ELY CATHEDRAL

COME, LET US ADORE HIM

Worship, Prayer and Christian Formation at Ely Cathedral

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2026/27



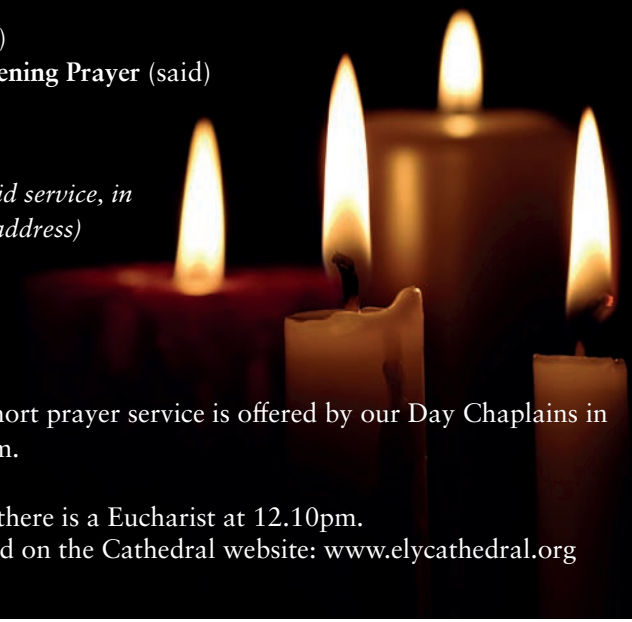
DAILY WORSHIP

Monday - Saturday

7.30am: **Morning Prayer**
8.00am: **Holy Communion** (said)
5.30pm: **Choral Evensong** or **Evening Prayer** (said)

Sunday

8.15am **Holy Communion** *(A said service, in traditional language with a short address)*
10.30am **Sung Eucharist**
with music, hymns and sermon
4.00pm **Choral Evensong**



On **Wednesdays** and **Fridays** a short prayer service is offered by our Day Chaplains in St Catherine's Chapel at 12.15pm.

On **Thursdays** and **Saints' Days** there is a Eucharist at 12.10pm.
A full list of services can be found on the Cathedral website: www.elycathedral.org

Come, let us adore him

Arguably 'the most wonderful time of the year', the seasons of **Advent, Christmas and Epiphany** are certainly filled with wonder and holy joy at Ely Cathedral. We hear from the prophets of old as they awaited the coming of Christ, we rejoice in the promise of a Saviour born among us and celebrate his birth with a rich season of worship and festivity to which everyone is warmly invited.

PRAYER FOR THE SEASON

Almighty God,
grant that we who are bathed
in the new light of your incarnate Word
may reflect the faith
that shines in our hearts
in all we do;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Gregorian, 10th Century

ADVENT

In Advent we traditionally reflect on The Four Last Things - Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell - and we also look forward in hope and anticipation to the coming of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, as a human being, God with us. These two elements of solemn contemplation and joyful expectation are both essential to the proper keeping of a good Advent.

Tuesdays 1, 8 & 15 December, 8pm

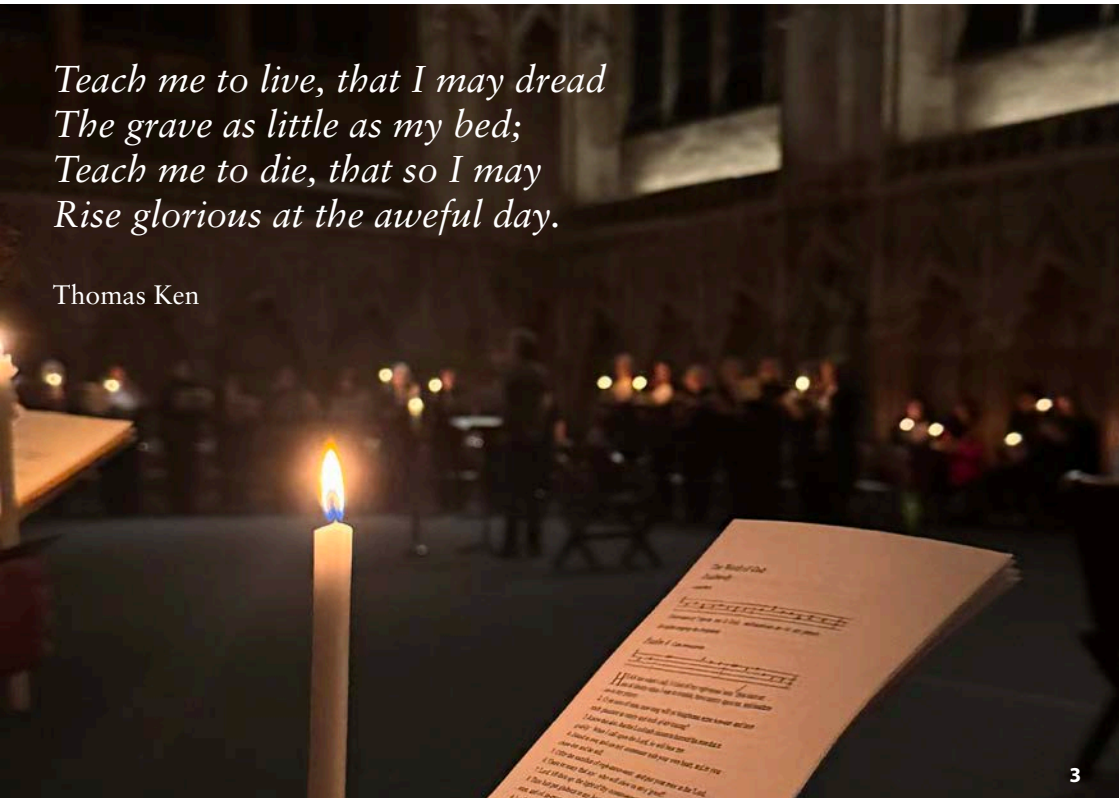
Advent Compline

in the Lady Chapel

Compline is the last of the seven daily services which are sung in monasteries and convents.

It has changed very little since the monks of Ely sang it before the Reformation. It is a meditative, candlelit space for music, prayer and reflection, to quiet and calm the soul, to look back over the day that is gone, and to commend ourselves and those we love to God's care as night comes.

It brings us to the end of the day, and it is also a gentle preparation for the end of life, very much in the spirit of Thomas Ken's words below:



Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise glorious at the aweful day.

Thomas Ken

ADVENT SERMON SERIES

Advent sermons traditionally focus on the four last things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – but we look forward in anticipation to the coming of Christ as our Saviour – Emmanuel - God-with-us. Balancing solemnity and hope, serious self-examination and joyful anticipation, is the task of the Christian.



Sunday 29 November, 10.30am

Advent Sunday

Preacher: Canon James Reveley
(Precentor and Interim Dean)

O that you would tear the heavens and come down.

(Isaiah 64.1)

Canon James explores the longing of Isaiah for God to draw near as our saviour and deliverer.



Sunday 6 December, 10.30am

Second Sunday of Advent

Preacher: Canon Jenny Wright
(Canon Theologian)

He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.

(Mark 1.8)

Canon Jenny reflects on John the Baptist's call to the people to repent as he looks to the coming of Christ.



Sunday 13 December, 10.30am

Third Sunday of Advent

Preacher: Canon Robert Mackley
(Canon Pastor)

God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up.
(Isaiah 61.11)

Canon Robert examines the passage from the Prophet Isaiah that Jesus proclaimed at the beginning of his ministry.



Sunday 20 December, 10.30am

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Preacher: The Revd Sister Margaret Anne ASSP

The child to be born will be holy
(Luke 1.35)

Sister Margaret Anne reflects on the account of the annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary and her faithful response.

She is a member of the Anglican religious community known as All Saints Sisters of the Poor. This is now a dispersed Community and Sister Margaret Anne lives in West Sussex. She has a ministry in the Chapel at Ramsay Hall, community living for retired clergy. She is a Day Chaplain at Chichester Cathedral and also serves occasionally in her local parish.

ADVENT WORSHIP

Choral Evensong during this holy season provides a time for quiet reflection; the choir sings a selection of much-loved Advent music.

Sunday 29 November

ADVENT SUNDAY

Today the new church year starts and we begin again the cycle of season and saint, feast and fast, that draws us ever more deeply into God's life.

10.30am

Advent Sunday Eucharist

The choir will sing music by Francis Jackson and Andrew Parnell.
British Sign Language interpreted.

6pm

Advent Procession

The traditional and mystical service which marks the beginning of the church's year featuring the Cathedral Choir. The service is based around the Great Advent Antiphons (explained in their own section on page 8); music will include works by Kerensa Briggs, Jonathan Dove and Bob Chilcott.





Sunday 6 December

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10.30am

Sung Eucharist

With music by John Ireland and Antony Piccolo.

4pm

Choral Evensong

In the Lady Chapel

5.15pm

The Big Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on Service

Come and enjoy the most spectacular, Christmas tree in Ely as we count down to the switching on of the lights.This popular family event celebrates the festive season in song and prayer, concluding with the blessing of the magnificent tree! Sung by the Girl Choristers and the Ely Imps.

6.30pm

Advent Taizé Service

Sunday 13 December

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10.30am

Sung Eucharist

Music includes works by Grayston Ives and Orlando Gibbons.

4pm

Choral Evensong

5.15pm

Carols on Palace Green

(Join us outside the main doors of the Cathedral)
Please wrap up warm for outdoor carol singing. Hot chocolate provided.

THE 'GREAT O'S' OF ADVENT

The 'Great O's' are seven invocations of the different names of Christ, looking towards his coming into the world under different titles. Each one, addressing Christ, begins 'O..!' They are used as antiphons (opening and closing chants) for the Magnificat during Evensong or Evening Prayer from Thursday 17 December.

Thursday 17 December, 5.30pm — ***O Sapientia*** *O Wisdom*

Evening Prayer

O Wisdom, coming from the mouth of the most High, reaching from one end to the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

Friday 18 December, 5.30pm — ***O Adonai*** *O Lord*

Choral Evensong

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai: Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

Saturday 19 December, 5.30pm — ***O Radix Jesse*** *O Root of Jesse*

Choral Evensong

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples; before you kings will shut their mouths, to you the nations will make their prayer: Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

Sunday 20 December — ***O Clavis David*** *O Key of David*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10.30am

Sung Eucharist

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel; you open and no one can shut; you shut and no one can open: Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house, those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, the response of Mary to the Angel's greeting is the focus of our attention, *'Let it be to me according to your word.'*

4pm

Choral Evensong

Monday 21 December, 5.30pm — ***O Oriens*** *O Dayspring*

Evening Prayer

O Dayspring, splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Tuesday 22 December, 5.30pm *O Rex Gentium* *O King of the Nations*

Evening Prayer

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one: Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.

Wednesday 23 December, 6pm *O Emmanuel* *God With us*

Carol Service 1

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver, the hope of the nations and their Saviour: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

This processional service includes many opportunities for congregational singing as well as a colourful mix of carols from the Cathedral Choir.

CHRISTMAS

Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All People

At Christmas, God comes among us - not in power, or in eloquence, but as a new-born, dependent upon human love and care for his survival. The great Bishop of Ely Lancelot Andrewes called Jesus, *The Word without a word,* because the swaddled baby in the manger is also the power which has brought everything into being. Because God emptied himself out to become human, human beings are forever brought back into close intimacy with God.



PRAYER FOR THE SEASON

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven
touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.
Amen.


AND · TRVTH · THE · WORD ·
BET
HE
AND · DWELT · AMONG · VS · T

Thursday 24 December

Christmas Eve

12pm & 2.30pm

Crib Services

See page 15 for details.

6pm

Carol Service 2

This processional service includes many opportunities for congregational singing as well as a colourful mix of carols from the Cathedral Choir.

11pm

Midnight Mass

When peaceful silence lay over all, and the night in its swift course was half spent: down from the heavens, from the royal throne, leapt your all powerful Word.
The waiting and watching of Advent is brought to fulfilment in the deepest part of the night. Mary brings to birth the newborn infant who is also the redeemer of all creation. The Midnight Mass hallows the turning of the night to Christmas, and honours Jesus' birth in Word and Sacrament, carols and song. The service is sung by the Cathedral Choir. Bishop Sarah, Bishop of Ely will preside and preach.

Friday 25 December

Christmas Day

8.15am

Holy Communion of Christmas Dawn

10.30am

Festal Eucharist of Christmas Day

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning!
The people of God rejoice together, singing carols, sharing in communion, hearing and receiving the Word. The service is sung by the Girl and Boy Choristers and Lower Voices. Music includes traditional carols and Mozart's festive *Coronation Mass*. Canon James Reveley will preside and preach.

4pm

Festal Evensong

We conclude our Christmas Day celebrations with a glorious Evensong sung by the Cathedral Choir and featuring music by John Rutter.

Saturday 26 December / Monday 28 December - Saturday 2 January
8.30am **Morning Prayer**
9am **Holy Communion**
12.10pm **Holy Communion** (26, 28 December & 1 January)
12.15pm **Midday Prayer** (1 January)
4pm **Evening Prayer / Evensong**

Saturday 26 December

Stephen, Deacon, first martyr

Stephen was the first martyr of the early Christian church. In honouring him, the order of the Church's feasts moves abruptly from rejoicing to the realities of commitment to Christ's Way in this confused and violent world. Stephen witnessed to Jesus as Messiah and was then stoned for blasphemy. As he died, Stephen saw a vision of heaven and prayed for forgiveness for his persecutors.

Sunday 27 December

1st Sunday of Christmas

St John the Evangelist

St John the Evangelist is honoured for the Gospel named after him, which contains the most mystical of the visions of Jesus as both human and divine, participating both in human mortality and in the eternal nature of God the maker, redeemer and sustainer of all things.

10.30am

Sung Eucharist

Preacher: Canon James Reveley

4pm

Christmastide Carols

(see next page for information)

Tuesday 29 December

The Holy Innocents

Again we see the violence with which the realities of human power and greed surround the proclamation of the good news of peace. The feast of the Holy Innocents remembers the infants of Bethlehem killed by King Herod. Herod ordered their murder in an attempt to eliminate the threat he perceived to his own power in Jesus' birth. Jesus and his family escaped his soldiers to become refugees in Egypt.

Friday 1 January 2027

Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

Eight days after Jesus' birth, he was circumcised according to Jewish law, and this Feast marks that moment in real time, eight days after the Feast Day of Christmas itself.

CAROL SERVICES

Enjoy music, rejoicing, story, brass bands, choirs, and all the joy of Christmas in our Ely community at our various different carol services!

Saturday 12 December, 11.30am

Community Christmas Carols

Come and sing along to your favourite carols with Littleport Brass Band. With Christmas music, readings and prayers.

Wednesday 23 & Thursday 24 December, 6pm

Service of Lessons and Carols

A carol service sung by the Cathedral Choir.

Sunday 27 December, 4pm (rehearsal 2 - 4pm)

Christmastide Carols

Christmas begins on Christmas Day and so we maintain the spirit of the season with this carol service on the first Sunday of Christmas. It is the culmination of the annual 'come and sing' afternoon for singers familiar with books 1 and 2 from the Carols for Choirs series. Arrival at 1.30pm for rehearsals at 2pm and we ask that singers register via the Events page of our website or call 01353 660302 where more information is to be found. All are welcome to attend the service at 4pm.
(no registration required).



CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Thursday 3 December, 10.15am

Story and Song Time - Christingle

Celebrate the beginning of Advent and create your own Christingle at this interactive children's service

A service for children under 5 and their parents and carers.

Sunday 6 December, 5.15pm

The Big Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On Service

Come and enjoy the most spectacular Christmas tree in Ely as we count down to the switching on of the lights. This popular family event celebrates the festive season in song and prayer, concluding with the blessing of the magnificent tree.

Thursday 10 December, 10.15am

Story and Song Time - Getting Ready

A service for children under 5 and their parents and carers.

Thursday 17 December, 10.15am

Story and Song Time - Christmas Story

Enjoy our final pre-schooler service of 2026 as we hear the story of the Nativity and sing Christmas carols.

A service for children under 5 and their parents and carers.

Monday 21 December, 10am - 12pm

Christmas Discovery Morning

Crafts, sensory play, and colouring for children and families. Children are encouraged to come dressed as their favourite person from the nativity and take selfies at the selfie station!
Suitable for under 12s and their families.
A suggested donation of £2 per child is welcomed.

Monday 21 December - Wednesday 6 January

Discover Christmas Trail

Discover more about the people of the Nativity. Collect a booklet from the Ticket Office and explore 6 activity stations with crafts, games, and puzzles to explore the nativity and those in it.
Suitable for under 12s and their families.
Included in usual entrance fee.

Thursday 24 December, 12pm & 2.30pm

Crib Services

The children of the Cathedral retell the story of Christmas in this wonderful tableau of shepherds, angels and wise men. Sing carols and enjoy this family friendly celebration to mark the birth of Jesus.
Dressing up optional!
12pm: Sung by the Ely Imps 3pm: Sung by the Choristers





Epiphany is *'a showing'*. It is associated with light, with the idea of being illuminated with an astonishing truth which changes life for ever. First, Jesus is revealed as a King and worshipped by the Magi, who follow the light of a star to his dwelling place. Second, Jesus is himself baptised in the river Jordan and the *'heavens tear apart'* as he is recognised by God himself as his Son, the Beloved. Third, at the wedding in Cana, Galilee, Jesus shows his abundant and generous power, changing water into wine at the wedding feast to which he comes as a guest.

PRAYER FOR THE SEASON

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Wednesday 6 January, 7.30pm

Sung Eucharist For the Feast of the Epiphany

Preacher: Canon James Reveley
The Eucharist for Epiphany focuses particularly on the coming of the Magi, the wise men, following a star to offer their homage to the infant Jesus.

Sunday 24 January, 4pm

Epiphanytide Procession

This processional service is based around the three miracles of Epiphany: the wedding at Cana, the coming of the Magi and the baptism of Jesus. Its fine carols and hymns, like its dynamic liturgy, ponder the themes of divine manifestation and human transformation.

Sunday 10 January
Baptism of Christ

10.30am
Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Canon Jenny Wright

4pm
Choral Evensong

Saturday 16 January, 5.30pm
Choral Evensong with Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*
Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols is sung by girl and boy choristers together, conducted by Sarah MacDonald, with harpist Tomos Xerri. This 25-minute work transports us into a most unusual sound world with medieval carols sung by the children of the choir to shimmering harp accompaniments, topped and tailed with haunting plainsong processions.

Monday 18 - Monday 25 January
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

'Do not be afraid'
As disciples, we are called by the Good Shepherd to follow him on the good path of life towards lifegiving waters of abundance. We move from fear toward radical trust, vigilant hope and responsible service. We do this with our brothers and sisters of all traditions and denominations, both locally and throughout the world, as we live, pray and work together. Here in Ely, there will joint services and shared online reflections as we journey together to keep watchful hearts, praying that we may become powerful catalysts for reconciliation and shared witness.

Monday 18 January, 12pm
Worship Service
Followed by a soup lunch.
At Ely Methodist Church

Sunday 24 January, 6pm
Ely Christian's Together United Service
Preacher: Canon Robert Mackley
At Ely Methodist Church

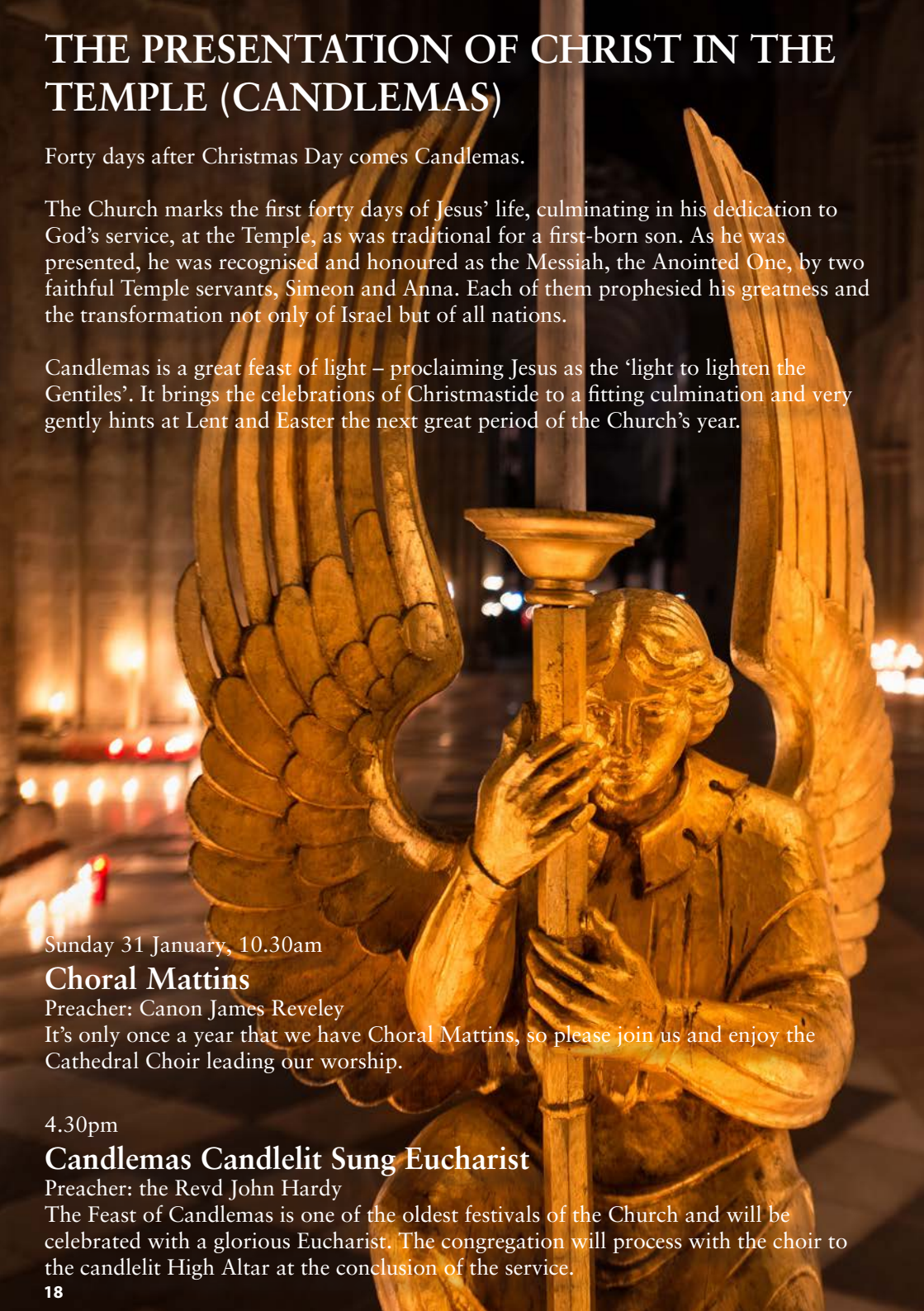
Monday 25 January
The Conversion of St Paul
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ends with the feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Blinded by a light on the Road to Damascus, Saul, an arch-persecutor of the earliest church, becomes Paul, an apostle of Christ and evangelist to the nations. The Eucharist of this Festival is celebrated at 8am and 12.10pm, with Choral Evensong sung by the Girl Choristers and Lay Clerks at 5.30pm.

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (CANDLEMAS)

Forty days after Christmas Day comes Candlemas.

The Church marks the first forty days of Jesus' life, culminating in his dedication to God's service, at the Temple, as was traditional for a first-born son. As he was presented, he was recognised and honoured as the Messiah, the Anointed One, by two faithful Temple servants, Simeon and Anna. Each of them prophesied his greatness and the transformation not only of Israel but of all nations.

Candlemas is a great feast of light – proclaiming Jesus as the 'light to lighten the Gentiles'. It brings the celebrations of Christmastide to a fitting culmination and very gently hints at Lent and Easter the next great period of the Church's year.



Sunday 31 January, 10.30am

Choral Mattins

Preacher: Canon James Reveley

It's only once a year that we have Choral Mattins, so please join us and enjoy the Cathedral Choir leading our worship.

4.30pm

Candlemas Candlelit Sung Eucharist

Preacher: the Revd John Hardy

The Feast of Candlemas is one of the oldest festivals of the Church and will be celebrated with a glorious Eucharist. The congregation will process with the choir to the candlelit High Altar at the conclusion of the service.

COMMUNITY EVENT

Ely Community Lunches Christmas Day Meal



The Ely Community Lunches team is excited to bring festive cheer to the community again this year, welcoming Christmas Day lunch bookings for individuals who would otherwise spend Christmas alone, or are experiencing homelessness.

Run through the kindness of the community, donations toward the cost of providing these meals are warmly welcomed to help ensure everyone can enjoy a warm meal and friendly company.

Tickets are priced at £10, though free tickets are available by emailing them: events@elycommunitylunches.com or visiting The Lighthouse in person.

Donation and booking options also accessible online via Ticket Tailor and the Ely Community Lunches Facebook page.

CHRISTMAS CHARITIES

Our Resident Clergy have selected the following three charities for this year's Christmas Collections:

The Ferry Project

The Ferry Project helps homeless people in Fenland: not simply to provide accommodation, but to give them the skills they need to live independently.
www.ferryproject.org.uk

The Children's Society

Working with young people to counsel and support them through their most serious life challenges.
www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Christian Blind Mission

Transforming lives for people with sight-loss and disabilities in some of the world's poorest places.
www.cbmuk.org.uk

ELY CATHEDRAL

Ely Cathedral
Cambridgeshire CB7 4DL
Tel: 01353 660300
Email: receptionist@elycathedral.org

box.office@elycathedral.org
www.elycathedral.org
Follow us on:

More details about ***Come, let us adore him*** can be found on our website.

Images © ECPL, Timothy Selvage, Keith Heppell, Andrew Sharpe, James Billings

Front Cover: © *The Stained Glass Museum 1980.15.1 Thomas Willement, Nativity, 1850, From Holy Trinity Church, Carlisle.*

