

WELCOME AND NOTICES

LIGHTING OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP & OFFERTORY

In the joy of this Christmas day let us open our hearts and lives to God, that we may receive him as Light and Word, as Bread and Wine. Let us offer ourselves and all we have given that we may serve him as Lord and Saviour, as Immanuel 'God with us.'

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING:

<https://youtu.be/1IGP68i3JvU>

'Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
Hark! the herald angels sing:
'Glory to the new-born King!'

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
'Glory to the new-born King.'

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings,
Mild, He lays His glory by;
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
'Glory to the new-born King.'

OPENING PRAYER

God our Father, you invited Mary to be part of your plan of salvation, becoming the mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Like Mary, move in us today.

Glory to you, God our Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, you came down from heaven in humility and poverty. Receive our lowly worship.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus.

Holy Spirit of God, you brought joy to simple shepherds when they saw the Messiah. Bring joy to us in our worship today.

Glory to you, Holy Spirit.

Glory to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

CONFESSION

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.

Lord of grace and truth, we confess we stand in your presence as your children but we have sinned:

Forgive us, Lord.

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty and placed in a manger. Forgive us for always wanting more.

Forgive us, Lord.

The shepherds went around telling everyone about the birth of your Son. Forgive us for keeping silent about you.

Forgive us, Lord.

May God forgive us that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. He came so that your sins can be forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

BLESSING OF PRESENTS

CAROL: JESUS, JOY OF THE HIGHEST HEAVEN

Sung by Khmih Shillong Choir, India

<https://youtu.be/Okxl20m-tgE>

Jesus, joy of the highest heaven,
Born as a little baby
Under a wondrous star.
Like us, crying he takes His first breath
Held by His mother, helpless
Close to her beating heart.
Jesus, laid in a lowly manger,
Facing a world of dangers,
Come to turn me a stranger
Into a child of God.

Jesus, King of the highest heaven
Learning to take His first steps,
That He might bring us life.
Like us, knowing our smiles and sorrows,
He showed the way to follow,
A way that is true and right.
Jesus, take away every darkness,
Steady my simple footsteps
That I might in your goodness
Live as a child of God.

READING: Luke 2:1-7 (NIV UK)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in

cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

CHRISTMAS DAY MESSAGE: The Greatest Gift

PRAYERS

We give thanks for who celebrate Christmas this day, all who are worshipping you, Lord, in churches and homes, in hospitals and prisons, especially those worshipping you in secret or for fear of others.

Jesus, present among us

Let your love transform the world

We pray for peace on earth and goodwill among all peoples, that we may learn to value one another and live in peace. We remember before you all who suffer from war or violence.

Jesus, present among us

Let your love transform the world

We give thanks for our homes and families. We pray for all those who will have to be alone this Christmas, and for families separated because of covid.

Jesus, present among us

Let your love transform the world

We pray for all who have to work over Christmas, and for all who have lost their jobs because of covid. We pray for Connecting Bowthorpe and the continuing work of helping feed those in need, and also the work of St. Martin's and their continuing work of helping the homeless.

Jesus, present among us

Let your love transform the world

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

HOLY CHILD

<https://youtu.be/ewF00hROjfE>

Holy Child, how still You lie,
Safe the manger, soft the hay;
Faint upon the eastern sky
Breaks the dawn of Christmas Day.
Holy Child, whose birthday brings
Shepherds from their field and fold,
Angel choirs and eastern kings,
Myrrh and frankincense and gold:

Holy Child, what gift of grace
From the Father freely willed!
In Your infant form we trace
All God's promises fulfilled.
Holy Child, whose human years
Span like ours delight and pain;
One in human joys and tears,
One in all but sin and stain:

Holy Child, so far from home,
All the lost to seek and save:
To what dreadful death You come,
To what dark and silent grave!
Holy Child, before whose name
Powers of darkness faint and fall;
Conquered death and sin and shame –
Jesus Christ is Lord of all!

Holy Child, how still You lie!
Safe the manger, soft the hay;
Clear upon the eastern sky

Breaks the dawn of Christmas Day.

THE PEACE

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.
Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HOLY COMMUNION

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.

Father, it is our joy and delight to offer you
our thanks and praise. Through your Word
you spoke creation into existence, and
made us in your image. When we
disobeyed you, you did not leave us in
darkness but sent your Son, the Word
made flesh, to be the light of the world.
Emptying himself of all but love, he was
born of Mary, shared our human nature
and died on the cross. Yet you raised him
from death; and through him you have
sent your holy and life-giving Spirit to make
us a people of light.

And so with angels and archangels, and
with all the company of heaven we
proclaim your glory, for ever praising you
and saying:

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.

Holy and redeeming God, we see your grace and truth in Jesus Christ our Lord, who, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take this and eat it. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

And so in faith we proclaim:

Christ is born!

The Saviour has come!

God is with us!

And so, Father, we remember and celebrate all that Christ has done for us. Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we give ourselves to you. May your Spirit draw us together in the one Body of Christ.

BREAKING OF BREAD

Christ is the bread of life and the true vine, the light of the world.

Lord God, you are here with us, bringing us light and life.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Son of Mary, Son of God, we have rejoiced at the news of your birth; help us to proclaim that message in word and deed, to your praise and glory. **Amen.**

CAROL: JOY TO THE WORLD

<https://youtu.be/vZhgp97y7Q>

Joy to the world the Lord has come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing!

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns;
let men their songs employ.
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

Go, praising God for his gift of grace, and share your Christmas joy with a world in need of good news.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you this Christmas Day and for ever more.
Amen.

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

Happy Christmas!