



St Luke's Church Fontainebleau

Nativity Service The Third Sunday of Advent Service of the Word 14 December 2025

Service led by Rev'd Dr Donald McFadyen



Welcome to our service this morning.

The outline for today's service is contained in this service guide and from our [website](#).

You are invited to respond at various points with the words in bold print.

If you have any prayer concerns that you would like included in our prayers today there is a book at the back of the Chapel where you can write these down.

Our chaplain contact details: chaplain.stlukesfontainebleau@gmail.com



Worship lies at the heart of the Christian life.

It is in worship that we express our theology and define our identity.

It is through encountering God within worship
that we are formed and transformed as his people.

As we sit quietly before this service commences let us prepare ourselves to meet Jesus and receive him into our hearts by spending a few moments in prayer and reflection.

WELCOME

Please stand as the Advent Wreath is lit, and as we are led in the following prayer:

God our Father,
you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age
a son called John.
He grew up strong in spirit,
prepared the people for the coming of the Lord,
and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins.
Help us, who have been baptized into Christ,
to be ready to welcome him into our hearts,
and to grow strong in faith by the power of the Spirit.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.
Amen.

We remain standing as we sing our first Hymn:

OPENING HYMN: COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

1 *Come, Thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of every longing heart.*

2 *Joy to those who long to see Thee
Day-spring from on high, appear.
Come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse,
Of Thy birth, we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing
News, glad tidings of a birth;*

*"Go to Him your praises bringing
Christ the Lord has come to earth!"*

*3 Come to earth to taste our sadness,
He whose glories knew no end.
By His life He brings us gladness,
Our redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
Born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder,
In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

**The Lord be with you
And also with you.**

Words of welcome and introduction may follow.

**Loving Lord, fill us with your new life
and with the joy and peace of your presence.
May we praise you now with our lips
and make room in our hearts for you. Amen.**

CONFSSION & ABSOLUTION

Please be seated.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations
into the peace of your kingdom:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

You come in word and sacrament
to strengthen us in holiness:

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.

Christ was born the Lord of all.

*4 Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.*

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

You will come in glory
with salvation for your people:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

We sit for our first reading:

ISAIAH 35. 1-10

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.*

*Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.*

*Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”*

*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for
joy.*

For the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

*For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;*

*the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.*

*A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.*

*No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on
it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.*

*And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

NEW TESTAMENT READING: MATTHEW 11. 2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

*‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’*

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he”.

For the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

NATIVITY PLAY

... during which we sing:

AFTER SCENE 1: O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM VERSE 1 (SoF 420)

1. *O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.*

*Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.*

AFTER SCENE 2: O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM VERSE 2

2. *O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;*

*For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.*

AFTER SCENE 3: O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM VERSE 3 & 4

3. *How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.*

4. *O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!*

AFTER SCENE 4: WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR CLOCKS ;-) BY NIGHT (SoF 602)

1. *WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED their
flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around.*

4. *'The heavenly babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
And in a manger laid.'*

2. *'Fear not' said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.*

5. *Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:*

3. *'To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
And this shall be the sign.*

6. *'All glory be to God on high
And on the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'*

DURING SCENE 5: WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE. VERSE 1

1 *We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.
Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

DURING SCENE 5: WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE. VERSE 2, 3 & 4

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.

3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a Deity nigh;

prayer and praising, voices raising,
worshiping God on high.

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

AFTER SCENE 5: O COME O COME IMMANUEL (SOF 410)

... during which the collection is taken up.

1. O COME, O COME, IMMANUEL,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Ref:

Rejoice, rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud, and majesty, and awe.

3. O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave.

4. O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

5. O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

ADVENT CREED

Please stand.

Let us affirm our faith in God:

We believe in God the Father, creator
of heaven and earth.
The one who is full of patience,
who is not afraid of silence,
who does not need to fill each
moment with activity and noise.
The one who is beyond bluster and
flurry,
and who does not jostle for attention.

We believe in God the Son, Saviour
of creation,
who slipped into Bethlehem one
night, mostly unnoticed,
who lived thirty years without
headlines or hurry,
who frequently took time alone with
his patient Father,
who waited for the right time to
become the suffering servant,

who stood quietly before the noise of
his accusers,
whose silence overpowered their
words,
who died, then rose again on a quiet
Sunday morning.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens, empowers, renews
and refreshes,
sometimes arriving with obvious
power,
sometimes with the quiet breath of a
whisper.

We believe in one God
who patiently waits for us,
and who longs for us to do the same.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Please be seated.

...
Merciful Father,
Accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

OUR NOTICES

THE SENDING OUT

We sing our Final Hymn:

FINAL HYMN: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT (SOF 2417)

*1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.*

*(Chorus)
Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine
through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church
gathered today.
Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.*

*2 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.*

*Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.*

*3 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.*

(Chorus)

*4 Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.*

(Chorus)

THE BLESSING

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The dismissal:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

You are invited to refreshments following the service, please stay for a chat and if we can be of help in any way, please speak to the clergy or to a member of the welcome team. You may also contact our chaplain at the following email address: chaplain.stlukesfontainebleau@gmail.com.



ADVENT APPEAL 2025



Bishop's Advent Appeal

Al-Ahli Anglican Hospital, Gaza



“When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and rescues them from all their troubles. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” – Psalm 34:17-18 (NRSV)

The headlines may be fading, but the suffering in Gaza is far from over. Months of devastation have left entire communities struggling. The impact of conflict lingers long after the fighting stops. Disease spreads rapidly, food and clean water remain scarce. At the time of writing, 68,280 people have been killed in Gaza, the vast majority of whom are civilian women and children, and the toll of wounded stands at 170,375.



Despite overwhelming challenges, the medical team at Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza is doing everything in their power to care for the injured and sick. They face impossible odds: shortages of medicine and essential supplies, dwindling fuel reserves for life-saving equipment, and an ever-growing number of patients in desperate need.

At Al-Ahli Hospital, doctors and nurses have treated over 190,000 outpatients and performed more than 6,000 surgeries in the past year alone. The demand is relentless. The injuries they see of burns, broken bones and shrapnel wounds are devastating.

Beyond emergency treatment, Al-Ahli hospital offers long-term rehabilitation, mental health support, and essential community care. Many of those injured will face lifelong disabilities, requiring physiotherapy, pain management, and counselling. Without urgent funding, these critical services could be lost.

This Advent, I am asking you to support the work of one of our partners in the Gospel, USPG, whose partnership with the Diocese of Jerusalem gives us the opportunity to sustain this vital hospital, ensuring that it remains open and equipped to serve those who need it most, not only in moments of immediate crisis but in the long, difficult years of recovery that follow.

It looks – for now – that there is a fragile semi-peace. It is to be hoped that this not only lasts but spreads and deepens, and that rebuilding can begin. Your gift today will help keep the hospital open and equipped to provide urgent medical aid, long-term rehabilitation, and dignity to those in crisis.

"Every donation and every prayer are an act of love. It is a message to families in Gaza that they are not forgotten," says Sawson Aranki-Batato, Programme Development Officer, Diocese of Jerusalem.

I commend to you these resources for prayer as I ask you to give generously to this Appeal (details below).

[Prayers for peace in the Middle East — Embrace the Middle East](#)

[How to pray for Gaza and Israel - Tearfund](#)

[Pray for Peace in Israel and Gaza - 24-7 Prayer International](#)

O God, whose heart breaks for the world,
May your justice dwell in the land
May your righteousness abide in fruitful fields
May the effect of righteousness be quietness and trust forever
May the effect of justice be peace—enduring peace.
Amen.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+Robert Gibraltar in Europe



How you can donate to the Bishop in Europe's Advent Appeal 2025:

Via your Chaplaincy Treasurer to Nick Wraight in the Diocesan Office:

By bank transfer:

Account number: 40317039

Sort code: 20-06-13

IBAN: GB16 BUKB 2006 1340 3170 39

Swift / BIC: BUKBGB22

By cheque made out to: Diocese in Europe

Diocese in Europe Board of Finance

14, Tufton St

London SW1P 3QZ

(Please add the words "Advent Appeal 2025" to any note you send with the cheque)

On the Diocese in Europe Just Giving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/diocese-ineurope>
(please add "2025 Advent Appeal" in the Message from Donor column)

CHURCH NOTICES

Christmas Services at Saint-Luke's:

Carols Service:

Our traditional service of Christmas Carols and Readings will take place on Saturday December 13th at 6PM. Venue : Eglise Protestant de Fontainebleau, 3 Rue Béranger, 77300 Fontainebleau.

Nativity Play:

The Nativity Play service organised by our Sunday School will take place on Sunday December 14th at 10:30AM. Venue: Eglise Saint-Eloi, Arbonne-La-Forêt.

Christmas Eve service: no service

There will be no Christmas Eve service this year. We encourage you to attend the evening service at the Protestant church, Eglise Protestant de Fontainebleau, 3 Rue Béranger, 77300 Fontainebleau on Wednesday December 24th from 7PM.

Christmas Day service:

The Christmas Day service will take place on Thursday December 25th at 10:30AM. Venue: Eglise Saint-Eloi, Arbonne-La-Forêt.

Sunday 28 December 2025: no service.

Return to Saint-Aspais

Unfortunately the works at Saint-Aspais are not complete yet and the earliest date for our return to Fontainebleau is now Jan 4th, 2026 (to be confirmed).

Reading the Bible

Following on from our celebration of Bible Sunday, and as some of you are aware, we have a group of New Daylight Bible Reading Fellowship readers in St Luke's who subscribe annually to receive a set of quarterly notes at a cost of approx 30€ per year. These help you develop a 'holy habit' of reading a little part of the Bible each day, with the help of gifted teachers who introduce you to one of its books, and whose commentary helps you understand it better.

As the blurb says, 'New Daylight provides four months of daily Bible readings and comment, with a regular team of contributors drawn from a range of church backgrounds. It is ideal for anybody wanting an accessible yet stimulating aid to spending time with God each day, deepening their faith and their knowledge of scripture.'

If you'd like to join the group receiving New Daylight, please contact Annabel Pouget: abelpouget@aol.com and she would be happy to add your name to the order for the year starting January 2026.

Week of Christian Unity services in January 2026:

Dates and venues for the week of Christian unity services organised with all Christian churches in the south Seine-Et-Marne:

Pôle Fontainebleau:

Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 8PM, Couvent des Carmes, Avon.

Pôle Moret / Nemours / Montereau:

Friday 23rd January 2026 at 8PM, Eglise Saint-Lambert, Varennes-Sur-Seine. The sermon will be done by our Chaplain (in French).

GIVING TO SAINT-LUKE'S

The Anglican Church of St. Luke's Fontainebleau is 100% self-funded and our ministry depends on God's faithfulness and the faithful giving of time, talents, and money from our congregation as we seek to serve Jesus Christ through welcome, worship, and witness.

GIVING TO ST LUKE'S CAN BE MADE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

1. Regular monthly giving by bank transfer. This is by far the easiest and most efficient way to provide regular financial support to St Luke's (bank details at the bottom of page).
2. Occasional or one-off donations via Bank Transfer.
3. Regular or occasional giving by cheque: either by sending a cheque made payable to "*Eglise Anglicane de Fontainebleau*" to the Treasurer or simply placing a cheque in the collection basket during the service.
4. Cash offerings in the collection basket in the service (Euros preferably !). Please consider replacing any giving that you would have made in cash with a cheque or an online donation during the period of suspension of physical services.

* All information concerning giving and donations is private and treated as confidential *

* Standing orders for regular giving by bank transfer can be amended or cancelled at any time *

TAX CERTIFICATES

If you are a French taxpayer, you will receive an annual 'tax certificate' for your giving online, by bank transfer or cheque which will allow you to claim a reduction on your tax (*)

*up to a limit for all your charitable giving of 20% of your taxable income

FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you require any additional information or have any questions or require assistance, please contact Christopher Burton-Page: treasurer.stlukesfontainebleau@gmail.com

THANK YOU - your generous giving, whatever the amount, large or small, is so important to us and is greatly appreciated.

<p style="text-align: center;">CIC RELEVE D'IDENTITE BANCAIRE</p>					
<p>Identifiant national de compte bancaire - RIB</p>					
Banque 30087	Guichet 33862	N° compte 00013539701	Clé 36	Devise EUR	AGENCE DE FONTAINEBLEAU
<p>Identifiant international de compte bancaire</p>					
IBAN (International Bank Account Number) FR76	3008	7338	6200	0135	3970 136
<p>BIC (Bank Identifier Code) CMCIFRPP</p>					
<p>Domiciliation AGENCE DE FONTAINEBLEAU 8 PLACE DE LA REPUBLIQUE 77300 FONTAINEBLEAU Tél : 08-20-07-91-34</p>					