

St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal Church



Midnight Eucharist

11.30pm

A very warm welcome on this Holy Night

Please stand as the choir and clergy enter

We meet to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world.
The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.
And we beheld his glory.

HYMN 289 – Hark, the herald-angels sing

**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 th'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 heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth:**

***Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.***

©Copyright 2008 Kevin Mayhew Ltd Charles Wesley (1707-1788), George Whitefield (1726-1790) and others, alt.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

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.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Please sit or kneel

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil. For the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by the Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GLORIA

Please stand

***Glory to God, Glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest,***

**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.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest,***

**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.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest,***

**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.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest.***

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. As we have known the revelation of that light on earth, so bring us to see the splendour of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Please sit

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 52. 7-10

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: HEBREWS 1.1-4

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn 827 – While shepherds watched

**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 all mankind.**

**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 on the earth be peace,
goodwill henceforth from heaven to all
begin and never cease.’**

GOSPEL: JOHN 1. 1-14

Hear the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to Christ our Saviour. *(Sung)*

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.

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord. *(Sung)*

SERMON

Please sit

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Please stand

We believe in God who made us, loves us and sent the Son for our salvation.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who came in humility and love to reveal his kingdom and welcome us home.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, by whose quickening power the Virgin conceived and who brings us all to life.

We believe we are all called to be the children of God born of water and the Spirit healed, restored, forgiven and assured of the world to come. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

Please sit or kneel

THE PEACE

Please stand

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

We meet in Christ's name. **Let us share his peace.**

Let us offer one another a sign of God's peace.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

Offertory Hymn - 363 It came upon a midnight clear

Please stand

**It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing;
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds
the blessed angels sing.**

**Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise of mortal strife,
and hear the angels sing!**

**For lo, the days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when, with the ever-circling years
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.**

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Please remain standing

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
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 offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands;
it will become the cup of our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

OPENING PRAYER: celebrating the work of God, Father, Son and Spirit, in creating, restoring and bringing to completion, all that is His.

Worship and praise belong to you, Father, in every place and at all times. All power is yours. You created the heavens and established the earth; you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son, our life and yours are brought together in a wonderful exchange. He made his home among us that we might for ever dwell in you. Through your Holy Spirit you call us to new birth in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose for whom Christ Jesus humbled himself and became poor to make us rich, we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending glory:

SANCTUS: an anthem to God's glory.

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

BENEDICTUS: The greeting to him who came in the flesh, comes in the sacrament and is still to come.

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

Please sit or kneel

CHRISTOLOGICAL PRAYER: Thanksgiving to God for all that was accomplished in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father, for the gift of your Son born in human flesh. He is the Word existing beyond time, both source and final purpose, bringing to wholeness all that is made.

Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.
By your power you raised him from the dead.
He broke the bonds of evil and set your people free
to be his Body in the world.

NARRATIVE OF THE INSTITUTION: an account of the Last Supper.

On the night when he was given up to death, knowing that his hour had come, having loved his own, he loved them to the end. At supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks.

He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

ANAMNESIS AND OBLATION: The work of Christ is recalled and linked with our offering.

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

EPICLESIS: We ask for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the divine response to our obedience.

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by his life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

PRAYER OF PETITION: As members of the Church we pray for her whole life and mission.

Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles and prophets, St Cuthbert, and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

DOXOLOGY: A concluding act of praise.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end. **Amen.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.

Lord, unite us in this sign. Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us, we are bold to say:

**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.**

Communion

**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.**

Hymn 59 - Away in a manger

**Away in a manger,
no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus
laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky
looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus,
asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing,
the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus,
no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus!
Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side
until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus;
I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever,
and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children
in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven,
to live with thee there.**

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William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)*

A PRAYER FOR US TO PRAY AT HOME:

God of infinite mercy, we thank you for Jesus our Saviour, who feeds his people and gives them eternal life.

Though we cannot consume the gifts of bread and wine, we thank you that we do receive Christ's saving presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of his passion. Grant that we may continue for ever in the Risen Life of our Saviour.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND SENDING OUT

Give thanks to our gracious God
Whose mercy endures for ever.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Father of all, tonight you have united earth and heaven in sending your Son to take our human nature. May we who have tasted heavenly things share in the life of his eternal Kingdom. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN 534 - O come all ye faithful

Please stand

**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 adore him

**Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee, with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?**

O come, let us adore him

THE BLESSING OF THE CRIB

Dear friends in Christ, let us pray that God our Father will bless this crib, and that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father, on this 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 those who see it be strengthened in faith, and receive the fullness of life he came to bring; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The hymn continues:

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
glory to God in the highest:
*O come, let us adore him***

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
*O come, let us adore him***

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trans. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880)*

BLESSING

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one all things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace; and the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

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

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Wishing you a safe, peaceful and blessed Christmas.

