

A very warm welcome to St Michael's Church

Sunday 11th February 2024



**Christ, the light to enlighten the Gentiles and
the glory of his people**

Today we celebrate Candlemas, which is sometimes called The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. We hear the story of Mary and Joseph bringing Jesus to the Temple forty days after his birth. There he is recognised and acclaimed by Simeon and Anna as the long awaited Messiah.

Candlemas has a 'bitter sweet' flavour. It celebrated the coming of Christ into the world, but also recalls the words Simeon spoke to Mary, that this child is 'Destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, destined to be the sign that is rejected - and a sword will pierce your own soul too - so that the secret thoughts of many will be laid bare.'

Candlemas is therefore, a turning point in the Christian year. It marks the end of the Christmas season, in which we celebrate the joy of the coming of Christ among us, but it also looks forward to Good Friday and Easter, with their message of the cost of God's love. As we celebrate this feast we are reminded that we are called to share in God's work - both its joy and its struggle.



Today we celebrate the close of the Christmas festival of light. Candles are blessed and we carry them in procession to welcome Christ, the light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people.

Blessing of Candles and Procession

Forty days ago we celebrated the joyful feast of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today we recall the holy day on which he was presented in the temple, fulfilling the Law of Moses and at the same time going to meet his faithful people. Led by the Spirit, Simeon and Anna came to the temple, recognised Christ as their Lord, and proclaimed him with joy.

United by the Spirit, may we now go to the house of God to welcome Christ the Lord. There we shall recognise him in the breaking of bread until he comes again in glory.

The candles are blessed.

Let us pray.

God our Father, source of all light,
today you revealed to Simeon

your Light of revelation to the nations.

Bless + these candles and make them holy.

May we who carry them to praise your glory

walk in the path of goodness

and come to the light that shines for ever. **Amen.**

During the lighting of candles we sing the song of Simeon

Lord, now let your servant

Go his way in peace;

Your great love has brought me

Joy that will not cease.

For my eyes have seen him

Promised from of old –

Saviour of all people,

Shepherd of one fold.

Light of revelation

To the gentiles shown,

Light of Israel's glory

To the world made known.

The procession to our seats begins with the acclamation.

Let us now go in peace to meet the Lord.

Processional Hymn: Alleluia, alleluia give thanks to the risen Lord

Greeting and Entrance

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

The Lord be with you, **And with your spirit.**

Call to Confession

My brothers and sisters,
to prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries,
let us first call to mind our sins.

**Almighty God,
our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you,
through our own fault,
in thought and word and deed,
and in what we have left undone.
For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
forgive us all that is past,
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sin,
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,
and keep us in life eternal,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria

**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 Liturgy of the Word

Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God,
we humbly implore your majesty
that, just as your Only Begotten Son
was presented on this day in the Temple
in the substance of our flesh,
so, by your grace,
we may be presented to you with minds made pure.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews. (2:14-18)

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, he too shared equally in it so that by his death he could take away all the power of the devil, who had power over death, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it was not the angels that he took to himself; he took to himself descent from Abraham. It was essential that he should in this way become completely like his brothers so that he could be a compassionate and trustworthy high priest of God's religion, able to atone for human sins. That is because he has himself been through temptation he is able to help others who are tempted.

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

Gradual Hymn: Now thank we all our God

Alleluia

Alleluia, alleluia!

The light to enlighten the Gentiles
and give glory to Israel, your people.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel

The Lord be with you, **And also with you.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (2:22-40)

Glory to you, O Lord.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord -observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord - and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the spirit he came to the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and he blessed God; and he said:

"Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel."



This is the Gospel of Our Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

Intercessions (sit)

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

The Peace

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross;
we meet in his name and share his peace
The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with your spirit.

Let us offer one another a sign of that peace.

Offertory Hymn: Immortal, invisible God only wise

Offertory Prayers

Prayer over the Gifts

May the offering made with exultation by your Church
be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray,
for you willed that your Only Begotten Son
be offered to you for the life of the world
as the Lamb without blemish.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you, **and with your spirit**
Lift up your hearts, **we lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right and just**

Preface

Father, all-powerful and everliving God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Today your Son,
who shares your eternal splendour,
was presented in the temple
and revealed by the Spirit
as the glory of Israel
and the light of all peoples.

Our hearts are joyful,
for we have seen your salvation,
and now with the angels and saints
we praise you for ever singing;
**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and God of might,
heaven and earth, heaven and earth are full of your glory
your power and might
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest heaven.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest heaven.**

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.

Let us proclaim 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 all,
rejoicing at his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate the 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 Holy Mary mother of God,
St Michael 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.**

The Communion

Our Father

Let us pray with confidence to the Father
in the words our Saviour gave 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 thine is the Kingdom, the power,
and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread:

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ

Though we are many we are body because we all share in the one bread

Preparation for Communion:

All: **With this bread...**

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

People: **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

All: **With this wine...**

We now come forward to receive Communion or a blessing

Communion Hymn: be still for the presence of the Lord

Prayer after Communion

By these holy gifts which we have received, O Lord,
bring your grace to perfection within us,
and, as you fulfilled Simeon's expectation
that he would not see death
until he had been privileged to welcome the Christ,
so may we, going forth to meet the Lord,
obtain the gift of eternal life.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Blessing & Dismissal

Blessing

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

Priest: May the Father be your strength,
the Son be your light,

and the Spirit be your peace;
and may God bless you ,
Father , Son and Holy Spirit, now and always.

People: **Amen.**

Priest: The Mass is ended, Go in the peace of Christ

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Final Hymn: Thou whose almighty word.