/4 Kyrie in the *Dona nobis pacem*.

***Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* (BWV 604) – Bach**

The chorale prelude on *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*, BWV 604 is part of the *Orgelbüchlein* ("little organ book") collection, which was likely composed in Weimar between 1708 and 1717. The first verse of this Christmas chorale translates as follows:

Praised be you, Jesu Christ, / that you are born man / of a Virgin, that is
truth; / in this the angel host rejoices. / God have mercy.

The setting resembles the principles of what Ernest May has termed a "melody chorale." A single, largely unornamented top voice features the tune in long note values, while a rhythmically and harmonically complex texture of accompanying voices is placed below. In the case of this particular chorale prelude, the soprano voice is emphasised by being played with a solo registration on a separate manual, whilst the pedal line is characterised by a recurring motif of three semiquavers and a crotchet.

Lully, lulla, thou little tine child - Leighton

Kenneth Leighton (1929 – 1988) received his first musical formation as a Chorister at Wakefield Cathedral. As a student at Oxford, he pursued both Music, as well as the Classics. Mentored musically at first by Bernard Rose and Gerald Finzi, who also introduced him to Ralph Vaughan-Williams, Leighton continued his studies with Italian composer Goffredo Petrassi in Rome, from whom he gained significant influences for his further musical career. Later in life, Leighton held teaching positions at the universities of Oxford and Edinburgh. It has been noted that the composer did much to keep alive and transform the Victorian tradition of English choral music, purge its piety and drag it into the (late) twentieth century. The musicologist Tom Coxhead points out that Leighton ‘has suffered the same fate as many English composers in receiving little attention from concert halls and festival.’ In other words, his rich output of liturgical works and the resulting popularity in the choral scene have overshadowed an equally vast oeuvre of orchestral and chamber music.

Leighton wrote his setting of the Coventry Carol, *Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child* in 1948 as a nineteen-year old student at Oxford. The gently lilting 6/4 metre of Leighton’s music does not instantly reveal that this carol reflects on one of the darkest stories connected with Christmas, the Massacre of the Innocents. Leighton uses the musical depiction of a cradle song as the backdrop for the soprano solo narrative of the piece. Imaginative harmonies and a dramatic middle section depicting King Herod’s fury give further variety to this exquisite musical miniature.

I wonder as I wander – Rutter (arr.)

Named ‘the composer who owns Christmas’ by The New York Times, John Rutter (born 1945) has indeed shaped the sound of Christmas for millions around the globe through the multitude of carols he composed and arranged in his unique style over more than forty years. Born in London and educated at Highgate School, John Rutter read music at Clare College Cambridge and served as the director of music of the same college between 1975 and 1979. Working as a freelance composer and editor ever since, John Rutter has made substantial contributions to the repertoire performed by amateur choirs in the English-speaking world and beyond. Besides carols and choir anthems, Rutter has written extended choral works, such as the Gloria (1974), Requiem (1985) and Magnificat (1990).

The American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles (1892 – 1980) collected the musical material of the carol *I wonder as I wander* in Appalachian North Carolina in July of 1933 and expanded it into the version on which John Rutter’s arrangement is based. In the arrangement, Rutter elegantly alternates between solo voices, unison and the full choir whilst strictly adhering to the archaic Aeolian modality of the carol tune.

The Lamb – Taverner

John Taverner (1944 – 2013) was one of Britain’s most influential choral composers of the second half of the 20th century, known mostly for his rich oeuvre of sacred works of which all are written in a highly personal and original style. Educated at Highgate School (as a classmate of John Rutter) and the Royal Academy of Music, Taverner’s first major compositions were stage works. A conversion to Orthodox

Christianity in 1977 had a significant impact on his musical output, including the development of a style in many ways comparable with Arvo Pärt's idiom.

Taverner's short motet *The Lamb*, composed 1982, is a setting based on a poem from the collection *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* by William Blake (first published in 1789). The composer said about his piece: '*The Lamb* was written...for my then 3-year old nephew, Simon. It was composed from seven notes in an afternoon. Blake's child-like vision perhaps explains *The Lamb's* great popularity in a world that is starved of this precious and sacred dimension in almost every aspect of life.'

Tocatta-Gigue on the Sussex Carol – Baker

A native of Dallas, Texas, George Baker (born 1951) was shaped as an organist from extended studies in Paris. Amongst his teachers were some of the most renowned French organists of his time, Marie-Claire Alain, Pierre Cochereau, Jean Langlais and André Marchal. Upon return to the U.S.A., Baker earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan and won numerous prestigious prizes as an organist. Not long after, however, he decided to become a medical doctor, allowing him to practice as a dermatologist until his retirement in the summer of 2020. George Baker never ceased performing, composing, teaching and recording, and he is recently resumed a career as a full-time musician.

George Baker's Tocatta-Gigue on the Sussex Carol was premiered at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College Cambridge in 2009 and broadcast worldwide. Baker himself describes the piece as 'a joyous Christmas postlude on the Sussex Carol,' where snippets of Bach's Gigue Fugue (BWV 577) 'make cameo appearances' in the pedal, whilst the tune ('On Christmas night all Christians sing') can be heard with a solo colour. The work is unmistakably shaped by the bell-like patterns of French organ toccatas and the lush harmonic world of mid-20th-century French organist Pierre Cochereau. A development section in the middle of the piece leads to a dramatic crescendo. Exuberant chordal sections, pedal passagework and an unexpected piano effect shortly before the end add further stimulation before the Tocatta-Gigue comes to a triumphant conclusion.

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St Paul's Knightsbridge maintains a regular professional choir of eight and the services of both a Direct and Assistant Director of Music. The organ is by Henry Willis & Sons and dates from 1888. The musical repertoire, Sunday by Sunday, is diverse and often boldly ambitious: at the Solemn Mass at 11 am there is always a choral mass setting and two seasonal anthems, one at the Offertory and the other during Communion. Full details of the music for each week – along with a programme note – is published in the service paper. The musicians also sing and play for weddings, baptisms, funerals and memorial services at the church.

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