

The Parish Church of St Giles
with St Mary's, Pontefract



Midnight Mass
24th December 2023
11.00 p.m.

We welcome you to this celebration of Midnight Mass

The setting for tonight's Mass is Missa de angelis and Darke in F

People of all denominations who are in good standing with their own church are welcome to come and receive communion. If you wish to receive a blessing, please come to the altar carrying this order of service.

Please let clergy or a churchwarden know at the beginning of the service if you need a gluten-free host.

5 minutes before the service begins, a bell will ring to signal that a period of quiet reflection is kept during which you may wish to use this prayer.

**Heavenly Father,
you have created a universe of light:
forgive us when we return to darkness.**

**Lord Jesus,
you are the light of the world:
cleanse and heal our blinded sight.**

**Holy Spirit,
you give us light in our hearts:
renew us in faith and love.**

Amen

A bell is rung to begin our worship.

Parish Giving

It costs us at least £2,000 per week to carry out our ministry, mission and basic maintenance of this lovely building. One off cash donations can be made in the box in reception just by the entrance door into church. Contactless payments can be made using our free-standing contactless giving machine located in church. It is also possible to donate using our QR code which links to a safe and secure 'Give a little' payment portal which is compliant with GDPR, PCI & PCI-DSS.

1. Open your phone camera 2. Scan the QR code 3. Click the link displayed 4. Donate



Hymn (29)

*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 men,
From heaven'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 heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lonely plains
they bend on hovering 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 man, at war with man, hears not
the love-song which they bring.
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
and hear the angels sing!*

*For lo! The days are hastening on,
by prophet bards foretold,
when, with the ever-circling years,
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and the whole world give back the song
which now the angels sing.*

✠ In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Edmund H. Sears

The Greeting

The president greets the people

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

John 1.14

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

and also with you.

cf 1 Timothy 1.2

Blessing of the Crib

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.

Crib censed and sprinkled with holy water

God our Father,
on this night
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.

Amen.



Invitation to confession

Christ the light of the world has come
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.
Let us turn to the light and confess our sins.

Prayers of Penitence

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

Lord, have mercy.

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

Christ, have mercy.

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

Lord, have mercy.

The president says

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
✠forgive you your sins
and make you holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

*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 on earth peace to men of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give thanks to you
for your great glory,
O, Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Almighty Father.*

*O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ,
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
who takes away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
You who are seated at the right hand
of the Father, have mercy on us.*

*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.*

The Collect for Christmas Eve

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.

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
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.

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Isaiah 9.2-7

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness -
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Second Reading Titus 2.11-14

A reading from the letter of Paul to Titus.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Alleluia

During the Gospel Alleluia, lights will be dimmed for the gospel reading.

Gospel Reading Luke 2.1-20

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Profession of Faith

**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.

Prayers of Intercession

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Father, in this holy night your Son our Saviour
was born in human flesh.

Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night 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.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour,
brought your Son to birth.

Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness.

Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.'

Strengthen those who work for peace and justice
in all the world.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy.

Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family,
and saw the baby lying in the manger.

Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

In this holy night 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

hear our prayer.

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.
Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God

hear our prayer.

Father,

in this holy night 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.

Amen.

Advent Wreath

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, King of peace:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
The new light of your incarnate Word
gives gladness in our sorrow,
and a presence in our isolation.
Fill our lives with your light,
until they overflow with gladness and praise.
Blessed be God for ever.



The fifth and final candle of the advent wreath is lit, and then the following is said:

**Lord Jesus, Light of light,
you have come among us.
Help us who live by your light
to shine as lights in your world.
Glory to God in the highest.
Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

This holy night the angels sang,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

Luke 2.14

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Preparation of the Altar

Carol - Once in royal David's city

Solo Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for His bed:
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
and His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

**And through all His wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.**

**For he is our childhood's pattern
day by day like us He grew,
He was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us He knew;
and He feeleth for our sadness,
and He shareth in our gladness.**

**And our eyes at last shall see Him,
through His own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and He leads his children on
to the place where He is gone.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see Him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
where like stars His children crowned
all in white shall wait around.**

Cecil Frances Alexander

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.

Prayer over the Gifts

Pray, my brothers and sisters
that this my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice
at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name.
for our good
and the good of all his church.**



The Eucharistic Prayer

Please be seated.

The Lord is here

His spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

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,
and on this night 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:

Sanctus & Benedictus

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of thy glory:
Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

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.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of The Blessed Mary, St Joseph, Giles
and all the saints
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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

**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.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

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

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion.

Jesus is the lamb of God
Who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord I am not worthy to receive you,
But only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The president and people receive communion.

All who usually receive communion in their own churches are welcome to do so here.

If you would like to receive a blessing, please carry this service order and keep your hands at your sides. Please come forward as the sides-people direct.

Organ Voluntary

Hymn (32)

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee to-night.**

**O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth;
for Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.**

**How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive Him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.**

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)

Choir ~

O holy night Adolphe-Charles Adam

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

The Blessing and Dismissal

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

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.

Hymn (30)

During the hymn, the candles will be lit and the church lights turned off.

**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...

**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 given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing:**

O come, let us adore Him...

Latin 18th Century, Tr. Frederick Oakeley and others

**Go in peace to proclaim the Word made flesh
In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The clergy and people depart.

Organ Voluntary

Copyright acknowledgement (where not already indicated above):

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England material from which is included, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000 Common Worship: Times and Seasons material from which is included, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2006

The Scripture quotations contained herein are from The New Revised Standard Version Bible, Anglicised Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

Used by

permission. All rights reserved.

Christian Copyright Licence No. 169304

All songs covered by CCLI have been reproduced under the CCL Licence No. 169304

The Parochial Church Council of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Giles, Pontefract
is a charity registered in England and Wales (1135106).