

THE BOURNE VALLEY BENEFICE
A SERVICE OF NIGHT PRAYER FOR CANDLEMAS

2ND FEBRUARY 2025

YEAR C – PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

WELCOME

Welcome to this service of Night Prayer for Candlemas to mark the presentation of Christ in the temple at Jerusalem. Please join in with the words printed in bold type, and sing along with the hymns. I will offer some brief thoughts on the readings to suggest some possible themes for reflection in our time of silence.

Opening Responses

The Light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it.

Be swift, O God, to save us.

Come quickly, Lord, to help us.

From the rising of the sun to its setting:

may the Lord's name be praised.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me
will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'

OPENING HYMN – Christ whose glory fills the skies

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Christ, whose glory fills the skies
Christ, the true, the only light,
sun of righteousness, arise,
triumph o'er the shades of night;
dayspring from on high, be near,
day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
unaccompanied by Thee;
joyless is the day's return,
till Thy mercy's beams I see,
till they inward light impart,
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, radiance divine,
scatter all my unbelief;
more and more Thyself display,
shining to the perfect day.

CONFESSIO

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
Forgive us all that is past,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be,
that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways,
to the praise and glory of your name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God is merciful and just:

If we say sorry for our mistakes, he will forgive us;

If we acknowledge our failings, he will heal our weaknesses;

If we turn our lives to him, we will find the kingdom of heaven.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

PSALM 100 – All people that on Earth do dwell

[William Kerthe (d. 1594)]

All people that on Earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with fear, his praise forth tell;
come ye before him and rejoice.

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise,
approach with joy his courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

To Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Whom heaven and earth adore
from men and from the angel-host
be praise and glory ever more.
Amen.

PSALM 24.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;

**for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.**

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

**Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.**

They will receive blessing from the Lord,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

**Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is the King of glory?

**The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle.**

Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

**The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.**

READINGS

First reading: Malachi 3, 1-5

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

A short silence is kept for reflection.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2, 22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every first-born male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

A longer silence is kept for reflection. You may wish to pray about those injustices in the world that pierce your soul with pain and sadness. Or you may want to reflect on Jesus as the light of the world: what does Christ's light mean in your life? Where is it leading you? Or you may want to think about the themes of transformation and growth – changes you would like to make in yourself, or how you support others to grow to be the best that they can be. Or, of course, something else in the readings may speak to you. Or you may wish to wait upon God's presence in joyful and thankful silence.

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'

Amen.

PRAYERS

Collect

**Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel:
make your home among us, and present us pure and holy
to your heavenly Father, your God, and our God, Amen**

Intercessions

Lord's Prayer

**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 them that 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**

OFFERTORY

Please support your local church through the Parish Giving Scheme or with a one-off donation – your church treasurer will be able to help you to do this.

Offertory Hymn – O thou who camest from above

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

O thou who camest from above
the fire celestial to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart!

There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return
in humble prayer and fervent praise.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
to work, and speak, and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire,
and still stir up thy gift in me.

Ready for all thy perfect will,
my acts of faith and love repeat;
till death thy endless mercies seal,
and make the sacrifice complete.

Offertory blessing

Generous Creator,
you shed light in our lives and give us riches beyond measure.
We ask that you will bless our offerings and service
that they may be used to build your kingdom
and for your glory. **Amen.**

CONCLUSION

Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon)

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:
your word has been fulfilled.

My own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:
a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn – – Thou whose almighty word

[John Marriott (1780-1825)]

Thou, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight;
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel-day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.

Thou, who didst come to bring
on thy redeeming wing
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
O now to humankind
let there be light.

Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy Dove,
speed forth thy flight;
move on the water's face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

Blessèd and Holy Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might;
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth far and wide
let there be light.

Closing Prayer (from the Community of Aidan and Hilda)

**Lord Jesus Christ, Light of the world,
by your cross you have overcome all darkness that oppresses.
Come and shine on us
that we may grow and live together in your love
which makes us one with all humanity.**

**THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen**