

*Mortlake with East Sheen Team Ministry*  
*St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake*

*A service of Spiritual  
Communion for Midnight*



*24th December 2020 at 11.30pm*

## ❖ THE GATHERING

Opening Hymn (recorded by St Martins singers)

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  
he would honour and obey,  
love and watch the lowly Maiden,  
in whose gentle arms he lay:  
Christian children all must be  
mild, obedient, good as he.

Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
where like stars his children crowned  
all in white shall wait around.

*Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)*

### The Greeting

In the name of the Father and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

I bring you good news of great joy:  
a Saviour has been born to you. Alleluia.  
**To us a child is born, to us a Son is given. Alleluia.**

*Informal words of welcome follow.*

### Prayers of Penitence

*We sit or kneel; silence is kept*

Christ the Light of the world has come  
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.

Let us turn to the light and confess our sins.

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

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:  
forgive our selfishness and rejection of your ways.

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

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

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

### Absolution

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

**Amen.**

### The Collect

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

*Silence is kept.*

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty  
Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:  
give to the earth the peace that we long for and fill our hearts with  
the joy of heaven through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.. **Amen**

## ❖ The Liturgy of the Word

### Old Testament Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn** (recorded by St Martins singers)

Silent night, holy night.  
All is calm, all is bright,  
round yon virgin mother and child;  
holy infant, so tender and mild ,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night.  
Shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar  
heav'nly hosts sing alleluia  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night.  
Son of God, love's pure light,  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace:  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

*Josef Mohr (1792-1848) Tr. J.F. Young (1820-1885)*

### Gospel Reading Luke 2: 8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### The Sermon

*After the sermon, a short period of silent reflection is kept.*

### Prayers of Intercession

*The response to the words 'Holy God' is 'Hear our prayer'*

### The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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 forever.  
Amen**

### The Peace

*We stand and the President introduces the Peace*

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

### Spiritual Communion

Loving Lord, we know that you are with us wherever we are and that the Christmas message of light shining in the darkness speaks to our hearts especially in these difficult times. Since we cannot at this moment receive you in the bread and wine of the Eucharist, we ask you to open our eyes to your presence now in these quiet night time moments and in our daily lives, leading and guiding us in the week ahead. May we know that though we are physically separated from one another, we are united in your Spirit and we can never be separated from you. **Amen**

*A time of silence follows as we open our hearts to God.*

Anthem (recorded by St Martins singers) O holy night  
J.S. Dwight (1813-1893)) based on Placide Cappeau (1808-1877)

Closing Prayers

*The president prays the closing prayer*

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. To him be glory both now and for ever.

**Amen**

❖ **THE DISMISSAL**

The Blessing

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

**Amen.**

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

**Amen.**

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

**Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

Closing Hymn (recorded by St Martins singers)

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:

*Chorus*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:  
'Glory to God in the highest:'

*Chorus*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;  
Jesu, to Thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing.

*Chorus*

Adeste fideles Latin anon

Sending Out

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

Organ Voluntary:

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