Advent and Christmas

at The Parish Church of Saints Peter & Paul

Advent Carol Service

Sunday 29 November at 6.30pm

Grand Christmas Concert

Saturday 19 December at 7.30pm (ticket required)

Nine Lessons and Carols

Tuesday 22 December at 8pm

Christmas Eve

Nativity Service at 4pm & Midnight Mass at 11pm

Christmas Day

Holy Communion at 8am & Sung Eucharist at 10am

plus **Choral Evensong by Candlelight on December 6, 13 & 20 at 6.30pm**
Eucharist every Sunday at 8am (Said) and 10am (Sung)
and **All Age Eucharist with Christingle on Sunday 6 December at 10am**

The Parish of Chingford: Ss Peter & Paul with All Saints
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Christmas is for everyone

Almost every nativity scene has them – the shepherds, called from the fields by angelic messengers, summoned to visit the new-born baby Jesus in his manger crib. I've often wondered, though, if it was all quite so straight forward. Would responsible shepherds really abandon their flocks just like that? Surely, at least some of them thought twice about leaving their animals and their livelihoods at the mercy of wolves and thieves?

The seventeenth-century Welsh metaphysical poet Henry Vaughan seemed to think so and explored this hesitation in his poem 'The Shepherds'

Perhaps some harmless care
for the next day
Did in their bosoms play,
As where to lead their sheep,
what silent nook,
What springs, or shades to look:
But that was all;
and now with gladsome care
They for the town prepared;
They leave their flock,
and in a busy talk
All towards Bethlem walk
To see their souls' Great Shepherd,
Who has come
To bring all stragglers home.

This seems more true to life to me. There can, I think, be something of the 'straggler' in many of us – a healthy questioning and a reluctance to rush into something when we're still unsure.

Besides – as I know from twenty-plus years of ordained ministry – far too many people have been deeply wounded or made to feel excluded by religion gone wrong, leaving them understandably wary of anything to do with church.

Please know, however, that the Parish of Chingford is here for everyone and that the Christmas events and services listed on this flyer are open to all – the seeking and the sceptical, just as much as the certain. After all, the message of Christmas is that God can be found, not just in the birth of a baby two thousand years ago, but in every human heart which responds to the call to love.

Merry Christmas,



The Revd Darren McCallig
Rector of Chingford