

Saint Edmund, Chingford

Midnight Mass: Christmas Night

Tuesday 24 December 2025 23.30

The Bidding

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we beheld his glory.

Carol (BCS 14)

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth,
to touch their harps of gold;
'Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lonely plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever over its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angels' strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and man, at war with man, hears not
the love-song which they bring;
oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
and hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet bards foretold,
when, with the ever circling years,
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing!

Gathering

The president lights the white candle and says

Welcome all wonders in one sight!
Eternity shut in a span.
Summer in winter, day in night,
heaven in earth and God in man.

Great little one whose all-embracing birth
brings earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

Greeting

The president greets the people

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

Prayer of Penitence

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 is kept.

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.

The president says

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw *you* to himself,
that *you* may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
and be cleansed from all *your* sins,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Gloria in excelsis

**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

The president introduces a period of silent prayer.

**Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.
Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

New Testament Reading

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Carol (BCS 17)

Ding dong! merrily on high
in heaven the bells are ringing;
ding dong! verily the sky
is riv'n with angels singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

E'en so here below, below,
let steeple bells be swungen,
and i-o, i-o, i-o,
by priest and people sungen.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

Pray you, dutifully prime
your matin chime, ye ringers;
may you beautifully rime
your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

Gospel Reading

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Alleluia, alleluia.

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

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Ruth Holmes

Affirmation of Faith

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

**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.**

Prayers of Intercession

These responses may be used

Father, in this holy night your Son our Saviour
was born in human flesh.

Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night there was no room for your Son in the inn.

Protect with your love those who have no home
and all who live in poverty.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour,
brought your Son to birth.

Hold in your hand [...and] all who are in pain or distress.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness.
Bring comfort to [...and] all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.'
Strengthen those who work for peace and justice
in [...and in] all the world.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy.
Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family,
and saw the baby lying in the manger.
Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth,
and earth is raised to heaven.
Hold in your hand [...and] all those who have passed through death
in the hope of your coming kingdom.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.
Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God
hear our prayer.

Father,
in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at
the manger throne.
Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary,
Joseph and the saints
through him who is your Word made flesh,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The Peace

This holy night the angels sang,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
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.

Carol (BCS 13)

Silent night, holy night.
All is calm, all is bright
round the Virgin mother and Child;
holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night.
Shepherds quail at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia:
Christ, the Saviour is born,
Christ, the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, Love's pure Light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace:
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

The Preparation of the Table

Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.
Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

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 thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,
and on this night was born of the Virgin Mary
by the power of your Spirit,
and lived as one of us.

In this mystery of the Word made flesh
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
In him we see our God made visible
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.

Therefore with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

**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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood
of our Lord Jesus Christ;

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.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
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.

Great is the mystery of faith:
**Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once
for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection
and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of Edmund, and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

Silence

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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.**

Please sit or kneel.

The Breaking of Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

Agnus Dei

We sing

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

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion.

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.
Lord, give us this bread always.

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood
of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you
our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.

Blessing

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with peace and goodwill
and make you partakers of the divine nature;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Carol (BCS 10)

Hark! the herald-angels sing,
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 th'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 dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.

Hail, the heavenly 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 we 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.

The Dismissal

A minister says

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

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Hymns

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