

SAINT JOHN'S



ANGELICAN CHURCH



MIDNIGHT MASS

For the Solemnity of the Nativity
of our Lord Jesus Christ

SAINT JOHN'S EAST MALVERN

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GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Text marked with  is sung to the Mass Setting in F by Harold Darke. Please stand when the bells are rung

OPENING HYMN

1. *(choir only)*

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

2. *(choir only)*

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

**3. And through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.**

The Crib assembled within the Altar is blessed

Let us pray that God our Father will bless this crib,
and 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 for ever.
Amen.

4. And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heav'n above:
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

5. Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him, but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

*H. GAUNTLETT, V 14 HARM. A.H. MANN, V5
ARR. DAVID WILLCOCKS.*

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

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration
of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ Jesus said ‘This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.’

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.

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

♪ The choir sing the Kyrie

Kyrie Eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

Christe Eleison.

Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie Eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God,
who has promised
forgiveness to all
who turn to him in faith:
✠ pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

♪ The choir sing the Gloria

Glory be to God on high,

and in earth peace,

good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee,

we worship thee, we glorify thee,

we give thanks to thee for thy great
glory,

O Lord God, heavenly King,

God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus

Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father, that takest away the
sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the
world, receive our prayer. Thou that

sittest at the right hand of God the

Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art

the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the

Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory

of God the Father. Amen.

THE COLLECT

Good and gracious God, who gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Saviour of all, lying in a manger: on this holy night draw us into the mystery of your love. Join our voices with the heavenly host that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please sit. You may extinguish your candles now

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

[9.2-7]

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 96

O sing to the Lord a new song:
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord and bless his holy name:
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations:
and his wonders among all peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised:
he is more to be feared than all gods.

As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols:
it is the Lord who made the heavens.

Majesty and glory are before him:
beauty and power are in his sanctuary.

Render to the Lord, you families of the nations:
render to the Lord glory and might.

Render to the Lord the honour due to his name:
bring offerings and come into his courts.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness:
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

Say among the nations that the Lord is king:
he has made the world so firm
that it can never be moved;
and he shall judge the peoples with equity.

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad:
let the sea roar, and all that fills it:

Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them:
then shall all the trees of the wood
shout with joy before the Lord;

For he comes, he comes to judge the earth:
he shall judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen.

SECOND READING

A reading from Paul's letter to Titus.

[2.11-14]

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL

Alleluia, **alleluia.**

I proclaim to you good news of great joy:

today a Saviour is born for us,

Christ the Lord.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

[2.1-14]

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. 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!’

For the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SERMON

The Sermon is followed by a period of reflection as the organist plays ‘Polish Carol’ arranged by David Willcocks

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us together stand to affirm the faith of the Church.

**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 of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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 THE FAITHFUL

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

Please kneel

Jesus, Son of Mary, you have come among us, to be one of us. We welcome you into our homes, we welcome you into our hearts, we welcome you into our lives. Let all who come to this church worship with the shepherds and adore you with the wise men. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, Prince of Peace, may all the world know your love and saving power. Empower your church to show forth your glory, fill our hearts with song in the service of your praise and draw all people from every corner of the world to kneel before you in homage. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, bring the power of your presence to this troubled world, protect us from evil, scatter the darkness from before us, deliver us from plague and pestilence, and give peace on earth, peace among nations and peace amongst us. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, Wonderful and Everlasting, fill us with wonder and awe at the mystery of your coming among us; joy and thanksgiving that we may proclaim your grace and glory. Be with all those this Christmas-tide who are homeless, those who can find no place of rest. We commend to children who are at risk or in care, all who are lonely and feel neglected this Christmas and those who will spend this time in hospital. We remember from our own community: Marg, Ali, Patricia, Christine, Phil, Greg, Warwick, Andrew and Tom. Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Jesus, Good Shephard of the sheep, we rejoice that you became human that we might share in the Divine; as you came down to lift us into your Kingdom, so we pray that you might lift the hearts of all who are bereaved or who grieve at this time. We commend to you all our loved ones departed this life, and pray that we may share with them in a vision of your glory. We remember particularly those whose anniversary of death occurs in this week: Caroline Vere Jonas, Marie Dorothy Robinson, George William Masson, Clive Cox, Frederick Guy Tuddenham, Beryl Noble Graham, and John William Kilborn. May they rest in peace: **and rise in glory.**

GREETING OF PEACE

Please stand

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

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

We greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

A collection is taken to support the life and mission of the parish

OFFERTORY HYMN

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

2. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King and peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary; and, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring
love.

3. *(choir only)*

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

4. Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed child,
Where misery cries out to thee, Son of the mother mild;
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes
once more.

5. O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today,
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

ARR. RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS,
V.5 ARR. THOMAS ARMSTRONG

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND CONSECRATION

♪ 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 our thanks and praise.

The priest continues in thanksgiving...

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

♪ *The choir sing the Sanctus and Benedictus*

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts,
heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he that cometh in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest

The priest continues with the prayer of consecration...

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

♪ **Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

The Eucharistic Prayer continues...

... we worship you, Father,
in songs of never-ending praise:

**♪ Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray:

**♪ Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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. Amen.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND COMMUNION

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We who are many are one body:

For we all share in the one bread.

♪ The choir sing the Agnus Dei

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.

All baptised Christians who seek Christ in this sacrament are invited to receive Holy Communion. It will be assumed during this time that you wish to receive the consecrated bread only. All are welcome to come forward to the altar for a blessing. During the communion the choir will sing the Motet 'O Magnum Mysterium' by Francis Poulenc.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Notices may be given here

Please stand. The priest prays a post-communion prayer, followed by

Father,
**we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

The priest says this blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;

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

CLOSING HYMN

**1. 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.**

2. 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...

3. See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;
O come, let us adore him...

5. Child, for us sinners, poor and in the manger,
We would embrace thee, with love and awe;
Who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
O come, let us adore him...

6. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, in the highest;
O come, let us adore him...

7. 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 adore him...

ARR. DAVID WILLCOCKS

The organist plays the ORGAN VOLUNTARY 'Noel Suisse' by Louis-Claude Dacquin

