

Welcome to the Parish Church of St Mark

Serving the people of Broomhill & Broomhall

THE FEAST OF BETHLEHEM



A Service of Christian Hospitality
also known as the Eucharist
or the Holy Communion

30 December 2012 at 10.00 am

Welcome

Welcome and greetings, especially if you are new to St Mark's. May you soon discover what you are seeking and find companions for life's journey. This communion is more complete with you being a part of it.



To use the *Induction Loop*, please select the *T Setting* on your hearing aid. We ask that *mobile phones* and *paggers* be switched off or set to silent mode. LARGE PRINT versions of worship materials are available.

Before the service begins, we are all invited to share in a few moments of quietness in preparation for worship.

About this service

The seasons of Christmas and Epiphany invite us to ponder not only the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth, but also the meaning and significance of incarnation – of how it is that 'Eternity is in love with the productions of time' (William Blake).

As the evangelists recognised, the wonder and vulnerability of new birth draw us into this mystery by challenging our sense of what constitutes power and how authority manifests itself when motivated by love.

Preparing for worship

Now burn, new born to the world,
Double-naturèd name,
The heaven-flung, heart-fleshed, maiden-furled
Miracle-in-Mary-of-flame,
Mid-numbered He in three of the thunder-throne!
Not a dooms-day dazzle in his coming
nor dark as he came;
Kind, but royally reclaiming his own;
A released shower, let flash to the shire,
not a lightening of fire hard-hurled.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89).

Gathering

Organ Voluntary.

Welcome

Carol

OF THE FATHER'S love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.

At his word they were created;
he commanded; it was done:
heaven and earth and depths of ocean
in their threefold order one;
all that grows beneath the shining
of the light of moon and sun,
evermore and evermore.

O that birth for ever blessèd!
when the Virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bare the Saviour of our race,
and the babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heaven, adore him;
angel-hosts, his praises sing;
powers, dominions bow before him,
and extol our God and King:
let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert ring,
evermore and evermore.

*Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-410),
trans J M Neale (1818-66) & H W Baker (1821-77).
Tune: Divinum Mysterium (Piae cantones).*

Prayers of Approach

The Lord be with you:
and also with you.

AUTHOR OF LIGHT,
you bring to light things hidden in darkness
and know the shadows of our hearts:
cleanse and renew us by your Spirit,
that we may walk in the light
and glorify your name;
through Jesus Christ,
the Light of the world. Amen.

Christ, the Light of the world,
has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts.
Let his light reveal the poverty of our humanity
and our potential for revealing the glory of God.

Pause for reflection.

Your servant Mary accepted your call
to be the mother of Jesus.
Forgive our disobedience to your will.

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Your Son our Saviour
was born in poverty in a manger.
Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

The shepherds left their flocks
to go to Bethlehem.
Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Prayers for an Inclusive Church.

May the God of forgiveness
heal you of all that harms you
and lead you into life eternal. **Amen.**

Gloria

ANGELS, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story,
now proclaim messiah's birth:

*Come and worship, Christ the new-born king
Come and worship, worship Christ, the new-born king.*

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light: *Refrain*

Sages, leave your contemplations;
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations;
ye have seen his natal star: *Refrain*

Saints before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord, descending,
in his temple shall appear: *Refrain*

Though an infant now we view him,
he shall fill his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him;
every knee shall then bow down: *Refrain*

James Montgomery (1771-1854). Tune: Iris.

Collect

Let us pray. *(please remain standing)*

Lord, your wisdom echoes
in the child's question,
the raw insight of youth:
renew our curiosity
and deepen our desire
for a truth that lives
and grows before you;
through Jesus Christ,
the Question and the Answer. **Amen.**

*Prayers for an
Inclusive Church.*

Attending

Reading – Colossians 3. 12 – 17, read by Caroline Fisher

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

AS GOD'S CHOSEN ONES, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Let us wait upon the Lord;
in whose word is our hope.

Psalm 130.5.

Pause for reflection.

Carol

WHO WOULD THINK that what was needed
to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army,
proud in purpose proved in worth?
Who would think despite derision,
that a child might lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

Shepherds watch and wise men wonder,
monarchs scorn and angels sing;
such a place as none would reckon
hosts a holy, helpless thing;
stable beasts and by-passed strangers
watch a baby laid in hay:
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

Centuries of skill and science
span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether,
with such progress we improve.
While the human lot we ponder,
lest our hopes and humour fray,
God surprises earth with heaven,
coming here on Christmas Day.

*John L Bell (b 1949) & Graham Maule (b 1958).
Tune: Scarlet Ribbons.*

Gospel – Luke 2. 41 – 52.

The good news is proclaimed from the heart of the worshipping community.

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

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

NOW EVERY YEAR his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' ⁴⁹ He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – The Vicar.

Followed by a period of silence for reflection.

Responding

Prayers of Solidarity & Concern, led by Jane Padget

The following chant is sung at the beginning and end of the intercessions.

Through our lives and by our prayers ,
your Kingdom come.

Wild Goose Resource Group.

After each petition.

Light of the world.

Bring healing, bring peace.

At the end.

Christ, Light of the world.

**May your healing peace
bring hope to our troubled world;
be born in us, we pray. Amen.**

Greeting of Peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:
and his name is called the Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there shall be no end.

Isaiah 9.6.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

*Gestures of peace and goodwill are shared, especially with those
who are unfamiliar or from whom we are estranged.*

Carol

A collection is taken for the ministry of St Mark's. If you are a taxpayer and are not currently a member of the church's planned giving scheme, please place your gift in one of the envelopes provided, writing your name and address on the front. Thank you.

SEE HIM LYING on a bed of straw:
a draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore-
the prince of glory is his name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord of love again:
just as poor as was the stable then,
the prince of glory when he came.*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
show where Jesus in the manger lies;
shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise
to see the saviour of the world!

Chorus

Angels, sing again the song you sang,
sing the glory of God's gracious plan;
sing that Bethl'em's little baby can
be the saviour of us all.

Chorus

Mine are riches, from your poverty,
from your innocence, eternity;
mine, forgiveness by your death for me,
child of sorrow for my joy.

Chorus

*Michael Perry (1942-96).
Tune: Calypso Carol.*

Abiding

Preparation

Tokens of our response to God, bread and wine, and the collection, are offered.

We bring to this table symbols of our lives.

**Bread to sustain us,
wine to gladden the hearts
and money, the fruit of our labours.**

As wise men and shepherds worshipped the Prince of Peace,
these are our offerings of thanksgiving and praise.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray. *(please sit or kneel)*

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 thanks and praise.

We thank you loving God,
for you did not abandon us or stand far off
but came in awful nearness with the urgency of love.

In creation's dawn,
you gave birth to all that is;
to the people of Israel
you revealed yourself a Father
and shared our human story.

Now we praise you
for the Word made flesh
born of Mary's body,
nurtured in her womb,
cradled in her arms,
greeted by her song.

The fullness of God dwells in his flesh,
a touch of welcome for the one thrown aside,
good news of bread for the hungry and poor,
a shepherd to find those who are lost.

Now we are caught up,
body and soul resound
with the glory of music divine,
echoing through the hallowed earth:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of truth and love,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he, O blessed is he,
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Setting from 'St Anne's Mass,' by James Macmillan (b 1959).

We ask that your Holy Spirit
will fall upon us and upon these gifts
that these fragile, earthly things
may be to us the body and blood
of our lord and brother, Jesus Christ;
who, on the night that he was betrayed,
gathered with his friends for a meal that tasted of freedom.

Calling them to his table,
he took bread, gave thanks,
broke it and said:
'This is my body,
which is given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

In the same way after supper,
he took the cup, saying:
'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, whenever you drink it,
to remember me.'

As on that night, so here and now
he offers himself in touch and taste
beyond all words can hold.

**Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your people
and kindle in us the fire of your love.**

Therefore we come in memory and hope,
responding to your call
and the promise that echoes from the dawn of all time.

May mind and heart be held
by your self-giving sacrifice
as, celebrating your birth,
we catch a glimpse of your destiny
in gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Draw us into the intensity of your love
that your life may be renewed in us
and our lives may present you to the world. **Amen.**

Prayers for an Inclusive Church.

Lord's Prayer & Communion

Rejoicing in God's presence among us,
we pray as Jesus taught us.

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 bread is broken.

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

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Words of invitation follow.

Draw near to Bethlehem,
House of Bread,
where hungry hearts are satisfied,
seeking souls find wisdom,
and failing faith is kindled back to life.

**Today, God has turned the world upside-down
and restored the dignity of all people.
Alleluia!**

Everyone is invited to share in the communion through receiving the bread and wine or if preferred, a prayer of blessing. Please approach the altar rail with those around you. Gluten-free bread rolls are used.

During administration, we sing together:

O LITTLE TOWN of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love;
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God our King,
and peace upon the earth.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Phillips Brooks (1835-93).

Tune: Forest Green.

At the conclusion, silence is shared.

Prayers of Commitment

Let us pray.

**GOD of the stable,
God of the manger,
we thank you for revealing your glory
in the humility of our humanity
and in ordinary things made holy:
we offer you our lives in the service
of those who walk in darkness
and those who have seen a great light;
that Christ may be found among us
and his beauty transfigure the world. Amen.**

Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the sages,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;

and the blessing of God,
Creator, Christ and Sacred Spirit,
be upon you and those whom you love,
both living and departed, now and always. **Amen.**

Carol

HARK, THE herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace of earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
joyful, all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:
hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Refrain.

Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth
born to give us second birth.

Refrain.

*Charles Wesley (1701-88).
Tune: Mendelssohn.*

Commission *(please face the back of church)*

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost, to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Organ voluntary.

*Refreshments are served in the lounge.
Everyone is invited!*

Wishing you
Peace and Joy!



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