



**BLACKBURN
CATHEDRAL**

The Parish Eucharist
on
The First Sunday of Christmas

28 December 2025

9.00am

Welcome to this morning's service

The President and preacher is
Canon James Lawrence

The Organist is
Mr John Robinson
Director of Music

Preparation

For individual use before the service begins.

Old Testament Reading

(Isaiah 63.7-9)

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, 'Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely'; and he became their saviour in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The Gathering

Please stand to sing

Processional

Iris



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

*from Iris (1816) and The Christmas Box (1825), vv 1-4, James
Montgomery (1771 – 1854)*

The Greeting

The president greets the people

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

The president introduces the celebration

The Prayer of Preparation

**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.**

The Prayers of Penitence

The sun of righteousness has dawned
with healing in his wings.
Let us come to the light of Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Gloria

EVELYNS 338



Glory in the highest to the God of heaven!
Peace to all your people through the earth be given!
Mighty God and Father, thanks and praise we bring,
singing Hallelujah to our heavenly king;

Jesus Christ is risen, God the Father's Son!
With the Holy Spirit you are Lord alone!
Lamb once killed for sinners, all our guilt to bear,
show us now your mercy, now receive our prayer;

Christ the world's true Saviour, high and holy One,
seated now and reigning from your Father's throne:
Lord and God, we praise you! Highest heaven adores:
in the Father's glory, all the praise be yours!

Christopher Idle after Gloria in Excelsis

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Let us pray.

Silence is kept – please remain standing

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please sit

The Liturgy of the Word

New Testament Reading

(Hebrews 2.10-18)

Read by Linda Cronshaw

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, 'I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And again, 'Here am I and the children whom God has given me.' Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand to sing

Gradual Hymn

Forest Green



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.

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

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
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 today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Text: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) alt.

The Gospel (Matthew 2.13-23)

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

Glory to you, O Lord

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.' When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Canon James Lawrence

*There is a period of silence after the sermon for reflection
Please stand with the president*

The Creed

**Christ died for our sins
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers,
and to all the apostles:
this we have received, and this we believe. Amen.**

Please sit

The Prayers of Intercession

Led by John Wilson

This response is used

**Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.**

For those who have requested prayer:

John Bertalot, Arthur Blundell, Chris Drewe, Sue Hughes, Margaret Young,
Liam Johnson, Ray Hutchins, Peter Hardman, Graham Jordan, Brian and Ruth
Whittle, Jenni Bellamy, Ruth McGaughey, Harvey Stansfield, Eric Barnes,
Frank Haworth, Carol Fishwick, Christopher Browne, Susan Garlick,
Isla Smith, Tracey Riley, Peter Howell-Jones,
and those who mourn, remembering those who have died recently,
Sue Penfold, Clifford Fishwick, Ruth Taylor, Ray Duckworth, Peter Hughes,
Pam Jelley

and those whose anniversaries fall this week

Charles Henry Sykes, Karen Carr (29), Jack Monk (2), Elise Pemberton (3)
(Dates are in brackets)

And at the end

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

Please stand with the president for the peace

The Peace

The president says

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace. During the offertory hymn a collection is taken, please give what you prayerfully can. You may prefer to use the collection point or card reader on the way out. If you are a UK taxpayer, please use the blue gift aid form provided. If you prefer to give online, please visit blackburncathedral.co.uk/donate
The deacon prepares the table. Please remain standing to sing.

Preparation of the Table

Please remain standing to sing

Hymn
Cranham



In the bleak mid-winter
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone:
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-winter,
long ago.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim,
thronged the air;
but only his mother
in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved
with a kiss.

What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him - give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Music: Gustav Holst

Taking of the Bread and Wine

Be present, be present, Lord Jesus Christ,
our risen high priest;
make yourself known in the breaking of bread. **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

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.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God.
We give you thanks and praise for your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,
and was born of the Virgin Mary
by the power of your Spirit, and lived as one of us.
In this mystery of the Word made flesh
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
In him we see our God made visible
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.
Therefore with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:



Holy, most holy, all holy the Lord,
in power and wisdom for ever adored!
The earth and the heavens are full of your love;
our joyful hosannas re-echo above!
Blessèd, most blessèd, all blessèd is he
whose life makes us whole and whose death sets us free;
who comes in the name of the Father of light,
let endless hosannas resound in the height! *M. Forster (b. 1946)*
We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.
On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and,
taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them 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.
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Mary, Paul and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation, as we join our prayers with
those of the Church Universal, so we pray, each in our own
language, as our Saviour taught us,

Notre père, qui es aux cieux ...	Missierna, li inti fis-smewwiet...
Vater unser im Himmel ...	Padre nosso, que estais nos céus...
Padre nostro che sei nei cieli ...	Ojczy nasz, któryś jest w niebie...
Otče náš, jenž jsi na nebesích ...	ي السَّمَاوَاتِ،
Têve Mūsū, kuris esi danguje! ...	Ein Tad, yr hwn wyt yn y nefoedd...
Tatal nostru care esti in ceruri ...	

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 the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**Lord, our hearts hunger for you;
give us this bread always.**

**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.**

The Giving of Communion

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.
Lord, give us this bread always.

When you are ready to receive communion please approach the president in single file and return to your seat by one of the side aisles. Please do come and ask this first minister for any blessings

Communion is available in both kinds, and the minister distributing bread will say

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

After receiving the bread, if you wish to receive wine please move to the next minister before returning to your place. The minister distributing wine will say

The blood of Christ. **Amen.**

If you do not wish to receive communion wine, please walk past that second minister and return to your place.

Silence is kept

Prayer after Communion

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth
the life of an earthly home:
help your Church to live as one family,
united in love and obedience,
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**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.**

Please stand

The Dismissal

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.
And the blessing of Almighty God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest upon you now
and remain with you always. **Amen.**

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

The Organ Voluntary

Please do consider staying for tea or coffee after the service

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Notices for the Week Commencing 28 December

The Official Launch of Blackburn Cathedral's Centenary Year

Tuesday 6th January

7pm

Please join us to mark the beginning of our Centenary year on the Feast of Epiphany, a special time of light, renewal and shared hope for the future.

Special Services in January

Epiphany Carols

Sunday 11th January

4pm

Family Friendly Service

Saturday 17th January

3pm

Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts

12.15µm

Nigel Spooner

Wednesday 7th January

Graham Eccles

Wednesday 14th January

Mark Brafield

Wednesday 21st January

Kumi Choi

Wednesday 28th January

The Longest Yarn – ‘Britain at War’

Wednesday 7th January to Saturday 7th February

Hundreds of volunteer knitters from across the UK have created a stunning set of 80 individual knitted panels, each depicting a scene of Britain during wartime.

Safeguarding Contacts

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Foodbank - We are currently collecting tinned soup and toiletries

Servers and Live Streamers wanted. If you are interested in volunteering please speak to Alex or email alex.barnes@blackburncathedral.co.uk

The latest updates from the Safeguarding Improvement Board can be found at blackburncathedral.com/safeguarding