

**BENEFICE LIVESTREAMED SERVICE
MIDNIGHT MASS 2023
THE GATHERING**

Joseph welcomes people to worship

Introit Hymn

The president greets the people.

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

All **and also with you.**

Blessing of the Crib

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning only

President Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the
birth of Christ, let us pray that God will
bless this crib, that all who worship his
Son, born of the Virgin Mary,
may come to share his life in glory.
God our Father, on this night [*day*]
your Son Jesus Christ was born of the
Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation:
bless this crib, which we have prepared
to celebrate that holy birth;
may all who see it be strengthened in
faith and receive the fullness of life he
came to bring, who is alive and reigns for
ever.

All **Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

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

Silence is kept.

God our Father, you sent your Son full of grace and truth: forgive our failure to receive him. Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister of the Word Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger: forgive our greed and rejection of your ways. Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Minister of the Word Spirit of love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call: forgive the hardness of our hearts. Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

President 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.

All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

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 introduces a period of silent prayer:

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas
celebration that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

Silence is kept.

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour
and our eternal God.

All **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

JOSEPH – please sit for the readings.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah – read by Joseph

A reading from 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

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

New Testament Reading – read by Rick

A reading from the letter 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.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

'You are my Son;

today I have begotten you'?

Or again,

'I will be his Father,

and he will be my Son'?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

'Let all God's angels worship him.'

Of the angels he says,

'He makes his angels winds,

and his servants flames of fire.'

But of the Son he says,

'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,

and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

therefore God, your God, has anointed you

with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'

And,

'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,

and the heavens are the work of your hands;

they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like clothing;

like a cloak you will roll them up,

and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same,

and your years will never end.'

But to which of the angels has he ever said,

'Sit at my right hand

until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'?

Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

at the end of the reading ...

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

Gradual Hymn

Gospel Reading – read by Jane / Tim / Alex

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

All **Alleluia.**

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to *John*

All **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.

at the end of the Gospel ...

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon – Revd Bennett

The Creed

Please stand.

President Let us declare our faith in God.
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.

Bennett - now Arek will offer prayers on our behalf

Prayers of Intercession – led by Arek

Intercessor In peace let us pray to the Lord.
God our Father, your Son our Saviour was born in human flesh.
Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

All Holy God
hear our prayer.

Intercessor God our Father, there was no room for your Son in the inn.
Protect with your love those who have no Home and all who live
in poverty.

All Holy God
hear our prayer.
God our Father,

Intercessor Mary, in the pain of labour, brought your Son to birth. Hold in
your hand all who are in pain or distress.

All Holy God
hear our prayer.

Intercessor God our Father, your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness. Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.' Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in all the world.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy. Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger. Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven. Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth. Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God

All **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor God our Father, angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph and the

saints through him who is your Word
made flesh, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is
given, and his name shall be called
the Prince of Peace. (*Isaiah 9.6*)
The peace of the Lord be always with you
All **and also with you.**

President Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

Preparation of the Table

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

The Eucharistic Prayer

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

President Lift up your hearts.

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

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

President Blessed are you, Lord God, our light and our salvation;
to you be glory and praise for ever.
From the beginning you have created all things
and all your works echo the silent music of your praise.
In the fullness of time you made us in your image,
the crown of all creation. You give us breath and speech,
that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven
we may find a voice to sing your praise:

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.**

President How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord.
As a mother tenderly gathers her children, you embraced a
people as your own.

When they turned away and rebelled your love remained steadfast.
From them you raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary, to be the living bread,
in whom all our hungers are satisfied. He offered his life for sinners, and with a
love stronger than death he opened wide his arms on the cross.
On the night before he died, he came to supper with his friends and, taking
bread, he gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to them, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you 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.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

**Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

And now we give you thanks because, in the incarnation of the Word,
a new light has dawned upon the world; you have become one with us
that we might become one with you in your glorious kingdom

Father, we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross;
we remember his dying and rising in glory, and we rejoice that he intercedes for us
at your right hand. Pour out your Holy Spirit as we bring before you these gifts of your
creation; may they be for us the body and blood
of your dear Son.

As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence, form us in the likeness of Christ,
and build us into a living temple to your glory.

Bring us at the last with Luke and Richard, Thomas and all the saints
to the vision of that eternal splendour for which you have created us;

through Jesus Christ, our Lord, by whom, with whom, and in whom,
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

President Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, as our Saviour
taught us, so we pray.

All **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 Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

All 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.**

Agnus Dei

**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.**

The Giving of Communion

President Christ is the true bread which has
come down from heaven.

All **Lord, give us this bread always.**

Prayer before Distribution

**Most merciful Lord, your love compels us to come in. Our hands were unclean, our hearts were unprepared; we were not fit even to eat the crumbs from under your table. But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation and share your bread with sinners. So cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood of your Son, that he may live in us and we in him; and that we, with the whole company of Christ, may sit and eat in your kingdom.
Amen.**

During communion the choir sing Ring out the bells.

Communion hymn

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

President 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.

All **Amen.**

Minister of the Word **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**

The Blessing and Sending Out

President The Lord be with you
All **and also with you.**

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

All **Amen.**

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

All **Amen.**

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

All **Amen.**

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

All **Amen.**

President Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.

All **Glory, thanks and praise to God.**

Recessional Hymn