

# St Mary's Church, Walkley



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

*The candles invite us to praise and to pray  
when Christmas greets Easter on Candlemas Day.*

## Candlemas Carol Service

**28<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**Welcome to St Mary's Church, Walkley**  
**Officiant: Joe, Reader at St Mary's**  
**Churchwarden on duty: Alexandra**

## The Introduction

*Minister* Today the Lord is presented in the Temple  
in substance of our mortal nature.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Minister* Today the Blessed Virgin comes  
to be purified in accordance with the law.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*Minister* Today old Simeon proclaims Christ  
as the light of the nations and the glory of Israel.

*All* **Alleluia. Praise to Christ, the light of the world.**

*Words of welcome may be said.*

*Minister* Dear friends, forty days ago we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people. As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognized him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this service, we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.

## The Prayers of Penitence

*Minister* Hear the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ:  
'I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness  
but shall have the light of life.'  
Let us therefore bring our sins into his light  
and confess them in penitence and faith.

John 8.12

*All* **Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love,  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed,  
and repent of all our sins.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light.  
Amen.**

*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 Collect**

*Minister* Lord Jesus Christ,  
light of the nations and glory of Israel:  
make your home among us,  
and present us pure and holy  
to your heavenly Father,  
your God, and our God.

*All* **Amen.**

### **The Opening Hymn**

*We remain standing and we sing:*

**Come thou long expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
joy of ev'ry longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver;  
born a child and yet a king;  
born to reign in us for ever;  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thine own eternal Spirit,  
rule in all our hearts alone:  
by thine all-sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

*We sit.*

**The First Reading: Haggai 2. 1 - 9**

*Reader* A reading from the Book of the Prophet Haggai.

In the second year of King Darius, in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendour, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.

*Reader* This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*We stand and we sing:*

*Tune: Hyfrydol – Alleluia sing, to Jesus*

**Angels sang in celebration,  
sang a new age come to birth,  
heralding a new creation,  
promising God's peace on earth.  
Still we ache to hear their singing,  
long to know their word fulfilled  
as another year is turning  
with a hope not to be stilled.**

**Mary sang of liberation,  
God at work among the poor,  
come to heal the world's frustration,  
love insistent at the door.  
Longing for a new beginning,  
myriad Marys sound her song;  
round the world, while bells are ringing,  
God is still at war with wrong.**

**Simeon sang to end his story,  
sang of nations deep in night  
soon to see both Israel's glory  
and a whole world filled with light.  
As we turn a page of history,  
full of wonders, joy and pain,  
we too pray to see God's victory  
and the day when Christ will reign.**

Alan Luff b. 1928  
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*We sit.*

## **The Second Reading: Luke 2. 22 - 35**

*Reader* A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

‘Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.’

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

*Reader*  
*All*

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

*We stand and we sing:*

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of his Word;  
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!  
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
his holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.  
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of his Word!  
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and forevermore!**

Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1961  
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*We sit.*

## **The Third Reading: Luke 2. 36 - 40**

*Reader* A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

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

*We stand and we sing:*

**Sing we of the blessed mother  
who received the angel's word,  
and obedient to his summons  
bore in love the infant Lord;  
sing we of the joys of Mary  
at whose breast that child was fed,  
who is Son of God eternal  
and the everlasting Bread.**

**Sing we, too, of Mary's sorrows,  
of the sword that pierced her through,  
when beneath the cross of Jesus  
she his weight of suff'ring knew,  
looked upon her Son and Saviour  
reigning high on Calv'ry's tree,  
saw the price of our redemption  
paid to set the sinner free.**

**Sing again the joys of Mary  
when she saw the risen Lord,  
and, in prayer with Christ's apostles,  
waited on his promised word:  
from on high the blazing glory  
of the Spirit's presence came,  
heav'nly breath of God's own being,  
manifest through wind and flame.**

**Sing the greatest joy of Mary  
when on earth her work was done,  
and the Lord of all creation  
brought her to his heav'nly home:  
virgin mother, Mary blessèd,  
raised on high and crowned with grace,  
may your Son, the world's redeemer,  
grant us all to see his face.**

G. B. Timms  
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*We sit.*

### **The Fourth Reading: John 2. 18 - 22**

*Reader* A reading from the Gospel according to John.

The Jews then said to Jesus, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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

*We stand and we sing:*

*Tune: Picardy – Let all mortal flesh*

**In his temple now behold him  
see the long-expected Lord;  
ancient prophets had foretold him,  
God hath now fulfilled his word,  
now to praise him, his redeemèd  
shall break forth with one accord.**



In the arms of her who bore him,  
Virgin pure, behold him lie,  
while his aged saints adore him,  
ere in faith and hope they die.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
See, th'incarnate God most high.

Jesus, by your presentation,  
when they blessed you, weak and poor,  
make us see our great salvation,  
seal us with your promise sure,  
and present us in your glory  
to your Father, cleansed and pure.

Prince and author of salvation,  
be your boundless love our theme!  
Jesus, praise to you be given,  
by the world you did redeem,  
with the Father and the Spirit,  
Lord of majesty supreme.

Henry J. Pye (1851)  
Public Domain

*We sit or kneel.*

## The Prayers

*Intercessor* Let us pray to the Father through Christ who is our light and life.

Father, your Christ is acclaimed as the glory of Israel:  
look in mercy on your Church, sharing his light.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Intercessor* Father, your Christ in his temple brings judgement on the world:  
look in mercy on the nations, who long for his justice.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Intercessor* Father, your Christ, who was rich, for our sakes became poor:  
look in mercy on the needy, suffering with him.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Intercessor* Father,  
your Christ is the one in whom faithful servants find their peace:  
look in mercy on the departed, that they may see your salvation.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Intercessor* Father, your Christ is revealed as the one destined to be rejected:  
look in mercy on us who now turn towards his passion.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Intercessor* Lord God, you kept faith with Simeon and Anna,  
and showed them the infant King.  
Give us grace to put all our trust in your promises,  
and the patience to wait for their fulfilment;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

*Minister* Believing the promises of God,  
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 Candlemas Procession

*Minister* Blessed are you, Lord our God,  
King of the universe.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Minister* Your light shines on us  
and all peoples shall see your glory.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Minister* You gave us Jesus to be the light of the world;  
he makes our darkness to be light.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Minister* Through the Holy Spirit your love burns within us,  
bearing witness to your truth.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Minister* As we bear your light,  
may our lips never cease to sing your praise.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*Minister* Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*All* **Blessed be God for ever.**

*We remain standing as we sing, most of the Nativity is removed and  
our candles are lit.*

*Tune: St Denio – Immortal, invisible*

**When candles are lighted on Candlemas Day  
the dark is behind us, and spring's on the way.  
The kings have departed, the shepherds have gone,  
the child and his parents are left on their own.**

**They go to the temple, obeying the law,  
and offer two pigeons, the gift of the poor.  
But Anna and Simeon recognise there  
the Christ-child who came at the turn of the year.**

**The old who have suffered and waited so long  
see hope for the world as they welcome the young.  
They gaze at God's wonderful answer to prayer,  
the joy of the Jews and the Gentiles' desire.**

**They see before Mary a heart-piercing grief,  
but trust is complete at the end of their life.  
For Mary will follow, with tears in her eyes,  
her Saviour and Son to the foot of the cross.**

**O Spirit of God, with like courage inspire  
your everyday saints who face up to despair.  
They pass through temptation, through failure, through death.  
When darkness descends, they plod onward in faith.**

**Like Anna, like Simeon, may they have trust,  
the eyes to see Jesus, and peace at the last.  
The candles invite us to praise and to pray  
when Christmas greets Easter on Candlemas Day.**

Elizabeth Cosnett  
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*Minister* Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light,  
pour into the hearts of your faithful people  
the brilliance of your eternal splendour,  
that we, who by these kindling flames  
light up this temple to your glory,  
may have the darkness of our souls dispelled,  
and so be counted worthy to stand before you  
in that eternal city where you live and reign,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*We remain standing and we sing the Nunc Dimittis, the Song of Simeon.*

*Cantor* Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.  
Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.  
That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,  
that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.  
Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.  
That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,  
that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

*Cantor* At last, all powerful Master, you give leave to your servant to go in  
peace according to your promise.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.  
Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.  
That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,  
that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

*Cantor* For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared for all nations.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.**  
**Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.**  
**That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,**  
**that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

*Cantor* The light to enlighten the Gentiles and give glory to Israel, your people.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.**  
**Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.**  
**That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,**  
**that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

*Cantor* Give glory to the Father almighty, to his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.**  
**Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.**  
**That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,**  
**that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

*Cantor* To the Spirit who dwells in our hearts, both now and for ever.  
Amen.  
**Save us, O Lord, while we're awake.**  
**Guard us, O Lord, when we're asleep.**  
**That we may watch with Christ and rest in peace,**  
**that we may watch with Christ and rest in peace.**

Words: The Grail  
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*Minister* Father, here we bring to an end our celebration  
of the Saviour's birth.

*All* **Help us, in whom he has been born,**  
**to live his life that has no end.**

*Minister* Here we have offered the Church's sacrifice of praise.  
*All* **Help us, who have received the bread of life,**  
**to be thankful for your gift.**

*Minister* Here we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.  
*All* **Help us, who have found the Lord in his temple,**  
**to trust in your eternal promises.**

*Minister* Here we have greeted the light of the world.  
*All* **Help us, who bear these candles,  
never to forsake the light of Christ.**

*Minister* Here we stand near the place of baptism.  
*All* **Help us, who are marked with the cross,  
to share the Lord's death and resurrection.**

*Minister* Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.  
*All* **Help us, for whom Lent is near,  
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

*Minister* Here we bless one another in your name.  
*All* **Help us, who now go in peace,  
to shine with your light in the world.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**For more information: [stmaryswalkley.co.uk](http://stmaryswalkley.co.uk)**

*Please be mindful of those who prefer to keep their distance  
from others at the moment.*

