

Church at Home

Candlemas



Before the Service

The Eucharist on the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

Welcome as we worship God together from across the Diocese of Oxford in Church at Home on this fourth Sunday of Epiphany.

We are delighted to have as our president today the Right Revd Olivia Graham, the Bishop of Reading, and that our reflection is given by the Revd Canon Toby Wright, area dean for Witney. Many thanks to Svea, who joins us from Sweden, and to everyone who has contributed ideas, prayers and action to this week's Church at Home as we celebrate Candlemas.

Forty days ago, we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people.

As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was symbolically purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age, Simeon and Anna recognised him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this eucharist, we celebrate the joy of his coming as we look back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.

Today, we focus on vision: what was made known to Simeon and Anna of the saviour Jesus that day in the temple, even as we continue to extend the invitation to 'Come and See', to encounter Christ and be welcomed. A procession with lighted candles is the distinctive feature of the Eucharist of Candlemas, a symbolic carrying of the light of Christ into the world in the form of candlelight. At the end of the service, we acknowledge this tradition, in a form, as we invite you at home to have a candle nearby that you can light as we finish our celebration with the words of the final responsory.

Once again, a huge thank you to everyone from across the diocese who has made this service possible, including clergy and people from Milton Keynes, Dorchester, Oxford, High Wycombe, Thatcham, Newbury and Reading.

Music before the service

The Lord is my shepherd,
therefore can I lack nothing.
He doth lead me where the green pastures grow,
by the quiet waters of comfort.
He restoreth my soul
and doth lead me in the path of righteousness,
for His name's sake.
Yeah, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil
for thou art my guide
and thy rod and thy staff,
they shall comfort me.

'The Lord is my Shepherd'

Music & Words: Antonín Dvořák

*Recorded by Sarah Meyrick, lay canon of Christ Church Cathedral &
The Rev Ben Phillips, vicar of St Thomas Church, Goring*

Greeting

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

All **Amen.**

President The Lord of glory be with you.

All **The Lord bless you.**

The president welcomes the congregation gathered online and introduces the service.

Hymn

**All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou, burning sun with golden beam
Thou, silver moon with softer gleam
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Thou rushing wind that art so strong
Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rising moon in praise rejoice
Ye lights of evening find a voice
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Let all things their Creator bless
And worship Him in humbleness
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
And praise the Spirit, Three-in-One
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**O praise Him! O praise Him!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
O praise Him! O praise Him!**

**Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
And praise the Spirit, Three-in-One
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*'All Creatures of Our God and King',
Words: Jonathan Baird, Ryan Baird (2013)
Recorded by The Worship Team (Greyfriars Church, Reading)*

Gloria in Excelsis

President **And now we praise God together in the words of
the Gloria**

All **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

President Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President Lord Jesus Christ,
light of the nations and glory of Israel:
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy
to your heavenly Father,
your God, and our God.

All **Amen.**

Reading

Malachi 3.1-4

Read by Ayo Audu (St Frideswide's, Water Eaton)

Reader A reading from the prophet Malachi.

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.

But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and

purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness.

Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Song

**Alleluia, alleluia,
for the Lord God almighty reigns
Alleluia, alleluia,
for the Lord God almighty reigns
Alleluia, alleluia,**

**Holy, holy,
Are you Lord God almighty
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb
You are holy, holy**

*‘Alleluia, for the Lord God Almighty Reigns/Agnus Dei’
Music & Words: Michael W Smith
Recorded by The Worship Team (Greyfriars Church, Reading)*

Gospel Reading

Luke 2.22-40

Read by Polly Falconer (St George and St Mary Magdalen, Tilehurst)

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus Presented in the Temple

When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is

written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord'), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: 'a pair of doves or two young pigeons'.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

'Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.'

The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: 'This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher.

She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

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

Reflection

The Revd Canon Toby Wright (Team Rector, Witney Benefice)

The Creed

President Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

All **Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

President *Let us pray.*

Prayers of Intercession

*Led by the Revd Cara Smart
(St Paul's Church, Wokingham,
with St Nicholas, Emmbrook and Woosehill Church)*

The response to the prayers is:

Intercessor Light of Christ,
All **shine through our world.**

At the end we say:

Intercessor Merciful Father,

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

Confession

President When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore, in the light of Christ, let us confess our sins.

God be gracious to us and bless us,
and make your face shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

May your ways be known on the earth,
your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

President Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Peace

President In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high has broken upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.78,79

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

*Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church.
Although we are separated by distance, we are one Body of Christ; the Spirit moves
among us as we share Christ's peace.*

Song

**I am broken at Your feet
Like an alabaster jar
Every piece of who I am
Laid before Your majesty**

**And I will bow my life
At Your feet, at Your feet
My lips, so lost for words
Will kiss Your feet, kiss Your feet**

**Oh, the gravity of You
Draws my soul unto its knees
I will never be the same
I am lost and found in You**

*'Alabastar Jar'
Music & Words: Rend Collective (2012)
Recorded by Matt Dixey (Greyfriars Church, Reading)*

Preparation of the Table

President Look upon us in mercy, not in
judgement;

draw us from hatred to love;
make the frailty of our praise
a dwelling place for your glory.

All

Amen

The Eucharistic Prayer

President

The Lord be with you.

All

And also with you.

President

Lift up your hearts.

All

We lift them to the Lord.

President

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All

It is right to give thanks and praise.

President

And now we give you thanks
because your eternal Word took our nature upon him
in the womb of Mary the Virgin.
The sword of sorrow pierced her heart
when he was lifted high on the cross,
and by his sacrifice made our peace with you.
And so we rejoice and glorify your name
that we, too, have seen your salvation
and join with angels and archangels
in their unending hymn of praise:

Sanctus

'Holy is the Lord'

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
Holy is the Lord God almighty,
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
Holy is the Lord God almighty,
Who was, and is, and is to come,
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.**

arr. Colin Hand

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Sung by the Revd Dr Judith Ryder

(Kidlington with Hampton Poyle, Oxford)

President

Father, on the night before he died,
Jesus shared a meal with his friends.

He took the bread, and thanked you.
He broke it, and gave it to them, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine.
He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood,
the new promise of God's unfailing love.
Do this to remember me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

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

President Father, as we bring this bread and wine,
and remember his death and resurrection,
send your Holy Spirit,
that we who share these gifts
may be fed by Christ's body and his blood.

Pour your Spirit on us
that we may love one another,
work for the healing of the earth,
and share the good news of Jesus,
as we wait for his coming in glory.

For honour and praise belong to you, Father,
with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit:
one God, now and forever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Led by Svea Liyanage (Örebro, Sweden)

President As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

Svea **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 president breaks the consecrated bread.

President We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

All **God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

Agnus Dei

'Lamb of God'

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

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*Sung by the Revd Dr Judith Ryder
(Kidlington with Hampton Poyle, Oxford)*

Invitation to Communion

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

The president receives the bread and wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith.

There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use the following prayer, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

Music During Communion

**Lord, now let your servant depart in peace,
according to your word.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared before the face of all people
A light to lighten the Gentiles
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**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.**

Lord, Now Let Your Servant Depart in Peace (Nunc dimittis)
Text: from Luke 2.29-32, Tune: Plainsong, based on Psalm tone V
*Sung by the Revd Dr Judith Ryder
(Kidlington with Hampton Poyle, Oxford)*

Candlemas 'Procession'

Prayer

President Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light,
pour into the hearts of your faithful people
the brilliance of your eternal splendour,
that we, who by these kindling flames
light up this temple to your glory,
may have the darkness of our souls dispelled,
and so be counted worthy to stand before you
in that eternal city where you live and reign,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Final Responary

The president lights a candle and invites those at home to light their candles if they care to.

President Father, here we bring to an end our celebration
of the Saviour's birth.

All **Help us, in whom he has been born,
to live his life that has no end.**

President As we have offered the Church's sacrifice of praise.

All **Help us, who have received the bread of life,
to be thankful for your gift.**

President As we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.

All **Help us, who have found the Lord in his temple,
to trust in your eternal promises.**

President As we have greeted the light of the world.

All **Help us, who bear these candles,
never to forsake the light of Christ.**

President As we remember our baptism.

All **Help us, who are marked with the cross,
to share the Lord's death and resurrection.**

President As we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.

All **Help us, for whom Lent is near,
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

President As we bless one another in your name.

All **Help us, who now go in peace,
to shine with your light in the world.**

Thanks be to God. Amen.

President The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to
you;
the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give
you peace.

All **Amen.**

Hymn

**Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.**

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.**

**Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.**

**Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.**

**Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.**

**Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.**

'Christ be our light'

Music & Words: Bernadette Farrell (1993, 2000)

Recorded by Hannah and Liam Cartwright (Oxford)

Come and See: Adventures in Faith and Trust

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Thanks to all those who made this service possible:

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This service was produced by the Revd Dr Leonard Onugha, curate, St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, Reading. The guest liturgist was Dr Matthew Cheung Salisbury, music lecturer at Oxford University and Worcester College and national liturgist and worship adviser for the Church of England.

Church at Home is produced each week by the Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker, associate chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; and Steven Buckley, director of communications; with the help of Emma Thompson, digital communications officer, and Mark Robinson of Digital Creative.

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Wonderers welcome

Explore the Christian faith afresh



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