

PARISH OF ESHER
Christ Church, Esher with St George's, West End

Choral Evensong for the Feast of Candlemas



*'A light to lighten the Gentiles
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.'*

Luke 2.32

Introduction to the Service

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 recognised 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.

Opening Voluntary

Pastorale

Charles Wesley Jr (1757-1834)

The Introit

Please remain seated while the choir sings.

**Kindle a flame to lighten the dark,
and take all fear away**

John L Bell (b. 1949)

Words of Welcome and Introduction

The minister greets the people.

Hymn

Please stand to sing the hymn.

Light's abode, celestial Salem

Light's abode, celestial Salem,
vision whence true peace doth spring,
brighter than the heart can fancy,
mansion of the highest King;
O how glorious are the praises
which of thee the prophets sing!

There for ever and for ever
alleluia is outpoured;
for unending, for unbroken,
is the feast-day of the Lord;
all is pure and all is holy
that within thy walls is stored.

There no cloud or passing vapour
dims the brightness of the air;
endless noon-day, glorious noon-day,
from the Sun of suns is there;
there no night brings rest from labour,
for unknown are toil and care.

Laud and honour to the Father,
laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,
ever Three and ever One,
consubstantial, co- eternal,
while unending ages run.

Words: Thomas à Kempis, trans. J M Neale (1858)

Tune: REGENT SQUARE, Henry Smart (1813-1879)

The Sentence of Scripture

Mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared
before the face of all people.

Luke 2.31

The Preces

O Lord, open thou our lips:
and our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us:
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Praise ye the Lord:
The Lord's name be praised.

Psalm 24 - *Domini est terra*

Please be seated, but stand for the final Gloria.

The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is,
the compass of the world and they that dwell therein.
For he hath founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the floods.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord,
or who shall stand in his holy place?"

"He that hath clean hands and a pure heart,
and that hath not set his mind upon vain things,
nor sworn to his neighbour deceitfully.

He shall receive blessing from the Lord
and recompense from the God of his salvation."

Such is the portion of them that seek him,
even of them that seek thy face, O God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
that the King of glory may come in.

"Who is the King of glory?"

"It is the Lord, strong and mighty, even the Lord, mighty in battle."

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, O everlasting doors;
That the King of glory may come in.

"Who is the King of glory?"

"Even the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Please stand.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Chant setting: Sir Joseph Barnby (1838-1896)

The First Lesson

Please be seated.

Hebrews 2.14-end

Since the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Magnificat

Please stand.

Luke 1.46-55: The Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour;
for he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;
for he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his Name;
and his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.
He hath shewèd strength with his arm,
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel,
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Canticle setting: Daniel Purcell (1664-1717)

The Second Lesson

Please be seated.

Luke 2.22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus 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.

Nunc Dimittis

Please stand.

Luke 2.29-32: The Song of Simeon

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;
to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen.

Canticle setting: Daniel Purcell (1664-1717)

The Apostles' Creed

All remain standing and face the altar.

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

The Responses

The Lord be with you:
and with thy Spirit.

Let us pray.

Please kneel or sit.

Lord, have mercy upon us;
Christ, have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.*

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us:
and grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the King:
and mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness:
and make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people:
and bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord:
because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us:
and take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

Setting: William Smith (1603-1645)

The Collects

Almighty and everliving God,
we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that,
as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple,
in substance of our flesh,
so may we be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts,
by the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

O God, from whom all holy desires,
all good counsels and all just works do proceed;
Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give;
that both, our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments,
and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies
may pass our time in rest and quietness;
through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

Lighten our darkness,
we beseech thee, O Lord:
and by thy great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Anthem

Please remain seated while the choir sings the anthem.

When to the temple Mary went

When to the temple Mary went,
and brought the Holy Child,
Him did the aged Simeon see,
as it had been revealed.
He took up Jesus in his arms
and blessing God he said:
in peace I now depart, my Saviour having seen,
the Hope of Israel, the Light of men.

Help now thy servants, gracious Lord,
that we may ever be
as once the faithful Simeon was,
rejoicing but in Thee;
and when we must from earth departure take,
may gently fall asleep and with Thee wake.

Words: From St Luke's Gospel, trans. Revd John Troutbeck (1832–1899)

Music: Johannes Eccard (1553-1611)

The Sermon

The Revd Jonathan Andrew

The Prayers of Intercession

If you wish, please join in the sung responses.

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Music: Peter Lea-Cox (b. 1945)

Hymn

Please stand to sing the hymn.

Christ is the one who calls

Christ is the one who calls,
the one who loved and came,
to whom by right it falls
to bear the highest Name:
and still today
our hearts are stirred
to hear his word
and walk his way.

Christ is the one who seeks,
to whom our souls are known.
The word of love he speaks
can wake a heart of stone;
for at that sound
the blind can see,
the slave is free,
the lost are found.

Christ is the one who sends,
his story to declare;
who calls his servants friends
and gives them news to share.
His truth proclaim
in all the earth,
his matchless worth
and saving Name.

*Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)
Tune: LOVE UNKNOWN, John Ireland (1879-1962)*

Blessing of the Candles

*Please remain standing and carefully hold your candle
as our sidespeople spread the light among us.*

God our Father, source of all light,
today you revealed to Simeon
your Light of revelation to the nations.
Bless these candles and make them holy.
May we who carry them to praise your glory
walk in the path of goodness
and come to the light that shines for ever.

Amen.

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.

Amen.

The Responsory

Father, here we bring to an end our celebration
of the Saviour's birth.

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

Here we have offered the Church's sacrifice of praise.

**Help us, who have received the bread of life,
to be thankful for your gift.**

Here we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.

**Help us, who have found the Lord in his temple,
to trust in your eternal promises.**

Here we have greeted the light of the world.

**Help us, who extinguish these candles,
never to forsake the light of Christ.**

The congregation extinguish their individual candles.

Here we stand in this ancient place
where our forebears were washed in the waters of baptism.

**Help us, who are marked with the cross,
to share the Lord's death and resurrection.**

Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.

**Help us, for whom Lent is near,
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

Here we bless one another in your name.

**Help us, who now go in peace,
to shine with your light in the world.**

Thanks be to God.

Amen.

Hymn

Longing for light, we wait in darkness

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see:

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make use your living voice:

Refrain

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed:

Refrain

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living ston:

Refrain

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come:

Refrain

Words: Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957)
Tune: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell

Closing Voluntary

Cornet Voluntary in G, Op. 1 no. 5

William Walond (1725-1770)

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