

The Churches of the Parish of Berkswich

in the Church of England Diocese of Lichfield

Christmas Eve , 2020

Live-streamed Eucharist with Carols sung at home



Tonight we especially rejoice to be gathered not only at home but also in one of our church buildings. Please note that current guidance does not permit the singing of carols in the church building – those at home, please sing loudly for those in the church building who can't (you will still be muted!).

The gathering

After the disruption, pain and suffering of the last nine months, we are invited, on this most Holy Night, to come to our loving God with prayer and praise and thanksgiving. On this most Holy Night, we are invited to celebrate once again the constancy of God's love, the enduring miracle that is Immanuel, God with us.

The greeting

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you.

And also with you.

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the
Lord!

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him,...

See how the shepherds
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with
lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:
O come, let us adore him,...

Blessing of the Crib

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father,
on this night
your Son Jesus Christ was born of the
Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation:
bless ✠ this crib,
which we have prepared to celebrate
that holy birth;
may all who see it be strengthened in
faith
and receive the fullness of life he came
to bring, who is alive and reigns with
You and the Holy Spirit, now and for
ever.

Amen

The Act of Penitence

Christ the Light of the World
has come to dispel the darkness of our
hearts.

Let us turn to the light and confess our
sins.

Silence is kept.

God our Father,
you sent your Son full of grace and truth:
forgive our failure to receive him.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Jesus our Saviour,
you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Spirit of love,
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:
forgive the hardness of our hearts.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Words of forgiveness

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw you to himself,
that you may behold the glory of his Son, ✠
the Word made flesh,
and be cleansed from all your sins,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his
people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father, we worship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin
of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated
at the right hand of the Father: receive our
prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are
the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus
Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God
the Father. Amen.

The Collect for the day

Eternal God, who made this most holy night to
shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that
light on earth, to see the radiance of your
heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son
our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for
ever.

Amen.

The liturgy of the word

First reading Hebrews 1: 1-4

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many
and various ways by the prophets, but in these
last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he
appointed heir of all things, through whom he
also created the worlds. He is the reflection of
God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very
being, and he sustains all things by his powerful
word. When he had made purification for sins, he
sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on
high, having become as much superior to angels
as the name he has inherited is more excellent
than theirs.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel reading

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

I bring you news of great joy:

today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the
Lord

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John ✠

Glory to you, O Lord.

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word
was with God, and the Word was God. He was in
the beginning with God. All things came into

being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Homily

Affirmation of faith

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

*If possible, kneel (or bow) at the following three lines
as we honour the Incarnation – God stooping to
earth to become human.*

**For us and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the
Virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic
Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the
forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray to our incarnate Lord, who has brought us out of darkness and into his own marvellous light.

*At the end of each bidding the following
response is used*

Glory to God in the highest
And peace to his people on earth

And at the end

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Thomas, St Chad, and all the angels and saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to God's unfailing love as we pray

**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**

The liturgy of the sacrament

The Peace

This holy night the angels sang,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to all in whom he delights'.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Prayer

Son of God, Child of Mary,
Born in the stable at Bethlehem,
be born again in us this day,
that through us the world may know
the wonder of your love;
who are alive and reign, now and for ever.

Amen

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty creator, ever-living God. We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who for love of our fallen race humbled himself, and on this night was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of your Spirit, and lived as one of us. In this mystery of the Word made flesh you have caused his light to shine in our hearts, to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In him we see our God made visible and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see. Therefore with all the angels of heaven we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

✠ **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine ✠
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for
you;

do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the
forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious
ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our
Lord.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and
heaven,
we worship you. Father almighty,
with songs of everlasting praise:

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning; Jesu, to thee be
glory given:
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us...
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray to the eternal Father through Jesus,
the prince of peace.

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.

Breaking of the bread

The priest breaks the consecrated bread.

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.

An act of Spiritual Communion

*Those at home, as they look on to the consecrated
elements - the Body and Blood of Our Lord present
in the Bread and Wine, are invited to say these
words*

In union, dear Father, with Christian
people throughout the world and across
the centuries gathered to make
Eucharist, hearing your holy Word and
receiving the Precious Body and Blood,

I offer you praise and thanksgiving.
Even though I am exiled from tasting
the Bread of Heaven and drinking the
Cup of Life I pray that you will unite me
with all the baptised and with your Son
who gave his life for us.
Come Lord Jesus, dwell in me and send
your Holy Spirit that I may be filled
with your presence.

*Those in church are invited to receive communion
in one kind only. When you remove your mask,
please ensure you wash your hands before and
after receiving. Please do not say Amen when the
host is given to you. As people in church receive,
an organ voluntary will play.*

God's holy gifts
for God's holy people.
Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Prayer after communion

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

The dismissal

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, good-will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious King!
' The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing;
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears
not the love-song which they bring;
O just the noise of mortal strife,
and hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing,
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children.
Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.
Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-
bearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, ✠
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Proclaiming the Word made flesh, go in the
peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

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