

SERVICES

Sunday

8.00 am Low Mass

(quiet and with a short sermon)

9.00 am Children's Mass

(relaxed and quite noisy)

10.30 am High Mass

(sung, traditional and with incense)

6.30 pm Solemn Evensong

(psalms and Bible readings with incense)

Services last for about 35 or 40 minutes, except the High Mass which takes about an hour. We have a choir that sings fortnightly at the High Mass and monthly at Solemn Evensong

Weekdays

Mass is offered in the Lady-chapel each day at 10.00 am, except on Mondays.

All are welcome to all our services.

This has been a place of prayer for many centuries. Before you leave us you may like to add a prayer of your own, perhaps in the Lady-chapel, and light a candle. If you need any help from the clergy, please don't hesitate to ask. God bless you : we are glad you paid us a visit.

John Thewlis, Rector

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Welcome

The buildings we call churches aren't, strictly speaking, churches at all. They are where the Church meets, for the Church is the Body of Christ, the company of all Christians in earth and in heaven.

A church is a place where people can come to pray, either alone or with others. Lots of other things happen in this building, but prayer is the most important. You might like to think about that as you look around you.

This is what is often called a "high church". All that means is the approach we take is ceremonial and traditional. We are no better and no worse than any other Christians. But the way we worship has a very deep appeal to many.

CHRISTIANS believe that God brought everything into being and that he loves everything he has made. We also believe that the world is full of mysteries, and that there is a lot we don't yet understand about ourselves or what we see around us.

What we do believe is that God made us able to know him and to love him, and to know and love one another. We also believe we know the difference between right and wrong. Unfortunately, that knowledge is something we can't handle perfectly – often we can't handle it at all. That is our tragedy.

It is also our greatest glory. Christians believe that God has not just made us : he has come to our rescue in his son Jesus Christ, the anointed rescuer. We do not deserve forgiveness, but forgiveness is freely offered and freely given.

All over this building are reminders of Jesus, who he is and what he has done. His birth is told above each altar, especially the one in the north aisle. The story of his mother Mary is in the windows in the Lady-chapel. The two prophets who foretold his coming, Isaiah and John the Baptist, are commemorated above the High Altar. The east Windows show his glory.

Reminders of his death on the cross are everywhere – at the altars, at the pulpit and the lectern, and towering above us at the entrance to the chancel. Christians believe that the death of Jesus has restored for ever the great balance of the universe that we are always upsetting. The death of Jesus is solemn, but it is full of joy.

Unusually for an English church building, at Carshalton there is a great figure of Christ in Glory, a sign of the destiny to which God is calling us all. So stand for a moment in the very middle of the church and look towards the High Altar.

Above us we see Jesus on the cross, with his Mother on one side and the Beloved Disciple on the other. Above that we see Christ in Glory. That is a sign that for Christians it is not just the death of Jesus that matters, and not just his rising from the dead. What matters always is both : Crucifixion – Resurrection.

Through the screen we see the altar, where we are fed with the crucified and risen Lord Jesus. Christians believe when his followers share the Bread and the Cup, they each encounter Jesus himself. We call this encounter by different names, and our different traditions stress different things. But all believe Jesus is in our midst.

Our building shapes our tradition, and our tradition has shaped the building. What others call Holy Communion, Eucharist or Lord's Supper, we call the Mass, an offering made possible by Jesus offering of himself on the cross. It is the Blessed Sacrament of his Body and Blood.