

Church at Home

First Sunday of Christmas



Before the Service

Welcome as we gather from across the Diocese of Oxford to worship God during Church at Home on this first Sunday of Christmas.

We are delighted that the President today is the The Revd Canon Richard Peers, Sub Dean at Christ Church Cathedral, and that our address is given by The Venerable Stephen Pullin, Archdeacon of Berkshire. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed ideas, prayers and action to this week's Church at Home.

Today we continue to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on the final Sunday of this unusual year. Whether you are spending Christmas alone or are gathered with others, you are welcome as we reflect together in our worship on the meaning and hope of Christ's incarnation amid so much loss and uncertainty.

Thank you to all those from across the Diocese who have made this service possible, including people and clergy from Cippenham, Oxford, Great Missenden, Reading, Burford, Dorchester, Blackthorn Chase, Cowley, Shiplake, Dunsden and Harpsden.

Opening Video

Nativity video from St Peter and St Paul Great Missenden, with donkeys Joey and Shankydd at Road Farm Countryways Great Missenden with Wendy Gray and members of Roots youth group, baby Minnie Massey in the manger and music played by Ken Harratt.

The Gathering

The Greeting

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

All **Amen.**

President The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

The President welcomes the congregation and introduces our service.

Carol

We join with three different class bubbles from Year 5 from Great Missenden Combined Church of England School to sing:

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.

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.

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.

Prayers of Penitence

President 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.

President 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.

President 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

President 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 resigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Gloria

We sing God's praises in the words of the Gloria to the tune from 'Angels from the Realms of Glory', together with a small group of clergy gathered in Bernwood Forest

Joyful news to you I bring:

Christ the Lord is here on earth,
our Redeemer and our King
sing with gladness at his birth.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Joyful news to you I bring:

Jesus Christ is born tonight,
now let all the heavens ring:
praises to the Lord of Light.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Joyful news to you I bring:

Jesus Christ, a living sign,
for our human ransoming
comes to us through love divine.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Joyful news we sing today:

incarnation, living bread,
passion, taking sin away,
resurrection from the dead.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

Glo—ria in excelsis Deo.

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Read by Angeline Ruredzo, LLM, St Andrew, Cippenham

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Psalm 148

Read by Bill Maish from Dorchester Abbey

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels;
 praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 for he commanded and they were created.
He established them forever and ever;
 he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the LORD from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost,
 stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle,
 creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike,
 old and young together!
Let them praise the name of the LORD,
 for his name alone is exalted;
 his glory is above earth and heaven.
He has raised up a horn for his people,
 praise for all his faithful,

for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the LORD!

Carol

*We sing 'Saviour in a Manger' with Emu Music,
who have close links with St Ebbe's Oxford:*

Beyond the hills of Bethlehem
The angel choir sings
A joyful chorus fills the skies:
"A saviour in a manger!"

The promise of a coming king
The hope of all the earth
To dwell within our broken world
The saviour in a manger

*Rejoice, the Lord has come
Rejoice, the promised son
Rejoice, the saving one
Has come to pay our ransom
The saviour in a manger*

A treasure for the longing soul
His peace within our hearts
We sing the glory of the Son
Our saviour in a manger!

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:15-21

*Read by The Revd Jacqueline Dove, Rector (designate), Blackthorne Chase
Benefice*

Reader Alleluia, alleluia.
The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we have seen his glory.

All **Alleluia.**

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

All **Glory be to you O Lord.**

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. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Address

The Ven Stephen Pullin, Archdeacon of Berkshire

The Creed

President Together in courage and hope let us profess the faith that sustains us in the words of the Creed:

All **I believe in God, the Father Almighty
Maker of heaven and earth
I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
Born of the virgin Mary
Suffered under Pontius Pilate
Was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit
The Holy Catholic Church
The communion of saints
The forgiveness of sins
The resurrection of the body
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

President Let us pray to Jesus our Saviour.

The prayers are led by Imogen Rees, St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden

President Jesus, Saviour, child of Mary,

All: **you know us and love us,
you share our lives
and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace
to all in whom he delights.

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

President Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Preparation of the Table

Anthem

*Adam lay ybounden, music by Boris Ord, sung by the choir of Reading
Minster*

Adam lay ybounden
Bounden in a bond;
Foure thousand winter
Thought he not too long

And all was for an apple
An apple that he tok
As clerkes finden
Wreten in here book

Never had the apple
The apple taken ben
Ne hadde never our lady
A ben Hevene Quen

Blessed be the time
The apple taken was
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gracias

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord is here.

All **His Spirit is with us.**

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 It is indeed right,
it is our duty and our joy,
at all times and in all places
to give you thanks and praise,
holy Father, heavenly King,
almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
And now we give you thanks
because, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
he took our nature upon him
and was born of the Virgin Mary his mother,
that being himself without sin,
he might make us clean from all sin.
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:

All **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.**

President Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,

took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, 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.

Christ is the bread of life:

All **When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

President Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

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

President Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us
All **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 thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

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

Agnus Dei

All **Jesus, Lamb of God,
have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

Invitation to Communion

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

We are invited to make spiritual Communion with God, who comes to meet us wherever we are.

The Priest receives the Bread & 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 also 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 one of the following prayers, 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.

Worship song

Together with Burford Church Music Group, we sing:

In a moment everything changed
On a silent night came the promised Child
In a stable so humble and poor
Unto us was born the Saviour of the world

Love came down, hope was found
A star lit the sky, the angels cried "Glory!"
Light broke through the darkest night
Hope is alive, hope is alive
'Cause Love came down
Love came down

In a moment peace broke out
Now the Prince is here, there's no need to fear
In a manger, Eternity rests
Unto us was born the Saviour of the world

Love has come for you
Love has come for me
All the Earth will sing
Emmanuel
Love has come for you

Love has come for me
All the Earth will sing
Emmanuel

Prayer after Communion

President 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 least to our home in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

President Let us bless the living God:
He was born of the Virgin Mary,

All **revealed in his glory,**

President worshipped by angels,

All **proclaimed among the nations,**

President believed in throughout the world,

All **exalted to the highest heavens.**

President Blessed by God, our strength and our salvation,

All **now and forever. Amen.**

President Christ the Son of God, born of Mary,
fill you with his grace to trust his promises and obey his will;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

President Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Organ Voluntary:

*Dubois' Toccata played by Steven Grahl, Organist, Christ Church Cathedral
Oxford*

Thanks to all those who made this service possible:

The Revd Canon Richard Peers, Sub Dean, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford; The Venerable Stephen Pullin, Archdeacon of Berkshire; Donkeys Joey and Shankydd and Wendy Gray, Road Farm Countryways, Great Missenden; Roots Youth Group, baby Minnie Massey, Ken Harratt, Imogen Rees, St Peter and St Paul Great Missenden; Year 5 staff and pupils, Great Missenden Church of England Combined School; Angeline Ruredzo, LLM St Andrew's Cippenham; Bill Maish, Dorchester Abbey; The Revd Jacqueline Dove, Rector (designate) Blackthorn Chase Benefice; The Revd Gemma Beesley, Assistant Curate, Parish of Cowley; The Revd Sarah Nesbitt, Assistant Curate, United Benefice of Shiplake, Dunsden and Harpsden; The Revd Catherine Schneider, Assistant Curate, Dorchester Team; The Revd Dr Elizabeth Lowson, Assistant Curate, Great Missenden with Ballinger and Little Hampden; Emu Music; Choir of Reading Minster; The Burford Church Music Group; Steven Grahl, Organist, Christ Church Oxford.

This service was produced by Revd Dr Elizabeth Lowson and the lead liturgist was Revd Canon Toby Wright. Church at Home is produced each week by 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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