

St Mary's Church, Walkley



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

*When peaceful silence lay over all,
and night was in the midst of her swift course:
from your royal throne, O God, down from the heavens,
leapt your almighty Word.*

Christmas Midnight Eucharist

24th December 2024

Welcome to St Mary's Church, Walkley

President: The Revd Canon Dr Alan Billings
Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr Alan Billings
Assistant Churchwarden on duty: Alexandra

The Gathering and Opening Hymn

We stand and we sing:

Cantor Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

**He came down to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.**

**And through all his wondrous childhood
day by day like us he grew;
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.**

**Still among the poor and lowly
hope in Christ is brought to birth,
with the promise of salvation
for the nations of the earth;
still in him our life is found
and our hope of heav'n is crowned.**

**And our eyes at last shall see him
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.**

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander and Michael Forster

President 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.

The Greeting

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

All **Amen.**

The Blessing of the Crib

President Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray
that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the
Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

President God our Father,
on this night
your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary
for us and for our salvation:
bless this crib,
which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth;
may all who see it be strengthened in faith
and receive the fullness of life he came to bring,
who is alive and reigns for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Confession and Absolution

Minister 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.

We keep a time of silence.

Minister God our Father,
you sent your Son full of grace and truth:
forgive our failure to receive him.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister Jesus our Saviour,
you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Minister Spirit of love,
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:
forgive the hardness of our hearts.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

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

All **Amen.**

The Gloria in Excelsis

Cantor Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,

All **Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

Cantor 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.

All **Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

Cantor 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.

All **Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

Cantor 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.

All **Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

The Collect

President Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration
that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

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.

All **Amen.**

We sit.

The Reading: Hebrews 1. 1 - 12

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.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,
'You are my Son;
today I have begotten you'?

Or again,
'I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son'?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
'Let all God's angels worship him.'

Of the angels he says,
'He makes his angels winds,
and his servants flames of fire.'

But of the Son he says,
'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'

And,
'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;
they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like clothing;
like a cloak you will roll them up,
and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same,
and your years will never end.'

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

The Gradual Hymn

*We stand and we sing hymn number 253 from the green book.
During the hymn we turn to face the processional cross as the book
of the Gospels moves to the middle of the people.*

The Gospel Reading: John 1. 1 - 14

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

All **Alleluia.**

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

All **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.

Minister This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon

We stand.

The Creed

President Let us declare our faith in God,

All

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.**

Amen.

We sit or kneel.

The Prayers of Intercession

Intercessor Holy God:
All **Hear our prayer.**

Or another response is used.

Intercessor 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.
All **Amen.**

We stand.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President This holy night the angels sang,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

President The peace of the Lord be always with you
All **and also with you.**

Minister Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*We remain in our seats, sharing the peace through waves to those
around us.*

The Offertory Hymn

*We stand and we sing hymn number 377 from the green book as
the altar is prepared. If you would like to support St Mary's,
donations can be made after the service at the back of church using
the collection plate or contactless card giving station. If you would
like to give regularly to St Mary's please speak to the Treasurer, or
one of the Churchwardens.*

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord is here.

All **His Spirit is with us.**

President Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President 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:

Cantor Holy Holy Holy Lord

All **Holy Holy Holy Lord**

Cantor God of power and God of might

All **God of power and God of might**

Cantor Heaven and earth are full of your glory

All **Heaven and earth are full of your glory**

Cantor Hosanna in the highest

All **Hosanna in the highest**

Cantor Blessed is he who comes

All **Blessed is he who comes**

Cantor In the name of the Lord most High

All **In the name of the Lord most High**

Cantor Hosanna

All **Hosanna**

Cantor Hosanna

All **Hosanna**

Cantor Hosanna in the highest

All **Hosanna in the highest**

President We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Minister Great is the mystery of faith:

Cantor Dying you destroyed our death

All **Dying you destroyed our death**

Cantor Rising you restored our life

All **Rising you restored our life**

Cantor Lord Jesus come

All **Lord Jesus come**

Cantor Lord Jesus come

All **Lord Jesus come**

Cantor Come again in glory

All **Come again in glory**

President Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Mary, Mark, John and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

We sit or kneel.

The Lord's Prayer

President Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

President We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

All **God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

The Giving of Communion

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

The president will give instructions on how to come forward for communion and on returning to our seats. All are welcome to come to front for the bread and wine or a blessing. If you would like a blessing please keep your arms folded across your chest at you approach the front.

We are now able to receive the wine as well as the bread. The president will dip the wafer in the wine before giving it to you. Gluten free wafers are available, please ask at the altar.

During the distribution the cantor sings:

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht
Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Hirten erst kundgemacht
Durch der Engel Halleluja,
Tönt es laut von fern und nah:
Christ, der Retter ist da!
Christ, der Retter ist da!*

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht
Lieb' aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund'.
Christ, in deiner Geburt!
Christ, in deiner Geburt!*

We sing hymn numbers 444 and 65 from the green book.

The Prayer after Communion

President Let us pray.

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.

All **To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

All **We praise and thank you, creator God,
for you have not left us alone.
Every year we celebrate your coming as Emmanuel.
Every eucharist celebrates his death,
in the bread we break and the cup we share,
until that day when we shall see you face to face,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We stand.

The Blessing

President May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon us his children.

All **Amen.**

President May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill us with joy and peace.

All **Amen.**

President May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,
give us grace to carry the good news of Christ.

All **Amen.**

President And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.
All **Amen.**

The Closing Hymn

We remain standing and we sing during which we turn to face the back of church as the robed ministers process.

**O come all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the King of angels:
 *O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 Christ the Lord!***

**God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:
 O come, let us adore him...
See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:
 *O come, let us adore him...***

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
in the highest:
 *O come, let us adore him...***

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

Words: Latin, 18th century
Tune: Adeste fideles

The Dismissal

President Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.
All **Glory, thanks and praise to God.**

Merry Christmas!

For more information: stmaryswalkley.co.uk

