

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

Christmas Day 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

The straw was damp:
it had cradled life before
and wore its marks.

Now a fresh confusion,
wrapped in chaff and wonder,
welcomed by muted voices,
was birthed.

The door opened,
a spark leapt through,
enfleshed within a woman's faith,
fathered, yet beyond creating;
God comes too close.

Angels did their work:
shepherds, led not leading;
rich men, abandoning their crowns;
but not all were there.

Eternity's silence had been disturbed:
in this becoming,
we too must play our part.

Gathering

Organ Voluntary: 'Puer Nobis Nascitur,' Nicolas Le Bègue (1630-1702).

Choral Introit – *Gaudete! Piae Cantiones* 1582.

Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus (Rejoice, rejoice! Christ is born).

At the Crib

The service begins at the crib. Please turn to face the back of church.

And the Word became flesh and abided among us,
and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

Let us pray.

God of time and eternity,
as we gather to celebrate the birth of our infant saviour
and to ponder once more the mystery of incarnation,
open our hearts and minds to Christ's presence,
fill us with wonder and joy
and inspire us to live out the Christmas message;
in Jesus' holy name, we pray. **Amen.**

Processional Carol

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; *Refrain.*

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

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing. *Refrain.*

*John F Wade (1711-86).
Tune: Adeste Fideles.*

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.

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

Gloria

GLORY TO GOD, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.
Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father
Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.

We worship you,
Glory in the highest,
give you thanks,
Glory in the highest,
praise you for your glory.
Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.

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,
Have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer,
Receive our prayer.

Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.
Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.

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 glory of God the Father
Glory to God, glory in the highest.
Peace to his people, peace on earth.

*from Coventry Music
by Peter Jones*

Collect

Let us pray.

God of David's fragile house
of hope and expectation:
in the time of empires,
your word is born to those
who have no place
and sung to those
who watch in the wild;
may his birth unsettle our world
with hidden glory and untold peace;
through Jesus Christ, the Child of Promise. **Amen.**

Prayers for an Inclusive Church.

Attending

Reading – Isaiah 9.2-7 read by Alice Newitt

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

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. ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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 onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

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

Psalms 130.5.

Carol

1
SEE AMID the winter's snow,
born for us on earth below,
see the tender Lamb appears,
promised from eternal years.

3
Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
what your joyful news today?
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
on the lonely mountain steep?

*Hail, thou ever-blessèd morn,
hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

2
Lo, within a manger lies
he who built the starry skies;
he who, throned in heights sublime,
sits amid the cherubim.

4
'As we watched at dead of night,
lo, we saw a wondrous light:
angels, singing 'peace on earth',
told us of the Saviour's birth.'

Edward Caswall (1814-78). Tune: Humility.

Gospel – Luke 2. 1 – 14.

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.

IN THOSE DAYS a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Christmas Presents

*Young people share their Christmas delights (so far!) with Ian, Shan and Sue.
Sue offers a brief Christmas message.*

Responding

Prayers of Solidarity & Concern, led by Liz Wallis.

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.

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.

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:

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful,
in the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God, do not be afraid;
lift up your voices: the Lord is near,
lift up your voices: the Lord is near.

Taizé.

Afterwards, the choir will sing a selection of seasonal carols.

At the conclusion, silence is shared.

Venturing

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.

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

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.

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

*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: 'Sortie in E-flat,' Louis Lefébure-Wély (1817-69).

*Festive refreshments are served in the lounge.
Everyone is invited!*

Wishing you
Peace and Joy!



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The following sources have been used in compiling this service: 'Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England,' and 'Common Worship: Times and Seasons,' copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000 & 2006; 'Prayers for an Inclusive Church,' by Steven Shakespeare; 'Shine on, Star of Bethlehem,' edited by Geoffrey Duncan; and locally produced texts. The musical setting for the liturgy is the 'St Anne's Mass,' by James Macmillan. Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Anglicized Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995. Hymns and songs are reproduced under Church Copyright Licence Number 294846. The image on the front cover, entitled 'Nativity with Shepherds and Animals', is by David Jones (1895-74).