Advent – Prepare and Rejoice

If you come to a service or concert in Advent you will find the Cathedral illuminated by candlelight. The candles point to the light of Christ coming into the world.

Advent marks the beginning of the Christian year. It’s the point when we anticipate the end of history, when time will be no more. The four weeks that precede Christmas are punctuated by calls to wake up, watch and pray. As this comes at a time when it’s easy to be caught up in the feverish consumerism of pre-Christmas preparations, it can be hard to contemplate ultimate things.

But an awareness of eternity helps us live well in the here and now. Having a sense of our ultimate destination prevents us from getting too caught up in irrelevances. At this time of year, it is good to pray the prayer of purification: ‘Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit.’

This prayer also captures the Advent hope. This is the season when we look for light to pierce the darkness, when purity trounces pollution, when salvation overcomes sin. Advent, then, is a serious time of preparation. For Christmas, yes. But also for the rest of our lives, and beyond.
Concert

Tallis *Spem in alium*

Friday 20 November 2015 • Cathedral • 8.00pm
Tickets: www.musicatoxford.com or call 01865 244806
Doors to the Cathedral open at 7.30pm

Four hundred years after its composition Tallis’s *Spem in alium* remains one of the most spectacular pieces of music we have. It forms the main part of this performance, alongside other works by the composer. Christ Church Cathedral Choir joins forces with the Cardinall’s Musick for the great 40-part works at the heart of this programme.

More info: www.cardinallsmusick.com  www.chchchoir.org

Service

Advent Carol Service

Saturday 28 November 2015
Cathedral • 6.00pm

A service of music and readings for Advent

The Cathedral Choir sings a selection of Advent music old and new, by Poston, Byrd, Britten, Jackson and others. The service involves choir processions around the building and congregational participation in the hymns.

Concert

Macmillan Charity Concert

4 December 2015 • 8.00pm
Tickets: www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford
or call 01865 305305

A Celebration of Christmas, in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, is now in its 19th year. Celebrity readers include Maureen Lipman, Michael Palin, Gemma Jones, Gervase Phinn and Freddie Jones. Run by volunteers to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support.
Maggie’s Charity Concert

Thursday 10 December 2015 • Cathedral • 8.00pm
Tickets: www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford or call 01865 305305

Join Maggie’s Oxford for an incredible festive evening in the beautiful and historic Christ Church Cathedral right in the heart of Oxford.

We are delighted to welcome celebrity readers alongside vocal consort Vespri Segreti who will entertain us with carols and readings as we come together and celebrate the closing of an incredible year for Maggie’s Oxford.

Tickets available for £15, £30, £50 or £75. Some seats may have restricted view, but TV screens will be in place for you to see all of the action.

Christmas at Christ Church

Fridays 11 & 18 December 2015 • Cathedral • 8.00pm
Tickets: www.musicatoxford.com or call 01865 244806

Music at Oxford’s now famous, and ever-popular Christmas concerts, held in the evocative and atmospheric surroundings of Christ Church Cathedral, are perfect for preparing for the joy of Christmas. Directed by Stephen Darlington, the boys and men of the Choir perform a wide range of glorious Christmas music, alongside carefully chosen readings, and favourite carols for audience participation. With low lighting, and screens to help see the music-making, these two identical concerts are truly unmissable.

Doors to the Cathedral open at 7.30pm
The Picture Gallery

Christ Church is unique among the Oxford and Cambridge colleges in possessing an important collection of Old Master paintings and drawings, housed in a purpose-built Gallery of considerable architectural interest in itself. General John Guise bequeathed his collection of over 200 paintings and almost 2000 drawings to his former college. A number of subsequent gifts and bequests of paintings enabled Christ Church’s art collection to grow.

A View of Venice: An exploration of a rare and unknown panorama of Venice from the late 16th century

This painting has not been displayed in the Picture Gallery for twenty years, but after restoration the public will be able to explore this rare panorama in an in-focus exhibition.

Printing Ideas and Ideas for Printing: Select examples of Venetian printing culture

While the Ashmolean Museum is showing a breathtaking exhibition of Venetian drawings this autumn, the Picture Gallery will look at another aspect of Venice’s creative output.


Mondays and Wednesday to Saturdays: 10.30am – 1.00pm, 2.00 – 4.30pm. Sundays: 2.00 – 4.30pm (closed Tuesdays)

Tickets: Adults £4.00, Concessions £2.00, University members free. www.chch.ox.ac.uk 01865 276172 picturegallery@chch.ox.ac.uk

Entry to the Picture Gallery is not included in the price of general admission to Christ Church. However, visitors with general admission tickets are entitled to a 50% discount on entry.
Christmas – all are welcome

Come to the Cathedral at Christmas and you will see a great many figures gathered round the crib. Christ’s coming as the saviour of the world is God’s work, but it also involves a great many people.

Mary must say ‘yes’ to the angel, at some personal cost. The innkeeper offers hospitality when his hotel is bursting at the seams. The wise men bring their strange and extravagant gifts. The shepherds mirror the spontaneity and searching of Christ – you may find him, but if you don’t, he will come looking for you anyway.

And the people of Egypt support those unlikely asylum seekers, the holy family. Small wonder, then, that as an adult, Christ will preach on the importance of welcoming the stranger.

God involves many people in his work ‘of gathering up all things in Christ’. We are all partners in this extraordinary work. As anyone who has ever had a child will tell you, a tiny inarticulate infant is utterly absorbing and demanding. And God has come amongst us as a tiny child. As such he shows that all are welcome, all are needed. We hope you will find that welcome in our cathedral services this Christmas.
Organ Meditations  
Messiaen, *La Nativité du Seigneur*  
Saturday 19 December 2015 • Cathedral • 4.30pm


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Christmas by Candlelight  
Saturday 19 December • Cathedral • 8.00pm

Tickets: [www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford) or call 01865 305305. Doors open 7.30pm

A varied selection of seasonal choral music performed by the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church, Oxford, with choral gems by Parry, Elgar, Rutter, Ives, Willcocks, and audience carols. Director John Padley. Organist David Bannister.

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Service of Nine Lessons and Carols  
Wednesday 23 at 7.30pm & Thursday 24 at 3.00pm

Cathedral • Entry is free but tickets required (£1 postage)

Tickets: [www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford) or call 01865 305305

The Cathedral Choir sings a selection of Christmas music old and new, by Vaughan Williams, Gardiner, Cornelius, Britten, Tavener and others. The service involves choir processions around the building and congregational participation in the hymns.

If you don't have a ticket, you are welcome to queue on the day but we cannot guarantee entry.
In the Cathedral the figures of the wise men are now added to the crib. The wise men come late and they mark the end of Christmas. The season after Christmas is called ‘Epiphany’ which means ‘manifestation’: who Jesus is, for everyone, is now clear.

Like many of the stories surrounding the first Christmas, it is important to look beyond the literal to find some real meaning. The story of the Magi provides a wonderful insight into how the early Church understood the incarnation. Consider the problem of recognition: shepherds rejoice, Magi worship and Herod panics and over-reacts.

The story shows us that not everyone will see Jesus. God is subtle. If you want to see him, you may need to look harder. In the season of Epiphany we celebrate the Baptism of Christ. The Gospels tell us that Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, and the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, a sign of his special nature. Epiphany carries the hope of Christmas into the darkest places of the world. The season ends with Candlemas, always a joyful event in the Cathedral, a final blaze of light before the austere journey of Lent.
Seasonal services at the Cathedral

NOVEMBER 2015
Saturday 28, 6.00pm
Advent Carol Service

Sunday 29, 5.30pm
College Advent Carol Service. Entry by ticket only

DECEMBER 2015
Saturday 5, 3.30pm
Santa Lucia Service
A traditional candle-lit service for Saint Lucy’s day, sung by a Swedish Choir

Friday 11, 1.30pm
Christingle Service
(Family service)

Saturday 19, 12 noon
Journey to Bethlehem
(Family service, particularly suitable for children of primary school age)

DECEMBER 2015 (continued)
Monday 21
6.00pm: Friends Carol Service

Wednesday 23, 7.30pm
Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Entry by ticket – see page 7

Christmas Eve, Thursday 24
3:00pm: Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Entry by ticket – see page 7
11:30pm: Midnight Eucharist

Christmas Day, Friday 25
8:00am: Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Matins
11.15am Choral Eucharist
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer

First Sunday after Christmas
Sunday 27 December
8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Matins
11.15am Choral Eucharist

JANUARY 2016
Second Sunday after Christmas
Sunday 3 January
8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Matins
11.15am Choral Eucharist
6.00pm Evening Prayer

Eve of Epiphany
Tuesday 5 January
6.00pm Choral Evensong (Cathedral Singers)

Feast of Epiphany
Wednesday 6 January
6.00pm Choral Evensong (Cathedral Singers)

Saturday 16, 6.00pm
Epiphany Carol Service

EVE OF CANDLEMAS
Monday 1 February
6.00pm Choral Evensong (College Choir)

THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY
Feast of Candlemas
Tuesday 2 February
6.00pm Choral Evensong (Cathedral Choir)
Other events

The Friends of Christ Church Cathedral Christmas Party

Monday 21 December, 7.30pm.
After 6.00pm Carol Service. Christ Church Great Hall. Booking essential. Contact the Hon. Secretary (see below).

Friends of Christ Church Cathedral

The Friends of Christ Church Cathedral exist to foster and promote links between the Cathedral and the public. To find out more, please see www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral. Contact the Friends via the Cathedral Office (01865 791726) or write to the Hon. Secretary, Elizabeth Harrison, Priory Room Office, Christ Church, Oxford OX1 1DP cathedralfriends@btconnect.com

Be a Chorister for a Day

Saturday 30th January 2016

Would you like to be a chorister for a day? Boys aged 6, 7 and 8 are invited to come along on Saturday 30 January 2016. To find out more please contact Mrs Clare James, Registrar on 01865 260650 or registrar@cccs.org.uk

After Eight

Sunday evenings from 17 January to 6 March 2016
8.00pm to 9.00pm in the North Transept

After Eight continues with Landmarks of the Spirit. Drop in for conversations on key reference points in the history of Christian culture from Dante’s Divine Comedy to Chartres Cathedral, set within the context of contemporary reflective worship.
Tower Poetry prize
*The Christopher Tower Poetry Competition 2016*

Tower Poetry exists to encourage and challenge everyone who reads or writes poetry. Funded by a generous bequest to Christ Church by the late Christopher Tower, the aims of Tower Poetry are clear: to stimulate an enjoyment and critical appreciation of poetry, particularly among young people in education, and to challenge people to write their own poetry. Creative writing should be a central element in literary education, and learning about writing poetry can help students to think about ways of reading poetry.

All UK students (16–18) are encouraged to enter the 2016 Christopher Tower poetry competition – the theme is ‘WONDER’. Judges – Alan Gillis, Katherine Rundell and Peter McDonald. First prize £3,000; second prize £1,000 and third prize £500

Closing date for entries 19 February 2016

[www.towerpoetry.org.uk](http://www.towerpoetry.org.uk), 01865 286591, info@towerpoetry.org.uk, YouTube: [christophertower1](https://www.youtube.com/c/christophertower1), Twitter @TowerPoetry, Facebook: [Tower Poetry](https://www.facebook.com/TowerPoetry)
Who’s who at Christ Church Cathedral

Dean: The Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy  
Sub Dean: The Revd Canon Dr Edmund Newey 
Precentor: The Revd John Paton  
Organist: Dr Stephen Darlington  
Registrar: John Briggs  

The Cathedral Office, Christ Church St Aldates, Oxford OX1 1DP  
cathedral@chch.ox.ac.uk Tel: 01865 276155

To find out more about the life and work of the Cathedral, see www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral