



St Anne with Holy Trinity, Brondesbury

Confidently sharing the love of Christ

First Sunday of Christmas

31st December 2023

Welcome to St Anne's today—it is great to have you with us. St Anne's is the local Church of England parish church and we are a very diverse group of people. We hope that you will feel welcome in our worship today. If you are new, please do say hello—we would love to get to know you. If you are unsure where to find something, or about what is going on, please do ask. We will be happy to help.

Our worship style is quite formal, but we hope relaxed—as we come to worship God in our midst.

All the words for the service will be on the screens at the front however, if you would prefer to have a printed copy in your hands, there are hymn books and service sheets at the back.

*Please stand as the bell is rung as we sing our opening
Hymn **782 - Unto us a boy is born***

We meet in the name of God who is (+) Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The President will introduce the service

We make our confession for those things which separate us from God and from one another.

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph: 'You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God, through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

Silence is kept

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you
in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

We sing together.

**Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.**

We are reminded of God's forgiveness.

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.**

Confident in God's forgiveness we remain standing as we sing

**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:
Glo...ri - a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Glo...ri - a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo**

**Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant light:
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo**

**Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In his temple shall appear.
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo**

**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:
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Glo...ri – a, Gloria, in excelsis Deo**

The Priest introduces a period of silent prayer before the collect.

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.**

Liturgy of the Word (please sit as the young people leave us for their lessons. We hear a reading from the Old Testament.

Isaiah 40–66, sometimes called “Deutero-Isaiah” or “Second Isaiah,” is widely understood to represent early postexilic additions to the largely eighth-century Isaianic material in

Isaiah 1–39. Chapters 40–55 probably date from around 539 B.C.E., right at the end of the Babylonian exile. Chapters 56–66 are a bit later, as they seem to presuppose the reconstruction of the temple, which was completed in 515 B.C.E. Thus, this week’s Old Testament reading probably dates from the end of the sixth century B.C.E.

The volatile political situation in postexilic Judah reminds us that there is an immediacy to these prophecies in their ancient context. The prophets behind Isaiah 40–66 were not just waxing poetic about theology. They were advocating competing visions for what the reconstituted community in Judah might look like, and they were looking for God to restore and vindicate Jerusalem, still reeling from its destruction and defeat over seventy years earlier, in full sight of the nations around it. At the same time, exactly what this vindication looks like is not always clear. It is still poetry, after all, and the book turns to metaphor to describe an imaginative, expansive vision of the future—not a granular strategic plan.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
(Isaiah 61:10—62:3)

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

We hear a reading from the New Testament.

Our celebration of Christmas is built upon a Christian theological tradition that drastically differs from Paul's apocalyptic Jewish theology that we see in Galatians. But also, our traditions are built upon interpretations of Paul's theology, many of which misunderstood his Jewish context and specifically gentile audience. How can this more accurate and challenging understanding of Paul's theological argument help us proclaim the "fullness of time" that we just heralded in the celebration of Jesus' birth?

Paul firmly believes, although God's covenant—including the law—remains holy and firm for Jews, that gentiles, though once accountable to law, have a new path to show faith in God through Jesus Christ's faith (see Galatians; Romans 3:21–31). Gentiles, Paul argues, need not follow the law; in fact, he believes it is nearly impossible for gentiles to follow a covenant that was never intended for them, which is why God provided them a different path through Jesus as the Christ.

A reading from the letter to the Galatians

(Galatians 4:4-7)

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*We sing our **Gradual Hymn 2 A great and mighty wonder** during which we stand for the Gospel procession.*

As we read the unfolding drama Luke presents, we strain to appreciate the presence of God's peace as we witness those who suffer wrong. And yet, already in the birth narration, the poor, the widow, and the weak are helped to be strong in the name of Mary's baby boy. Luke has named those who testify to the arrival of God's promised one. And they have named God as faithful.

Luke has drawn us into a story of unique characters who stand out in their context. Some are not named, but each represent very real lives and circumstances, very real sorrows and hopes. Like the unnamed workers effected by the decision making of politicians, the shepherds represent a number of common folk, seemingly incidental to the decision making of Caesar, but paramount in the decision making on behalf of the one who will be called the Son of God. Only recently have we truly attended to their status in the first century — the workers, the rest of the world. These are the ones who occupy the guest room in Bethlehem to see if the angel's message is true.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

(Luke 2:15-21)

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Jesus Christ.

We sit to listen to the sermon. After the sermon silence is kept.

We stand to affirm our faith in the words of the Nicene creed.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*We sit as we prayer for the Church, the World and for this
community. A member of the congregation will lead these*

After the biddings we pray

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Rest Eternal Grant unto them O Lord

And let light perpetual shine upon them

May they rest in peace

And rise in glory

At the conclusion of the prayers

Merciful Father,

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

Liturgy of the Sacrament (please stand)

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 each other the sign of peace.

We share the peace with those around us in a way we are comfortable until the offertory Hymn is announced.

*We sing Hymn 363 **It came upon a midnight clear** omit verse 4 during which a collection is taken.*

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this bread to set before you, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this wine to set before you, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Lord be with you,
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

The preface continues until we sing.

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

After the Consecration :

Great is the mystery of faith

Christ has died: Christ is risen:

Christ will come again

*At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer we sing **Amen.***

We join in the prayer that Jesus taught his friends to say in our preferred version and language.

**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 president breaks the consecrated bread.

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

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

We sing the Agnus Dei.

**Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us
Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us
Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

The Elevation

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

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

*We receive communion. All who would normally receive are welcome to, and you may choose if you are ready to receive the chalice. We receive God's grace in one kind or two. **(Please do not intinct (dip))**. You may also like to come forward for a blessing; and you may wish to light a candle. During communion we listen to O Magnum Mysterium by Morten Lauridsen as we reflect on the gift that we share.*

At the end of communion, the priest will lead us in a period of silence, and then a short prayer:

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.**

We listen to notices about our community life.

We receive God's blessing for the week ahead.

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God almighty, the (+) Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Go in the peace of Christ
Thanks be to God

We join in our **final hymn 267 Good King Wenceslas** during which the clergy depart.

You are invited to join us for refreshments downstairs.

Our Community Life Together and Dates for your Diary

A Huge Thank you!!

A huge thank you to everyone for all your help in making a Advent and Christmas celebrations such a success. For everyone who arranged and cleaned, served food and drink, helped in services, welcomed our guests, made donations to our charities and those who encouraged us. It really was team effort and we should be very proud of what we achieved. Thank you!

And Thank you...

Mo Christine would like to wish you a happy and safe New Year. May 2024 will bring you hope. I would like to thank you too for the lovely cards, gifts and wishes.

Laurence's Larder

You can leave your donations, tinned fish or any non-perishable food in the basket at the top of the stairs. You can see updates on this work at www.laurenceslarder.org.uk

Finance—St Anne's

Our current monthly target for congregational giving is **£2180**. In November we raised £1869. Thank you to everyone for your generosity!

We are also going contactless! From Christmas, visitors to St Anne's, or even regulars will be able to donate using a contactless point at the back of church. For regular members, a Standing Order or Envelope is best as it helps us plan.

The funds we raise support the Mission work of St Anne's, from ensuring worship takes place to provision of Playgroup, tea and chat, bereavement support and care of the local community. We receive no funds external to support what we do, we need to raise all we need to continue our work in Queen's Park and beyond.



For our prayers— Olawale, Eunice, Marco, Irene, Patsy, Jean, Joyce, Guy and Renate, AnneMarie and Marion, Emma, Peter and Rhona, Florret, John and Josephine, Harriet, May, Mavis, Kay, Comfort, Jean, Pearl, Peter, Ruth, John and Cecilia. We remember those who have died recently including Gordon and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time including Sidney Hinks, Don Hawkes, Bob Lewis and Harold Hamilton.

Services during the week 1st January 2024

Public Weekday Morning Prayer will not take place from Friday 22nd December and will resume Tuesday 9th January 2024!

Friday 5th **No morning prayer or My Moves**
 2pm Tea and Chat

Sunday 7th **9am** Morning Prayer in Chapel and Zoom
Epiphany **10am** Sung Mass with Sunday School

Church complex is closed from
Boxing Day till New Years Day.

Admin Office is closed from 22nd Dec
until the 9th January 2024.

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