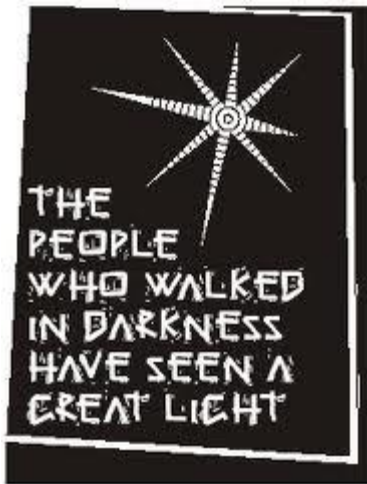


### Call to Worship

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light; on those who  
lived in a land of deep shadow a light  
has shone. For the yoke that was  
weighing upon them, and the burden  
that was upon their shoulders, you  
have broken in pieces O God, our  
Renewer.



### Words of Welcome

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this  
Advent Season for ourselves and our  
families, and all who live with hurt,  
grief, sorrow, sickness or painful  
memories of loss. We ask for  
strength for today, courage for  
tomorrow, and peace for the past.  
We ask these things in the name of  
you, Christ, who shares our life in joy  
and sorrow, death and new birth,  
despair and promise. *Amen.*

### Hymn No. 168 (Bergers)

Lord, you were rich beyond all  
splendour,

yet, for love's sake, became so poor;  
leaving your home in glad surrender,  
sapphire-paved courts for stable  
floor:

Lord, you were rich beyond all  
splendour,  
yet, for love's sake, became so poor.

You are our God beyond all praising,  
yet, for love's sake, became a man;  
stooping so low, but sinners raising  
heav'nwards, by your eternal plan:  
You are our God beyond all praising,  
yet, for love's sake, became a man.

Lord, you are love beyond all telling,  
Saviour and King, we worship you;  
Emmanuel, within us dwelling,  
Make us and keep us pure and true:  
Lord, you are love beyond all telling,  
Saviour and King, we worship you.

### Responses for 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent

God is among us,  
God is within us;  
*God is dancing with joy.*

God is our strength,  
God is our Saviour;  
*God is dancing with joy.*

God is our peace,  
God is our festivity;  
*God is dancing with joy.*

Loving God,  
who waits with us and walks beside us,

who speaks into all memory and shares every thought,  
 wait with us now, making this moment precious and close.  
 Help us lose ourselves in you;  
 in the depth of love that is generous enough to hold us,  
 strong enough to wrap us,  
 eternal enough to call us and patient enough to accompany us.

So, may we find the richness of this time,  
 the wealth of memory and the value to story,  
 the certainty of promise,  
 the healing of laughter,  
 the generosity of time.  
 May we find what we need to find,  
 know what we need to know and trust what we need to trust in you.  
 So be it. **Amen.**

### The Collect for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
 who at your first coming sent your messenger  
 to prepare your way before you:  
 grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries  
 may likewise so prepare and make ready your way  
 by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,  
 that at your second coming to judge the world

we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;  
 for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, world without end. **Amen.**

### The First Reading - from Matthew 1

Matthew 1: 18 - 25

#### Matthew Chapters One and Two

*The story of the first Christmas is not really a happy story but a story about life in the real world. Mary of Nazareth, who is engaged to the carpenter Joseph, discovers she is pregnant. Joseph does not want to embarrass Mary and plans to break the engagement privately.*

*This was not an easy time for this couple. Their country was under Roman occupation and King Herod who ruled Palestine for the Romans was known for his cruelty. These are not exactly ideal conditions for bringing a child into the world. In the midst of their turmoil, an angel - God's messenger - speaks to Joseph in a dream and tells him to proceed with his marriage to Mary.*

#### Matthew 1. 18 - 25

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>a</sup> <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for

the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us.' <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus. <sup>b</sup>

## Infant Holy (Hymn 163) - Musical Reflection

### The Second Reading - from Matthew 2

#### Matthew 2: 7 - 23

*In the midst of Mary and Joseph's joy over the safe birth of their son Jesus, a new crisis looms. King Herod orders the death of all children under the age of two, and so Joseph, Mary and Jesus have to flee as refugees to Egypt. There they live for several years until King Herod dies and it is safe to return. Mary and Joseph felt God's presence with them through all the hardships they had to face.*

#### Matthew 2.7 - 23

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>a</sup> <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search

diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.'

<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>b</sup> <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>c</sup>

<sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.

Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

<sup>13</sup> Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>d</sup> <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.'

<sup>16</sup> When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under,

according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. <sup>e f 17</sup> Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup> 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.' <sup>19</sup> When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup> 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' <sup>21</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>9 22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'



### Hymn No. 121 (Conditor alme)

Creator of the starry height,  
thy people's everlasting light,  
Jesu, redeemer of us all,  
hear thou thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving at the helpless cry  
of all creation doomed to die,  
didst come to save our fallen race  
by healing gifts of heav'nly grace.

When earth was near its evening hour,  
thou didst, in love's redeeming pow'r,  
like bridegroom from his chamber,  
come  
forth from a virgin-mother's womb.

At thy great name, exalted now,  
all knees in lowly homage bow;  
all things in heav'n and earth adore,  
and own thee King for evermore.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,  
our judge in that tremendous day,  
ward off, while yet we dwell below,  
the weapons of our crafty foe.

To God the Father, God the Son  
and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
praise, honour, might and glory be  
from age to age eternally.

### The Third Reading - from John 1: 1 - 14

*Matthew and Luke describe Jesus' birth in Bethlehem with stories of visits from shepherds and Magi. But John's gospel speaks of Jesus as God's word for all humanity; as God's word spoken through this one born into a hurting world, who was rejected by his own. He also describes Jesus' birth as light in the darkness.*

### John 1: 1-14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word

was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

### **Hymn No. 139 (Gabriel's Message)**

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as  
flame;

'All hail', said he, 'thou lowly maiden  
Mary,

most highly favoured lady'.

*Gloria!*

'For known a blessed mother thou  
shalt be,  
all generations laud and honour thee,  
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers  
foretold;

most highly favoured lady.

*Gloria!*

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her  
head,

'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said,  
'my soul shall laud and magnify his holy  
name':

most highly favoured lady.

*Gloria!*

Of her, Emmanuel the Christ was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
and Christian folk throughout the  
world will ever say

'Most highly favoured lady'.

*Gloria!*



## **Reflection**

### **A Liturgy of Remembering**

*(using the Candles on the Advent Wreath)*

This first candle we light to  
remember those whom we have loved  
and lost. We pause to remember  
their name, their face, their voice,

the memory that binds them to us in this season.

*[Silence]*

***May God's eternal love surround them.***

This second candle we light to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to God, asking that, from God's hands, we may receive the gift of peace.

*[Silence]*

***Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future.***

This third candle we light to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause to remember these past weeks, months, or maybe even years; the deep emotions we have felt, the pain we have suffered, the disbelief we have endured, and all who have stood with us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

*[Silence]*

***Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.***

Our fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

*[Silence]*

***Let us remember the one who shows the way, who brings the truth, and who bears the light.***



**Greensleaves (Hymn No. 202) -  
Musical Reflection**

### **Prayers of the People**

In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask God for all the things we need;

For ourselves as we participate in whatever way we can this Christmas.  
God hear our prayer....  
***and in your mercy answer.***

For our families and friends that they may continue to help and support us.  
God hear our prayer....

*and in your mercy answer.*

For the person we have loved that has died. For all the losses that we know, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise.

God hear our prayer....

*and in your mercy answer.*

For all our family and friends that they may know love and peace and happiness in you.

God hear our prayer....

*and in your mercy answer.*

For the peace proclaimed by the Christmas angels, to come throughout the whole world.

God hear our prayer....

*and in your mercy answer.*

God of great compassion and love, listen to the prayers of these your people. Grant to all, especially the bereaved and troubled ones this Christmas, the blessing we ask in the name of Christ who taught us to pray together saying:

*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.*

### Hymn No. 170 (Gartan 1)

Love came down at Christmas,  
love all lovely, Love divine;  
love was born at Christmas,  
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,  
love incarnate, Love divine;  
worship we our Jesus:  
but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,  
love be yours and love be mine,  
love to God and all men,  
love for plea, and gift and sign.

### Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you;  
may the wind be always at your back;  
may the sun shine warm upon your  
face  
and the rain fall soft upon your fields;  
and until we meet again,  
may God hold you in the palm of his  
hand.

And the Blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy  
Spirit,  
be with you, and those whom you love,  
this Christmas-time and for  
evermore. *Amen.*

### The Dismissal

What must we do?

We must pray faithfully;  
*we must live in love.*

What must we do?

We must share our possessions;  
*we must live in love.*

What must we do?

We must act justly;  
*we must live in love.*

*In the interests of trying to keep all who come to our churches safe, please take away this service sheet and any other items that you may have brought with you or used in church this morning. Thank you.*

*Stay well and stay safe.*



## **Plans for Christmas 2021**

These are the plans, currently for Christmas 2021. There will be further information and clarification provided in the coming days, should government restrictions change.

There is one more service today:

18.30 The Sausage(less!) Service in St Philip and St James' Church

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

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Christingle Service in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

*19.00 Carols by Candlelight in St Philip and St James' Church with RTÉ Cór na nÓg.*

### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2021 – Christmas Eve**

21.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

23.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2021 – Christmas Day**

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

### **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022**

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

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[Booking for the Christingle and the Carols by Candlelight will open at 12.00 midday on Tuesday 14th December 2021 and will](#)

[close at 12.00](#)

[midday on Friday 17th December 2021 to allow the specific detailed seating plan for each service to be](#)



**drawn up. Please note the booking for a service may 'close' before that if the maximum capacity has been reached.**

**Booking for all services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will open at 12.00 midday on Tuesday 14th December 2021 and will close at 12.00 midday on Monday 20th December 2021 to allow the specific detailed seating plan for each service to be drawn up. Please note the booking for a service may 'close' before that if the maximum capacity has been reached.**

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## **DECORATING THE CHURCHES FOR CHRISTMAS**

Both churches would be thrilled to receive donations of poinsettias, flowers, holly (preferably with berries!), etc. Help with decorating would also be very welcome in both churches. See details below:

### **St Thomas' Church**

St Thomas' Church will be decorated on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021**, 10.00-12.00.

Items for decorating may dropped off at the church 9.30-10.30.

*Please contact Sheila Chamberlain 086-3320072. If you bring your own mug, Sheila will provide coffee!!!*

### **St Philip and St James' Church**

St Philip and St James' Church will be decorated on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021**, 10.30-12.30. Items may also be dropped off at this time.

*Please contact Viola Brady 086-1780653 or Denise Richards 086-2065166*

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## **CHRISTIAN MEDITATION**

*in the Canon Osborne Barr Room*  
 Tuesday afternoon—3.30pm—4.10pm  
 Contact Irene on 087-2755423  
[irene.reid1052@gmail.com](mailto:irene.reid1052@gmail.com)

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**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

**St Thomas' Church at 10.30**

*Midweek Holy Communion Service*



*Bring your own mug for a cuppa afterwards!*

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## **Help for Santa!**

Life can be very cruel and we could make a difference to some children this Christmas. This is why I am asking you if we could help Santa. Due to COVID-19, the Capuchin Day Centre can only accept new toys, so I am asking if you could buy one or two small toys - they cannot be big toys as those families living in hotels or hostels, or in cars, do not have the room for anything

big - and could you bring them to either of our churches on the following Sundays... if you are not able to attend the service, please aim to arrive at the end of the service to drop off the items:

**I will also be in St Philip and St James' on Sunday 12th December 2021 to receive your items 17.00-18.00, before the Sausage(less!) Service, and on Tuesday 14th December 2021, 19.00-20.00.**

*I have to deliver the items into the Capuchin Day Centre on Wednesday 15th December 2021, so we have to have them before that day.*

**Santa needs long-johns, socks etc too!**

Thank you too to those who have donated brand new pairs of long-johns (underwear) which have been hugely appreciated by The Alice Leahy Trust for their service users. As you can imagine, it is bitterly cold living on the streets at this time of the year. People have been very generous with donating long-johns and ski underwear, and we would be delighted to pass on more, new long-johns, new warm socks, new gloves and new hats. Warm jackets in good condition would also be great.

***We can give a little love this Christmas, and that is exactly what Christmas is... God coming to earth in human form because he loves us, and to show us through Jesus Christ how to love and to care.***



## **Confirmation Class**

**The next Confirmation Classes will be on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in St Philip and St James' Church**  
**18.00-18.30 hours**  
**and**  
**18.30-19.15 hours**

## **BOOTERSTOWN AND CARYSFORT**

**SELECT VESTRY**  
**THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022**  
**20.00 HOURS VIA ZOOM**

## **MOUNT MERRION**

**SELECT VESTRY**  
**MONDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2022**  
**20.00 HOURS VIA ZOOM**