

St Mary-at-Finchley

Parish Eucharist

10am

Holy Innocents

28th December 2025

The Gathering

Stand A hymn is sung as the choir, servers and clergy enter

Processional Hymn 2 A great and mighty wonder

A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure!
The virgin bears the Infant
With virgin-honour pure!

*Repeat the hymn again:
To God on high be glory
And peace on earth to men!*

The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.

While thus they sing your monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, ye vales and mountains!
Ye oceans, clap your hands!

Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The Infant born in Bethl'em,
The Saviour and the Lord!

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

The Greeting

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Kneel

Prayers of Penitence

On this day when we recall the murder of innocent lives,
let us stand before our just and holy God,
and remembering the violence and injustice of our world,
confess our sins in penitence and faith.

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
in what we have thought, in what we have said and done,
through ignorance, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We have wounded your love, and marred your image in us.
We are sorry and ashamed, 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 lead us out from darkness**

**to walk as children of light.
Amen.**

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

Amen.

GLORIA - to "God rest you merry"

Glory to God in highest heaven,
The clouds of angels sing.
Today in lowly Bethlehem
Creation greets its king.
We join our voices now with them,
Our praise and worship bring

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

Jesus our Saviour, Lamb of God,
Forgiveness, mercy, grace
Are poured upon our darkened world
To free the human race.
Love shines out bright into our chaos
From your radiant face.

You only are the holy one
You only are the Lord
Immanuel God with us
The everlasting Word
With Father and with Holy Ghost
Ever to be adored.

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words

'Let us pray'.

Heavenly Father,
whose children suffered at the hands of Herod,
though they had done no wrong:
by the suffering of your Son
and by the innocence of our lives
frustrate all evil designs
and establish your reign of justice and peace;
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

Readings

Sit A reading from the prophet Jeremiah (31.15-17)

¹⁵ Thus says the Lord:

A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.

¹⁶ Thus says the Lord:

Keep your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears;
for there is a reward for your work,
says the Lord:
they shall come back from the land of the enemy;

¹⁷ there is hope for your future,
says the Lord:
your children shall come back to their own country.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the first letter to the Corinthians (1.26-29)

²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no one ^[c] might boast in the presence of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn 422 Praise my soul, the king of heaven

1 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
To his feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King.

2 Praise him for his grace and favour
To our fathers in distress;
Praise him still the same as ever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless:
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

3 Father-like, he tends and spares us,
Well our feeble frame he knows;
In his hands he gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes:
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

4 Angels, help us to adore him;
Ye behold him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before him,
Dwellers all in time and space:
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Gospel Reading

Alleluia, alleluia.
Never despise these little ones;
their guardian angels in heaven look continuously
on the face of my heavenly Father.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (2.41-end).
Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel Reading (Matthew 2:13-18)

¹³ Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt,

and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ ¹⁴ Then Joseph^[a] got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,^[b] he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.^[c] ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ ‘A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

Deji Makanjuola

Sermon

Stand

The Creed

**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.**

Kneel

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,
let us pray to the Father.

The prayers may follow this sequence:

The Church of Christ

Creation, human society, the Sovereign and those in authority

The local community

Those who suffer

The communion of saints

These responses may be used

Lord, in your mercy	(or)	Lord, hear us.
hear our prayer.		Lord, graciously hear us.

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

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Stand

The Peace

'I will comfort you,' says the Lord, 'as a mother comforts her child,
and you shall be comforted.'

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.

The Offertory

*A Hymn is sung as the elements of bread and wine are brought to the altar
and the gifts of the people are collected.*

Offertory Hymn 34 Angels from the realm of glory

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.

*Come and worship
Christ the new-born King:
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the new-born king*

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
Yonder shines the infant light:

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations;
Ye have seen His natal star.

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear;
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear.

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:

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

Stand

The Eucharistic Prayer (Ding dong merrily)

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 thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In love for our fallen human race,
you sent your Son into the world to lighten our darkness.

In his life

he rejoiced in the innocence and beauty of children;

in his death

he carried in his body the violence and cruelty of our world;

in his resurrection

he brought life and salvation to his people

and began the new creation.

As our ascended and merciful high priest,

he hears our cries and knows our grief;

and will come as universal Lord to whom all must give account.

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:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

The God of all creation

Peace and joy the angels' word

To each and every nation.

Gloria! Hosanna in excelsis!

We praise and bless you, loving Father,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord;

and as we obey his command,

send your Holy Spirit,

that broken bread and wine outpoured

may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them 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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Glory, glory to the king
The God of all creation
Heav'n and earth exultant sing
The song of their salvation.
Gloria! Hosanna in excelsis!

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Mary the God-bearer
and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

**Lift your voices now to praise
The God of all creation
On this holiest of days,
The feast of Incarnation.
Gloria! Hosanna in excelsis!**

Kneel

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**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 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.**

Agnus Dei 51 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.

Giving of Communion

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

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

Communicant members of all Christian Churches are welcome to receive Holy Communion in this Church. Anyone is welcome to come forward for to receive a blessing.

During Communion

Kneel

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

The Post Communion prayer is said.

Lord Jesus Christ,
in your humility you have stooped to share our human life
with the most defenceless of your children:
may we who have received these gifts of your passion
rejoice in celebrating the witness of the Holy Innocents
to the purity of your sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross;
for you are alive and reign, now and for ever.

Amen.

**God of glory,
you inspire us with the breath of life
which brought to birth a new world in Christ.
May we who are reborn in him
be transformed by the renewal of our lives,
that the light of your new creation
may flood the world with your abundant grace;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Notices

Stand A hymn is sung

Post Communion Hymn 542 What child is this

1 What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,

Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and donkeys are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the Babe, the Son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary!

The Dismissal

The Lord be with you
And also with you

God, who gives life to the dead and comfort to the desolate,
sustain you, keep you and console you,
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
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 peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

The ministers and people depart.

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