

Welcome to
A Celebration of Christmas



St Mary's, Hampton Poyle

**Christmas Day
10am 2023**

Today we come to contemplate
one of the greatest mysteries of the Christian faith:
that God in Christ took on our humanity and joined us
in our earthly life so that we might join him in his
divine life.

On this holy day we remember that God comes to us
in the lowly, the ordinary, and the humble.
In his coming he makes ordinary people and
ordinary things special, extraordinary, holy.

Bethlehem was not the hub of the universe,
nor was the stable a platform for the famous.
In an out-of-the-way place which people never thought
to visit – there God keeps his promise;
there God sends his Son.

Whether you are visiting us for the first time
or are a more regular worshipper here,
you are most welcome.

If you are a visitor
and would like to keep contact with us,
please make yourself known to the clergy
or one of the welcoming team
at the back of the church.

OPENING CAROL:

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, 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, Christ the Lord

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, Christ the Lord

Yea Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning!
Jesus to thee be glory given
Word of the father, now in flesh appearing
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord

WELCOME

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

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

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

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.

Silence

Lord of grace and truth,
we confess our unworthiness
to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call
to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us

Your Son was born in poverty in a manger.

Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.

Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us

The Magi followed the star

to find Jesus the King.

Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:

Forgive and heal us

The Absolution:

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.

Amen

*We make our joyful response to God's forgiveness
to the tune of 'Hark the Herald'*

Hark! The Herald angels sing
Glory to our new-born King.
Glory be to God above,
To all people, peace and love.
O Lord God our heavenly King,
Worship, thanks and praise we bring.
Jesus Christ, God's only Son,
Lamb of God, the Holy One.
Hark! The Herald angels sing
Glory to our new-born King.

Show us mercy, Lord we pray,
You take all our sin away;
Jesus Christ at God's right hand,
Humbly we before you stand.
For you are the Holy One,
Jesus Christ, our Lord alone,
With the Spirit we adore,
And the Father evermore.
Hark! The Herald angels sing
Glory to our new-born King. (*Gloria words by Kat Champion-Spall*)

Please sit

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

**Lord Jesus Christ,
Your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to knee; 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 WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING

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.
This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 2. 1-20*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you

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

Glory to you O Lord

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 Savior, 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 they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this

child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please sit

THE SERMON

DECLARATION OF FAITH—*please stand*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
who made the world?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ,
who redeemed us all?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God?

I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

INTERCESSIONS - *please kneel / sit*

*We pray for God`s people across the world
using the response:*

Reader: Holy God

All: Receive our prayer

THE PEACE—*please stand*

To us a child is born, to 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

Let us offer each other a sign of peace.
We exchange the peace.

OFFERTORY CAROL: In the bleak midwinter

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,
Breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels fall before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

THE PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

Bethlehem is a long way away,
and Jesus was born a long time ago.
But Jesus was born for us, he is with us still.
Jesus invites us to meet him at this table.

**As shepherds came to a stable
to celebrate the birth of a Saviour, we come to worship.**

All who come in fear or in need,
all who come in wonder or in hope,
all who come in love and in joy are welcome here.

**As we come, we bring to the table
symbols of our lives offered in thanks.**

Here is bread. Here is wine. Here is money.

**As wise men brought gifts to praise a new king,
these are our gifts, offered in adoration and praise**

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER D

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

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.

Almighty God, good Father to us all,
your face is turned towards your world.

In love you gave us Jesus your Son
to rescue us from sin and death.

Your Word goes out to call us home to the city where angels
sing your praise. We join with them in heaven's song:

**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 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.

We pray together as Jesus taught us:

**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**

**For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

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

**Though we are many we are one body
for we all share in one bread.**

Behold the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

THE RECEIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Everyone is welcome around God's table.
If you are used to receiving communion in any other Christian church
you are **most welcome** to receive today
If you would prefer a blessing please do come forward
and keep your head bowed.*

After Communion we all 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.**

Please stand

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

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

And the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
be with you this Holy night and evermore. **Amen**

CAROL:

God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray

O tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed Angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by Name.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His Mother Mary kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth efface.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

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

***Wishing you all a merry Christmas and
Blessings for the New Year!***