



CHESTER  
CATHEDRAL

**Cathedral Eucharist**

First Sunday of Christmas  
27th December, 2020 at 10.00am

President: The Very Revd Dr Tim Stratford  
Preacher: Canon Jane Brooke

# WELCOME

We welcome you to this beautiful church in the heart of the city for a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This cathedral is the seat of the Bishop of Chester and the core of a Christian community that has worshipped here and worked together for over 1100 years. It is a place where the mission of the church is to proclaim God's love is central, and your welcome presence here for worship helps to strengthen this vital act of witness.

# THE GATHERING

## HYMN

- 1 While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around.
- 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.'
- 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.'
- 4 'The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
and in a manger laid.'
- 5 Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus  
addressed their joyful song.
- 6 'All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to men  
begin and never cease.'

*Nahum Tate (1652-1715)*

WINCHESTER OLD  
*English Traditional*

## GREETING

*The President says*

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

## OPENING RESPONSES

For unto us a child is born  
**unto us a Son is given.**  
His name will be called  
wonderful counsellor, mighty God,  
**the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.**  
Glory to God in the highest  
**and peace to his people on earth.**

## PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph:  
'You shall call his name Jesus,  
for he will save his people from their sins.'  
Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God  
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

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.**

## ABSOLUTION

*The President says*

May the God of love and power  
forgive you and free you from your sins,  
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,  
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## GLORIA

**Glory in the highest to the God of heaven!  
Peace to all your people through the earth be given!  
Mighty God and Father, thanks and praise we bring,  
singing Hallelujah to our heavenly king;**

**Jesus Christ is risen, God the Father's Son!  
With the Holy Spirit you are Lord alone!  
Lamb once killed for sinners, all our guilt to bear,  
show us now your mercy, now receive our prayer;**

**Christ the world's true Saviour, high and holy One,  
seated now and reigning from your Father's throne:  
Lord and God, we praise you! Highest heaven adores:  
in the Father's glory, all the praise be yours.**

*Christopher Idle (born 1938) after Gloria in Excelsis  
© Christopher Idle/Jubilate Hymns Ltd*

## COLLECT

*The President says*

Let us pray.

Almighty God,  
who wonderfully created us in your own image  
and yet more wonderfully restored us  
through your Son Jesus Christ:  
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,  
so we may share the life of his divinity;  
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

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

A reading from the first letter of John, Chapter 1 beginning to read at the first verse. 1 John 1. 1-10

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GRADUAL HYMN

*Past three o'clock, and a cold, frosty morning:*

*Past three o'clock: good morrow, masters all!*

- 1 **Born is a Baby,gentle as may be,  
son of th'eternal father supernal.**
- 2 **Seraph quire singeth, angel bell ringeth:  
Hark how they rime it, time it and chime it!**
- 3 **Mid earth rejoices hearing such voices  
ne'ertofore so well carolling 'Nowell'.**
- 4 **Thus they: I pray you, up, sirs, nor stay you  
till ye confess him likewise, and bless him.**

## HOLY GOSPEL

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. 2. 8-21  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

Silent night, holy night. All is calm all is bright,  
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild.  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, God's own son, Love's pure light.  
Radiance beams from thy holy face.  
With the dawn of redeeming grace.  
Jesu Lord at thy birth, Jesu Lord at thy birth.

## 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.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,  
let us pray to the Father.

*After each petition the following response may be used*

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.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT**

### **PEACE**

*The President says*

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

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

*cf Isaiah (9.6)*

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

### **PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR**

*The President says*

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,  
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;  
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.  
**All things come from you,  
and of your own do we give you.**

## EUCCHARISTIC 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,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,  
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 angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever praising you and singing

*The choir sings*

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine. Osanna in excelsis.

*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.*

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross.  
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.  
Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
St John, St Stephen, the Holy Innocents, St Thomas and all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,  
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.**

## BREAKING OF BREAD

*The President says*

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

## GIVING OF COMMUNION

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

## AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.*

## COMMUNION ANTHEM

Coventry Carol

arranged Martin Shaw

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*The President says*

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father,  
whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home:  
help your Church to live as one family,  
united in love and obedience,  
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*All stand*

## THE DISMISSAL

### BLESSING

*The President says*

May the Father  
from whom every family in earth and heaven receives its name  
strengthen you with his Spirit in your inner being  
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith and that,  
knowing his love, broad and long, deep and high beyond all knowledge,  
you may be filled with all the fullness of God;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

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

## HYMN

- 1 **Unto us is born a Son,  
King of choirs supernal:  
see on earth his life begun,  
of lords the Lord eternal,  
of lords the Lord eternal.**
  
- 2 **Christ, from heav'n descending low,  
comes on earth a stranger:  
ox and ass their Owner know  
becradled in the manger,  
becradled in the manger.**
  
- 3 **This did Herod sore affray,  
and grievously bewilder;  
so he gave the word to slay,  
and slew the little childer,  
and slew the little childer.**
  
- 4 **Of his love and mercy mild  
this the Christmas story:  
and O that Mary's gentle child  
might lead us up to glory,  
might lead us up to glory!**
  
- 5 **O and A and A and O  
*cum cantibus in choro,*  
let our merry organ go,  
*Benedicamus Domino,*  
*Benedicamus Domino.***

*Puer nobis nascitur (Moosburg Gradual (1355/1360)  
tr George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934)*

UNTO US  
*Piae Cantiones (1582, Grieswald)*



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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