

HOLY COMMUNION

**CHRISTMAS AND
EPIPHANY**

Welcome in the name of Jesus Christ!

Please join in with all the words in bold in this service book.

Introduction to the season

The period from Christmas to Candlemas (The presentation of Christ in the Temple) is a festive season when we reflect on the coming of Jesus Christ into the world and the revelation of his glory in the heart of our humanity.

At Christmas we celebrate our Lord's birth, the Word made flesh, also known as the Incarnation. It is a time of great joy as we ponder on the wonder of Christ, the Light of the World, dispelling the darkness.

The *Feast of the Epiphany*, celebrated on 6th of January, traditionally told in the journey of the Magi, speaks of the ways in which Christ's presence is still revealed to us today as, like them, we seek him.

Candlemas is a pivotal feast, ending the 40 days of Christmas and the Epiphany. Alongside the theme of light in Simeon's words in Luke 2.29 - 32 (known as the Nunc Dimittis) as he cradled the infant Jesus in his arms, *'Lord, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word: for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for the glory of your people Israel...* here is also his warning of Jesus' destiny, (Luke 2.34,35) *and he said to Mary... and a sword will pierce your own soul too'*.

So, we turn our faces away from his birth towards the path to Calvary.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

The Greeting

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

We meet to celebrate
the coming of Christ into the world.
The Word was made flesh
and dwelt among us
and we beheld his glory.

Please stand

Hymn

Please sit to pray

Prayer of Confession

Christ the light of the world has come
to dispel the darkness of our hearts
In his light let us examine ourselves
and confess our sins.

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

Spirit of love,
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call;
forgive the hardness of our hearts.
Lord, have mercy.

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

The Collect (*the special prayer for this week*)

WE LISTEN AND RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

After the first reading:

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Please stand

Hymn

Please remain standing

Gospel Reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,
according to....

Glory to you O Lord

At the end of the Gospel

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ

Please sit

Sermon**Prayers of Intercession**

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

At the end:

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

Please stand to affirm our faith

The Nicene Creed

**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.**

**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.**

HOLY COMMUNION

Please remain standing

The Peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9.6

The peace of the Lord be always with you

And also with you.

Please greet those around you and offer a sign of peace.

Hymn

After the hymn please remain standing for

The Prayer at the Preparation of the Table

Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

Amen

Please sit

The Eucharistic Prayer- the great Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.

And now we give you thanks because,
in the incarnation of the Word,
a new light has dawned upon the world:
you have become one with us
that we might become one with you
in your glorious kingdom.

**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.**

Father of all, we give you thanks
for every gift that comes from heaven.
To the darkness Jesus came as your light.
With signs of faith and words of hope
he touched untouchables with love
and washed the guilty clean.
This is his story.

**This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

The crowds came out to see your Son,
yet at the end they turned on him.
On the night he was betrayed
he came to table with his friends
to celebrate the freedom of your people.
This is his story.

**This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Jesus blessed you, Father, for the food;
he took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and said;
This is my body, given for you all.
Jesus then gave thanks for the wine;
he took the cup, gave it and said;
This is my blood, shed for you all
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.
This is our story.

**This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate the cross
on which he died to set us free.
Defying death he rose again
and is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.
This is our story.

**This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Send your Spirit on us now
that by these gifts we may feed on Christ
with opened eyes and hearts on fire.
May we and all who share this food
offer ourselves to live for you
and be welcomed at your feast in heaven
where all creation worships you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit:
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the 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,
bringing us to light and life.**

Invitation to Communion

Emmanuel, who came to us in the Christmas child,
and who comes to us still through the living,
loving and sharing of others,
offers these signs of his presence
and invites us to join our story with his.
So come, whether you are drawn by joy
or driven by need,
whether you walk with confident step,

or stumble on faltering feet,
whether you understand the meaning,
or can only wonder at the mystery-
come and receive the gifts of God
for all are welcome here.

Whether you are a regular member at St John's or a visitor, a child or an adult, EVERYONE is invited to come to the Lord's Table to receive the bread and the wine, or a blessing.

If you are coming for a blessing, please keep your hands by your side.

Our welcomers will indicate when it is time for you to come forward.

Gluten free wafers and non-alcoholic wine are available. Please let us know when you come to Communion if you would like to receive either of these.

If you would like us to bring Communion to you in your seat, please let one of our welcomers know.

Prayer after Communion

**God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ the Lord.
Amen**

Please stand

Hymn

WE LEAVE WITH GOD'S BLESSING

The Blessing

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, now and always.

Amen

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.

Glory, thanks and praise to God. Amen.

*Church notices will be given and you are invited to stay for
coffee and fellowship after the service*

Acknowledgements

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