



WELCOME...

...to this church in the Tring team parish as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, and the subsequent realisation of what that birth means.

In St John's Gospel we hear that "the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory". Christmas is at the very heart of our faith. It is when we hear how God chose to be revealed by being born as one of us.

There is a sense of wonder and amazement as we greet our Lord. In our worship we are called to travel with the shepherds to wonder at the new born child, to join with the angels as we sing God's praises, and to follow the Christ child to his destiny as we share in communion. It is for this reason that we pray, in the second of our Eucharistic prayers "Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal." As we hear the Christmas story once more we are eager to have our lives transformed.

The season after Christmas is known as Epiphany, which marks a new start after the Christmas break. It is a time of realisation. In our own journeys of faith we have moments of epiphany, moments when we realise what God is calling us to be.

The season brings together the Magi, the Baptism of Christ, and the Miracle of Cana - three vivid signs that turn the Church towards reflecting upon the consequences of Christ's coming among us. We move from realising who the Christ is to what he did. We are called to reflect on who we are and what is our ministry, and also the Church's mission to the whole world.



PRAYERS & THOUGHTS for PRIVATE USE

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:
and his name is called the Prince of Peace.

cf Isaiah 9.6

Lord, by the song of the angels
you disclosed your birth to your own people,
and by the leading of a star
you revealed your glory to strangers.

Teach us to know you now,
and to make you known to all. **Amen**

The Promise of His Glory

I bring you news of great joy,
a joy to be shared by the whole people.

Today in the town of David
a Saviour has been born to you;
he is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2.10,11

God never imparts himself as he is to those
who contemplate him while still in this mortal life,
but he shows forth his brightness scantily
to the blinking eyes of our mind.

Gregory the Great

Eternal God,
who by the shining of a star
led the wise men to the worship of your Son:
guide by his light the nations of the earth,
that the whole world may behold your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Promise of His Glory

THE GATHERING

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

All **Amen.**

HYMN

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All **and also with you.**

LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

On Christmas eve and on Christmas morning the last candle may be lit on the Advent Wreath. The prayer for this is found on page 17.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

All **Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned:

All **forgive and heal us.**

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus. Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:

All **forgive and heal us.**

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

We have sinned:

All **forgive and heal us.**

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

We have sinned:

All **forgive and heal us.**

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus the King. Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:

All **forgive and heal us.**

The minister declares God's forgiveness saying:

The Lord enrich you with his grace, and nourish you with his blessing; the Lord defend you in trouble and keep you from all evil; the Lord accept your prayers, and absolve you from your offences, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

All **Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
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;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
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 Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT

*The president prays the collect which is the special prayer of the day.
At the end all respond*

All **Amen.**



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

READING(S)

At the end of each reading the reader says

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

GOSPEL READING

When the Gospel is announced all respond

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

And at the end of the Gospel

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

CREED

All **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin
Mary and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

INTERCESSIONS

From Christmas day until Epiphany these intercessions are used.

Father, your Son our Saviour was born as a child among us.
Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

There was no room for your Son in the inn.
Protect with your love those who have no home, all who
live in poverty, and those who feel unloved and alone.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Christ your Son came as a light shining in the darkness.
Bring comfort to [... and] all who are in pain or distress and
all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

The angels sang 'Peace to God's people on earth'.
Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in [... and in]
all the world.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven.
Keep in safety [... and] all those who have passed through
death in the hope of heaven.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray for one
another and ourselves.

silence is kept

Merciful Father

All **accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen**

From Epiphany to the Presentation these intercessions are used.

Let us worship the Saviour with joy and make our prayer to our heavenly Father. The Magi came from the east to worship your Son: Father, grant to all your people that sense of wonder, surprise and amazement.

Lord of glory,

All **hear our prayer.**

The infant Christ received gifts of gold, incense and myrrh: Father, accept the offering of our hearts and minds.

Lord of glory,

All **hear our prayer.**

The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ: Father, grant an abundance of peace to your world [...]

Lord of glory,

All **hear our prayer.**

The Holy Family lived in exile and in the shadow of death: Father, look in mercy on all who are poor and powerless, those who are weighed down by grief, and all who suffer [...]

Lord of glory,

All **hear our prayer.**

Your Son shared the life of his home and family at Nazareth: Father, protect in your love our neighbours, our families and this community of which we are a part [...]

Lord of glory,

All **hear our prayer.**

Our Saviour's glory is revealed through the cross and resurrection: Father give peace to all who have died [...]

Lord of glory,
All **hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in fellowship with the shepherds, the angels, the magi, the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, we commend ourselves and all people to your unfailing love.

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



THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

THE PEACE

From Christmas day until Epiphany the minister says

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

From Epiphany to the Presentation the minister says

'Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there shall be no end.

The minister then says

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN

A collection may be taken and presented.

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

Blessed be God, by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Either this prayer or the one on page 11 is used

A PRAYER FROM COMMON WORSHIP

The Lord be with you *or* The Lord is here
All **and also with you.** **His Spirit is with us**

Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

You are worthy of our thanks and praise,
Lord God of truth,
for by the breath of your mouth you have spoken your word,
and all things have come into being.
You fashioned us in your image
and placed us in the garden of your delight.
Though we chose the path of rebellion
you would not abandon your own.
Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace.
You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets
to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace.

As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,
we echo the song of the angels in heaven,
evermore praising you and *saying*:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God, you are the most holy one,
enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.

Embracing our humanity,
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end,
he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own,
he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave up himself for us all
he took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore we proclaim the death
that he suffered on the cross,
we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb,
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high
and we long for his coming in glory.
As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
form us into the likeness of Christ
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.
Gather your people from the ends of the earth
to feast with St Mary, St Peter and St Paul, St John the Baptist
and All Saints at the table in your kingdom,
where the new creation is brought to perfection
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen**

The service continues with the Lord's Prayer on page 14

A PRAYER FROM THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF AMERICA.

The Lord be with you or The Lord is here
All **and also with you.** **His Spirit is with us**

Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe
you are worthy of glory and praise

All Glory to you for ever

At your command all things came to be:
the vast expanse of interstellar space,
galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses,
and this fragile earth, our island home.

All By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race,
and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill.
You made us the rulers of creation, but we turned against you,
and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

All Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return.
Through the prophets and sages
you revealed your righteous Law,
and in the fullness of time sent your only Son,
born of a woman, to fulfil your Law,
to open for us the way to freedom and peace.

**All By his blood he reconciled us,
by his wounds we are healed.**

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those
in every generation who have looked to you in hope
to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him,
and made a new people by water and the Spirit,
now bring before you these gifts.
Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit
to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing,
broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said,
“Take eat: this is my Body, which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

After supper, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks and said, “Drink this all of you:
This is my Blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Remembering now his work of redemption,
and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

**All We celebrate his death and resurrection,
as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our ancestors:
God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
God of Sarah, Miriam and Ruth,
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:
open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us.
Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this table
for solace only, and not for strength;
for pardon only, and not for renewal.
Let the grace of this Holy Communion
make us one body, one Spirit in Christ,
that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

**All Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the
power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

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

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

AGNUS DEI

All **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.**

or **Jesus Lamb of God
have mercy on us
Jesus bearer of our sins,
Have mercy on us
Jesus, redeemer
of the world
grant us peace**

GIVING OF COMMUNION

If you normally receive Communion in your own church of whatever Christian denomination you are welcome to receive in this Church. Or, if you prefer, please come to the altar rail at the same time as the communicants but carry a book to indicate to the priest that you desire a blessing.

The minister says

God's holy gifts
for God's holy people.

**All Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

All may then say

(If this prayer is not used it may be used as a private devotion)

**All 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.**

AFTER COMMUNION

The post communion prayer is said by the president followed by

**All Father of all,
we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love,
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

HYMN



THE DISMISSAL

From Christmas Day to Epiphany the minister uses this blessing.

May the humility of the shepherds,
the faith of the wise men,
the joy of the angels,
and the peace of the Christ child
be God's gifts to you
this Christmas time, and always;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

From Epiphany to the Presentation the minister uses this blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory
and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

All **In the name of Christ. Amen**

PRAYER FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH ON CHRISTMAS DAY

God our Father,
today the Saviour is born
and those who live in darkness are seeing a great light.
Help us, who greet the birth of Christ with joy,
to live in the light of your Son,
and to share the good news of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the Light who has come into the world.

All **Lord Jesus, Light of Light,
you have come among us.
Help us who live by your light
to shine as lights in your world.
Glory to God in the highest!**

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PRAYERS & THOUGHTS for PRIVATE USE

God so loved us that for our sakes he,
through whom time was made, was made in time;
older by eternity than the world itself,
he became younger in age
than many of his servants in the world;
God, who made man, was made man;
he was given existence by a mother
whom he brought into existence;
he was carried in hands which he formed;
he was nursed at breast which he filled;
he cried like a baby in the manger in speechless infancy -
this Word
without which human eloquence is speechless.

Augustine

Christmas in prison

From the Christian point of view there is no special problem about Christmas in a prison cell. For many people in prison it will probably be a more sincere and genuine occasion than in places where nothing but the name is kept. That misery, suffering, poverty, loneliness, helplessness, and guilt mean something quite different in the eyes of God from what they mean in the judgement of man, that God will approach where men turn away, that Christ was born in a stable because there was no room for him in the inn - these are things that a prisoner can understand better than other people; for prisoners they really are glad tidings, and that faith gives them a part in the communion of saints, a Christian fellowship breaking the bounds of time and space and reducing the months of confinement in prison to insignificance.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Pastor, Theologian, Prisoner of War, & Martyr)