



**BLACKBURN
CATHEDRAL**

The Cathedral Eucharist on Christmas Day

25th December, 2025

10.30am

Welcome to this morning's service

The President and Preacher Is
The Rt Reverend Philip North
The Bishop of Blackburn

The Deacon is
Canon Andrew Horsfall
Interim Dean

The Subdeacon is
Mihaela Mladin

The service is sung by the
Cathedral Choir

Directed by
John Robinson
Director of Music

The Organist is
John Hosking
Organist in Residence

The setting for the service is
Chilcott – A Little Jazz Mass

*Before the service, the congregation is
welcomed by Canon Andrew Horsfall*

Please do not use cameras or digital recording devices
This service is livestreamed

The Gathering

Please stand as the ministers enter

Processional

Mendelssohn 26



Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King,
peace on 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 heaven 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 heaven-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 those of the earth,
born to give us second birth.
*Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

The Greeting

The Bishop greets the people

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

The Bishop introduces the service

**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 deacon says

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
Standing in the light of Christ let us make our confession to God.

**God of glory,
you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world,
to reveal your love for all people.
We confess that our sin and pride
hide the brightness of your light.
We turn away from the poor;
we ignore cries for justice;
we do not strive for peace.
In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin,
so that, as forgiven and renewed people,
we may share the light of Jesus Christ in the world.
into our world.**

Prayer from the Presbyterian Church in Canada, adapted

The Bishop says

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw you to himself,
that you may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
and be cleansed from all your sins,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The choir sings

Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax
hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite,
Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus Altissimus,
Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu,
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest
and peace on earth
to those of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we worship you, we glorify you.
We give thanks to you
for your great glory.
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father Almighty.
O Lord the only-begotten Son,
Jesus Christ.
O Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
you that take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
You that take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
You who are seated at the right hand of
the Father, have mercy upon us.
For you alone are holy,
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

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Please sit

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading *(Isaiah 52.7-10)*

Read by Krystyna Adams

A reading from the book of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading

(Hebrews 1.1-4)

Read by Ceri Davies

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Hebrews.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand

Gradual hymn

Winchester Old



While shepherds watched their flocks
by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

'Fear not', said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind.

'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth from highest
heaven
begin and never cease.'

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

The Gospel

The deacon says

(John 1.1-14)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ the saviour of the world has come among us.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Right Revd Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn

There is a period of silence after the sermon for reflection

The Creed

**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.**

Please sit or kneel

The Prayers

Led by Louise Hicks

Let us pray to Jesus our Saviour.
Christ, born in a stable,
give courage to all who are homeless.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, for whom the angels sang,
give the song of the kingdom to all who weep.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, worshipped by the shepherds,
give peace on earth to all who are oppressed.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt,
give humility and wisdom to all who govern.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger,
give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you.
Jesus, Saviour,
hear our prayer.

**Jesus, Saviour, child of Mary,
you know us and love us,
you share our lives and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever. Amen.**

Please stand with the president

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

The Bishop 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.

The deacon says

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All my 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 would prefer to give online, please visit blackburncathedral.co.uk/donate

Preparation of the Table

The deacon prepares the table. Please remain standing to sing

Offertory Hymn

ADESTE FIDELES 30



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.
O come, let us, etc.

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens
of heaven above:
"Glory to God in the highest:"
O come, let us, etc.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesu, to thee be glory given:
word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us, etc.

*Adeste, fideles (Latin, 18th century) tr.
Frederick Oakeley (1802-80) and others.*

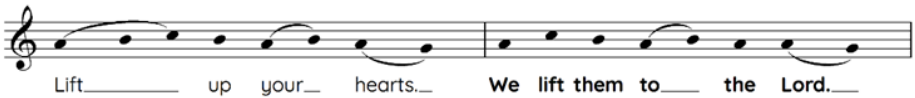
*Melody probably by John Francis Wade
(1711-86)*

arr. by David Willcocks (1919-2015).

Taking of the Bread and Wine

Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches. **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer



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,
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:

The choir sings

Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ;
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;

who in the same night that he was betrayed,
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, heavenly Father,
we remember now his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
and as we look for the coming of his kingdom,
we make with this bread and this cup
the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

The deacon says

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

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise;
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love
and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
by whom and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

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

The Lord's Prayer

As we join our prayers with those of the Church Universal, so
we say, in our own language, the prayer 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 ... Ojczę nasz, któryś jest w niebie...
Otče náš, jenž jsi na nebesích ... الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ...
Têve Mûsû, 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 Bishop breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us, light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

The choir sings

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God you take away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God you take away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God you take away the sins of
the world, grant us peace.

The Giving of Communion

The Bishop says

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

During communion

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 station near
the side aisle, and return to your place by the side aisle of the Nave.*

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 distribution
point, and return to your place by the central aisle of the Nave.*

While you are waiting to go for communion you may wish to sit down.

The choir sings

Anthem

Now the holly bears a berry
as white as the milk;
and Mary bore Jesus
who was wrapped up in silk:

*And Mary bore Jesus Christ
our Saviour for to be,
and the first tree in the green wood
it was the holly.*

Now the holly bears a berry
as green as the grass;

and Mary bore Jesus
who died on the cross;

Now the holly bears a berry
as black as the coal;
and Mary bore Jesus
who died for us all;

Now the holly bears a berry
as blood it is red;
then trust we our Saviour
who rose from the dead;
trad. arr. John Rutter (b. 1945)

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept

God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ the 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 to sing

Final Carol

Joy to the World



Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

The Dismissal

The Bishop pronounces God's blessing

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children.

Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The deacon says

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.
Glory, thanks and praise to God.

The Organ Voluntary

Ernest Alfred Dicks (1865 - 1948)

Variations on Adeste Fidelis

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Happy Christmas!

Many thanks to those people who gave donations towards the Christmas flowers. Thank you also to the flower arrangers for giving of their time and talents to enhance the beauty of the Cathedral, throughout the year.

Thank you to all our volunteers for making this such a special Christmas.