

St Mary's Church, Walkley



The Church on the Road:
Inclusive, Eucharistic, a safe place to be with God

O Sapientia

O Adonai

O Radix Jesse

O Clavis David

O Oriens

O Rex Gentium

O Emmanuel

The 4th Sunday of Advent

20th December 2020

Evening Prayer

Welcome to St Mary's Church, Walkley

There will be some changes to our usual way of worship. It may feel a bit like it does at St Mary's during Lent. There won't be any hymns during the service. Later on we might be able to have a cantor singing some of the liturgy.

St Mary's is a place of beauty and peace. It was built to the Glory of God, and to serve the community. It is the parish church of Walkley, part of the Church of England, and has a weekly pattern of "traditional" worship, including hymns, prayer and Holy Communion. St Mary's preserves much of the history of Walkley and is a focus for community events. It is an excellent venue for concerts and exhibitions, and a resource for local schools. We are working to get the church open and available for anyone to enjoy throughout the day. The community hall adjoining the church provides disabled access and is available for hire.

Evening Prayer

Beginning with the early church, Christians have gathered at different times of day to pray. This evolved over time to a pattern common in monasteries of seven different services throughout day and night, to which non-monks were welcome. At the Reformation, England lost this monastic tradition. With the production of the Book of Common Prayer (current version from 1662) the service of Evensong was created by fusing Vespers (evening prayer) with Compline (night prayer).

During the 20th century the church looked to renew its worship and incorporate contemporary language culminating, in the Church of England, with the publication of Common Worship in the early 2000s. This separated out Evening Prayer and Compline as two distinct services, appropriate for different times of day. This service is a product of the history above and draws on biblical texts, ancient prayers and contemporary preaching and intercession.

Advent

During Advent we gather together to proclaim and receive in our hearts the good news of the coming of God's kingdom, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate with confidence and joy the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We pray that we may respond in penitence and faith to the glory of his kingdom, its works of justice and its promise of peace, its blessing and its hope.

We meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's kingdom. We hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us – how that when we were far off, he met us in his Son and brought us home, how he humbled himself to take our human nature, that we might share his divine glory.

The Preparation

Minister O God, make speed to save us.

All **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Minister Reveal among us the light of your presence

All **that we may behold your power and glory.**

Minister Blessed are you, Sovereign God,
creator of light and darkness,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
As evening falls, you renew your promise
to reveal among us the light of your presence.
May your word be a lantern to our feet
and a light upon our path
that we may behold your coming among us.
Strengthen us in our stumbling weakness
and free our tongues to sing your praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Minister That this evening may be holy, good and peaceful,
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

Minister As our evening prayer rises before you, O God,
so may your mercy come down upon us
to cleanse our hearts
and set us free to sing your praise
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

We sit.

The Confession and Absolution

Minister When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

1 Corinthians 4.5

We keep a time of silence.

Minister Heavenly Father,
you exalted the humble and meek:
give us humble and contrite hearts.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister Lord Jesus,
you grew towards birth in the Virgin's womb:
be planted also in our hearts and lives.
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Minister Holy Spirit,
you overshadowed Mary,
that she might become the God-bearer:
fill us with your heavenly gifts.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Word of God

The Psalm: Psalm 89. 1 - 8

We sit as we say the psalm together.

- 1 My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord: ♦
with my mouth will I proclaim your faithfulness
throughout all generations.
- 2 I will declare that your love is established for ever; ♦
you have set your faithfulness as firm as the heavens.
- 3 For you said: 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one; ♦
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:
- 4 "Your seed will I establish for ever ♦
and build up your throne for all generations."
- 5 The heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, ♦
and your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones;
- 6 For who among the clouds can be compared to the Lord? ♦
Who is like the Lord among the host of heaven?
- 7 A God feared in the council of the holy ones, ♦
great and terrible above all those round about him.
- 8 Who is like you, Lord God of hosts? ♦
Mighty Lord, your faithfulness is all around you.

We stand.

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

We sit.

The First Reading: Isaiah 7. 10 - 17

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on your ancestral house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.'

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

We stand.

The Canticle: A Song of the Spirit

All **Surely I am coming soon.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**

1 'Behold, I am coming soon', says the Lord,
'and bringing my reward with me, ♦
to give to everyone according to their deeds.

2 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, ♦
and covered all their sins.

3 Blessed are those who do God's commandments,
that they may have the right to the tree of life, ♦
and may enter into the city through the gates.

4 'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you, ♦
with this testimony for all the churches.

5 'I am the root and the offspring of David, ♦
I am the bright morning star.'

6 'Come!' say the Spirit and the Bride; ♦
'Come!' let each hearer reply.

7 Come forward, you who are thirsty, ♦
let those who desire take the water of life as a gift.

Revelation 22.12-14, 16, 17

We stand.

All **To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb ♦
be blessing and honour and glory and might,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

All **Pour down, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness.**

We sit.

The Second Reading: Luke 1. 26 - 38

A reading from the Gospel according Luke.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

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

We stand.

The Gospel Canticle: The Magnificat – The Song of Mary

All

**O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel;
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.**

- 1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; ♦
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
- 2 From this day all generations will call me blessed; ♦
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his name.
- 3 He has mercy on those who fear him, ♦
from generation to generation.
- 4 He has shown strength with his arm ♦
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,
- 5 Casting down the mighty from their thrones ♦
and lifting up the lowly.
- 6 He has filled the hungry with good things ♦
and sent the rich away empty.
- 7 He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, ♦
to remember his promise of mercy,
- 8 The promise made to our ancestors, ♦
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Luke 1.46–55

All

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

All

**O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel;
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.**

The Apostles' Creed

Minister Let us declare our faith in God.

All **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator 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.**

We sit.

The Sermon

The Prayers of Intercession

We remain seated or kneel.

Intercessor Lord, in your mercy:
All **Hear our prayer.**

The prayers conclude with the following:

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

The Lord's Prayer

Minister Awaiting his coming in glory,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All **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.**

We stand.

The Conclusion

All **Lighten our darkness,
Lord, we pray,
and in your great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Minister May the Lord, when he comes,
find us watching and waiting.

All **Amen.**

Minister May the Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,
and keep us in eternal life.

All **Amen.**

Minister Let us bless the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Please take this order of service away with you!

Beginning with the back rows of pews and chairs, please leave using the church porch and move away as quickly as possible to help others to leave too. If you use the ramp, please use the hall door as usual, and move away as quickly as you can.

We are sorry that there won't be any refreshments after the service and that you won't be able to stay to chat to each other in person. We will still be holding our online coffee sessions, though, and we'd love to see you online if you'd like to join us.