



CHESTER  
CATHEDRAL

# Crib Service

**Christmas Eve 2025**  
**3.00pm**

Preacher: The Revd Canon  
Dr Anthony Lees-Smith



# WELCOME

We welcome you to this beautiful church in the heart of the city. This cathedral is the seat of the Bishop of Chester and the core of a Christian community that has worshipped here and worked together for over 1100 years. It is a place where the mission of the church is central to proclaim God's love, and your welcome presence here for worship helps to strengthen this vital act of witness.

Throughout this order, indications of where the congregation should stand or sit are given for guidance only; please feel free to follow your usual practice if this is different. During the service the congregation are invited to say the words in **bold type**.

In order to follow Safeguarding Policies, please may we ask you to refrain from the use of photography during this service.

Toilets, including facilities for the disabled, are available off the Cloisters. The stewards will be happy to give you directions.

## **Children's Church**

During the 10.30am Eucharist service during term time on Sunday mornings, we invite children and young people to take part in age related activities, before returning to the service for communion with their families.

There is an occasional Bubbling Together family service for young families during 10.30am Eucharist.

Further information or to join a group please email [hello@chestercathedral.com](mailto:hello@chestercathedral.com) (for the attention of Jackie Rainsforth Children's Church)

## **Saturday Singing Club**

Saturday Singing Club is a fun and relaxed club for primary school aged children who want to learn more about music and singing. The group meets on a Saturday morning from 10-11.30am.

No experience is necessary, just a passion for singing! For more information, please contact Tim McLachlan on 07950610055 or [saturday.singing@chestercathedral.com](mailto:saturday.singing@chestercathedral.com)

# WELCOME

*The Revd Canon Dr Anthony Lees-Smith,  
Canon Missioner*

## CAROL

*Please stand, if you are able, to sing the carol,  
during which members of Children's Church  
process from the West End.*

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  
he would honour and obey,  
love and watch the lowly Maiden,  
in whose gentle arms he lay:  
Christian children all must be  
mild, obedient, good as he.

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.

*Cecil Frances Alexander 1818-95*

*IRBY*

*Henry John Gauntlett 1805-76*

*revised by A H Mann 1850-1929*

*All sit.*

## **CHOIR CAROL**

*sung by the Saturday Singing Club and the  
probationer choristers of the Cathedral Choir*

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day;  
I would my true love did so chance  
to see the legend of my play,  
to call my true love to my dance;

*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love,  
my love, my love,  
this have I done for my true love.*

In a manger laid, and wrapped I was  
so very poor, this was my chance  
betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass  
to call my true love to my dance.

*Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love,  
my love, my love,  
this have I done for my true love.*



*Congregation invited to remain sitting and join in singing*

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus!

Look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children

in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

*Anon, Philadelphia 1883*

*CRADLE SONG*

*William J Kirkpatrick 1838-1921*

*Please sit. Community Tableau and choir are invited to return to their seats, while Children's Church stays in place.*

## **REFLECTION**

The Revd Canon Dr Anthony Lees-Smith

# THE PRAYERS

Jesus, whose mother was Mary, we pray for all families, and for those who will be alone this Christmas.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, cradled in a manger, we pray for all those who have no home, especially for the homeless sleeping on our streets and for all refugees.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, sharing the stable with the animals: we pray for the beautiful creation you have given us, and especially that we might care for it better.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, worshipped by shepherds and kings: we pray for the world you came to save, especially for all places where there is war and where people live in fear.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, our Emmanuel: we pray for those known to us in special need, especially for those who are sick or sad.

Lord Jesus, **hear our prayer.**





# CAROL

*All stand if you are able and sing, during which the members of Children's Church process down the Nave.*

Hark! the herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born 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.

*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born 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:

*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.*

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;  
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:

*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.*

*Charles Wesley 1707-88*

*MENDELSSOHN*

*Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809-47*

## **Retiring Collection**

*There will be a collection as you leave today to  
be split between the Cathedral and Claire  
House Children's Hospice.*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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