

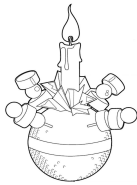


ST LAURENCE CHURCH

Diocese of Canterbury

**All Age Family Communion
4th February 2024**

Christingle (Candlemas)



The Zoom details are :

Meeting ID: 457 244 0784

Passcode: 5i1UCa

**The Sidespeople today are:
Charles and Sarah Vernede**

As we gather and prepare to join in worship, music is played on the organ.

Opening Hymn

Blest are the pure in heart,
for they shall see our God;
the secret of the Lord is theirs,
their soul is Christ's abode.

The Lord, who left the heavens
our life and peace to bring,
to dwell in lowliness with men,
their pattern and their King;

Still to the lowly soul
he doth himself impart,

and for his dwelling and his throne
chooseth the pure in heart.

Lord, we thy presence seek;
may ours this blessing be;
give us a pure and lowly heart,
a temple meet for thee.

Please sit:

Greeting and Welcome

Brothers and sisters in Christ, welcome to our Christingle Service today. We have come together in the presence of God our Father to rejoice in the gift of Jesus to us as the light of the world. In this service we hear and receive the story and message of the coming of Christ, and we offer to God our thanksgiving in prayer and song.

The Christingle speaks of the world in which we live, and we pray today for all Christians, that we may be mirrors of the light of Christ in the world; for those who do not know the light of Christ in their lives; for those who bear responsibility in our world for government, education, commerce, and communication; for all children and for young people who lack the basic necessities of food, shelter, and clothing; for those who are in special need, the sick and anxious, the lonely and fearful, and for those who are bereaved.

Opening Prayer

Father of light, from whom comes every good and perfect gift: keep us in the light of Christ, to shine in your world, that all may believe in you through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer before receiving the

Word of God — Before we read, we pray together

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scriptures, may your Word be heard; In the meditations of our hearts, may your Word be known; and in the faithfulness of our lives, may your Word be shown. Amen.

First Reading Malachi 3:1-5

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi read by Jane Cooper

"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty.

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings

of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.

"So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.

Gradual Hymn

Father, Lord of all creation,
ground of being, life and love;
height and depth beyond
description

only life in You can prove:

You are mortal life's

dependence:

thought, speech, sight are ours
by grace;

Yours is every hour's existence,
Sovereign Lord of time and
space.

Jesus Christ, the Man for others,
we, Your people, make our
prayer:

give us grace to love as brothers
all whose burdens we can share.

Where Your name binds us
together

You, Lord Christ, will surely be;
where no selfishness can sever
there Your love may all men see.

Holy Spirit, rushing, burning
wind and flame of Pentecost,

fire our hearts afresh with
yearning
to regain what we have lost.
May Your love unite our action,
nevermore to speak alone:
God, in us abolish faction,
God, through us Your love make
known.

Reading - Luke 2:22-40

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.'

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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, O Christ

Reflection

**Father, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

**Jesus, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

**Spirit, We adore You.
Lay our lives before You.
How we love You.**

*We gather in a circle around the
Church in preparation for the
Lighting of the Christingles*

Hymn

Jesus bids us shine, with a clear,
pure light,
Like a little candle burning in the
night;
In this world of darkness we must
shine,
You in your small corner, and I in
mine.

Jesus bids us shine, first of all for
Him;
Well He sees and knows it if our
light is dim;
He looks down from heaven,
sees us shine,
You in your small corner, and I in
mine.

Jesus bids us shine, then, for all
around

Many kinds of darkness in this
world abound -
Sin, and want, and sorrow: we
must shine,
You in your small corner, and I in
mine.

Jesus bids us shine, as we work
for Him,
Bringing those that wander from
the paths of sin;
He will ever help us, if we shine,
You in your small corner, and I in
mine.

Prayers led by Anne Wheelhouse

On this feast of Candlemas, we
pray for children growing up in
families struggling to make ends
meet.

Lord Jesus, it hurts to think about
this. Part of us would rather not.
We'd rather look away. Help us to
reach out, and come alongside
them. We thank you for the
Christingle and the ribbon that
represents your love wrapping
itself around the world.

We ask you to wrap your loving
arms around each child in need
today.

Be close to all the children we see
on television screens in war torn
areas who are frightened and do
not have enough of the basic
things they need.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the work of The Children's Society. Bless their projects to help children and their families. Help them to continue to challenge us to care, give and speak up on behalf of others. Bless every area of their work. Uphold their staff in your love and may every child who comes into contact with them continue to receive the love and practical care they need.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the work The Children's Society to raise awareness about those in difficult situations, and explain the effects new policies might have on those children who don't have a voice. Help those with power to hear what we are saying to put children and their childhoods above power, popularity or money.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves and for our local community. We pray for our schools, and those in special need of our prayers. Lord, we can't love like you do in our own strength.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We pray for all those who are sick and suffering: Robbie Robinson, Eleanor Ash, David Winstone, Jan Edwards, Jill Fitzpatrick, John

Tanner, Hilary Deller, Georgie Whitaker, Brian Elliott.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We remember all those recently departed: Helen Whitaker, John Hunt, Christian Jervis-Read, Raymond George Collins, Nigel Lemon, Ray Wicks and we pray for those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: William Crouch, Michael French, Charles Bladon, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Jane Coleman, Michael Buss, Albert Collins, Victor Botha, Joan Maskell, Brian Kingcome, Martin Chubb, Desna Harries, Christobel Van der Hoeven, Leslie Corfield, Marjorie Addyman, Norman Sheldon, Christian Solari.

Come, Lord Jesus,
hear our prayer.

We bring to the Lord our own particular prayers

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

We Share God's Peace
Shalom, Shalom,
May peace be with you,
Throughout your days;
In all that you do,
May peace be with you,
Shalom, Shalom.
(Repeat)

We return to our seats

Hymn

*A collection in aid of the
Children Society will be made
during the singing of this hymn*

Round orange, round orange you
serve as a sign

That God made the round world
with purpose divine

***The power of love is always
the same:***

***Be glad, give thanks, rejoice in
God's name.***

Ripe fruits freely given, this truth
you recall,
When God hands out presents
they're meant for all.

The power

Red ribbon, you tell of the
bloodshed and pain
Which led to forgiveness when
Jesus was slain.

The power

Bright candle, the message you
carry is clear,
The true light from God found a
home with us here.

The power

Christingle, Christingle, shine out
in the night
To kindle among us that
marvellous light.

The power

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 him thanks
and praise**

Why do we give thanks and
praise at this table?

**We give thanks for all that God
has done for us.**

God the Father created the
heavens, the earth and
everything in them; and created
us in his own image.

Let us give thanks and praise

Christ our Lord became human
like us, and died to save us.

Let us give thanks and praise

God sent the Holy Spirit to gather
us together as the people of God

Let us give thanks and praise

So come let us join together to
worship this God who loves

We sing:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of
your glory.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna
in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in
the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna
in the highest.**

Please sit/kneel

We praise you Father that before
Jesus our Saviour suffered and

died, he gave us this holy meal to share and told us to continue it until he comes again.

Why do we eat bread together at this table?

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Why do we drink from the cup together at this table?

In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup, saying. "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me"

What do we remember at this table?

We remember the Father's gracious love for us, Christ's death and resurrection for us, and the Spirit's tender care for us.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

We sing:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Merciful Father, pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. In eating and drinking together may we be made one with Christ and with one another. **Amen.**

The Fraction

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

Though we are many, we are one body

The Agnus Dei

We sing together

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

The Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

A Prayer for those joining us on Zoom who are making their Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.

The Distribution of Communion

The Chalice bearers today are:

Andrea Higgins and Alison Parsons

Communion Hymn

Be still for the presence of the Lord,
The Holy One is here
Come bow before Him now,
With reverence and fear
In Him no sin is found
We stand on holy ground
Be still for the presence of the Lord,

The Holy One is here

Be still for the glory of the Lord,
Is shining all around
He burns with holy fire,
With splendor He is crowned
How awesome is the sight
Our radiant King of light
Be still for the glory of the Lord,
Is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord,
Is moving in this place
He comes to cleanse and heal,
To minister His grace
No work too hard for Him
In faith receive from Him
Be still for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place
Be still for the power of the Lord
Is moving in this place

Notices

Final Prayer and Blessing

May the light that is Jesus lead you always.

May your heart be more for the people around you than yourself.
May your resolve be to reach out in love and come alongside those in need with God's generous compassion.

And may your life be a witness of the blessing that comes with giving,
for the sake of all God's children,
and for the glory of God's name.

Amen.

Hymn

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:

in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
a second Adam to the fight and
to the rescue came.

O wisest love! that flesh and
blood,
which did in Adam fail,
should strive afresh against the
foe,
should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace
should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and his very self,
and essence all-divine.

O generous love! that he, who
smote

in Man for man the foe,
the double agony in Man
for man should undergo;

And in the garden secretly,
and on the cross on high,
should teach his brethren, and in-
spire
to suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the
height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Let us bless the Lord
Thanks be to God.

May the divine assistance remain
with us always.

**And with all our brothers and
sisters in Christ.**

May the souls of the faithful de-
parted through the mercy of God,
rest in peace.

And rise in glory. Amen.

**We sit to listen to the organ
voluntary - Prelude in G - Bach**

***A very BIG thank you to Tesco
Hawkhurst for their very gener-
ous donation of the oranges
for this Christingle service.***

NOTICES

BOWLES LODGE – Please join us on Wednesdays at 10 am.

SERVERS WANTED – if you are interested in becoming an Altar server. Please speak to Mrs Rachel Elliott or Father Rodney who will explain more about the role.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER-

On Friday 1st March St. Laurence is hosting World Day of Prayer 2024. 12.00 – 2.00pm. Service prepared by the Christian Women of Palestine. 'I beg you, bear with one another in love'.

12.00 Lenten lunch

12.30 Short talk (speaker tbc)

1.15 Service

Lunch will be served at 12 noon followed by a talk on Palestine and a service, ending at 2pm.

Please support this ecumenical event.

Offers of help with food are welcomed. Please sign up.

Norma Crowe,

AT YOUR SERVICE

Vicar: The Revd. Canon Rodney Dreyer
01580 754459

Churchwardens:
Miss Alison Jones
01580 755705
Mrs. Liz Hatcher
01580 712099

Organist:
Dr. Charlotte O' Neill
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Safeguarding:
Mrs Jane Cooper
07825044877