CHORAL EUCHARIST
The Epiphany

Sunday 10 January 2021
11am Oxford Time
Welcome to this service at Christ Church! Today we celebrate the Epiphany, the visit of the three wise men to the Christ Child; by Christ Church custom we transfer the Epiphany to the Sunday after the 6th January.

The medieval European custom of blessing our homes at Epiphany takes on new meaning this year, as we anticipate more months of lockdown ahead. By the traditional blessing uses the initials of the wise men (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar) which are also the initials of the Latin phrase ‘Christus mansionem benedicat’: ‘may Christ bless this house’. If you would like us to post you blessed chalk with a prayer card to use as you write the blessing on your door, please send your address to us.

Alternatively, if you have chalk at home, have it with you as you watch the streamed service or come to Zoom Tea, and the prayer of blessing will enfold all those watching.

In this Epiphany season, we continue to rejoice that Jesus came among us to share our human life as ‘God with us’ and we mark three key moments in which Jesus is revealed as fully God as well as fully human.

As we consider how best to keep everybody safe, many parts of this service are less elaborate than usual. There are only two clergy present, and the music is led by an organist and a cantor: If you would like us to keep in touch with you, please make sure we have your contact details – you can get in touch at cathedraloffice@chch.ox.ac.uk/ 01865 286869.

Despite all the difficulties of this time, we know that God is present here and with us forever. We are very grateful to you for being gracious to us and to one another as we all seek to navigate these new waters. May God bless you as we worship together.

Music before the Service

*In dulci jubilo*
Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

*Prélude sur l’Introit de l’Epiphanie*
Maurice Duruflé (1902–86)

Setting of the Eucharist

*Missa De Angelis*
Anonymous (Gregorian chant)
The Gathering

Shortly before the beginning of the service, the congregation will be welcomed. The service starts at 11.05 GMT (11 am Oxford Time).

Please stand when the clergy enter.

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

All
Amen.

The Greeting

President
The Lord be with you
All
and also with you.

The President introduces the service.

Prayers of Penitence

The President invites the people to confess their sins.

President
The grace of God has dawned upon the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own. In his presence and confident in his mercy, let us confess our sins.

Please sit or kneel.
All 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.

Absolution

President 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.

All Amen.

Please stand as the cantor sings Gloria.

Gloria in Excelsis

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriæ tuam, Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

Gloria 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.
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.

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.

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.  
Amen.

The Collect

President  Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

President  O God,  
who by the leading of a star  
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:  
merciably grant that we,  
who know you now by faith,  
may at last behold your glory face to face;  
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.

All  Amen.
The Liturgy of the Word

Please sit.

First Reading
Ephesians 3:1–12 (NRSV)

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

Please stand. The Cantor sings the Gospel Acclamation.
In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Homily
The Archdeacon

Please be seated for the homily.

After the Homily, the Organist will improvise. Please stand when the Ministers stand and face East to join with the Apostles’ Creed.

The Creed

President    Let us declare our faith in God
All

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.
Prayers of Intercession

The President leads the prayers of the People.

President Let us pray.

Please sit. During the intercessions, the following response is used:

President Lord, in your mercy
All hear our prayer.

The prayers usually end with:

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

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Please stand.

The Peace

President Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.

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

We know that Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church. As once again we are separated from one another, we remember that peace is from the heart and from God. God’s peace in the Spirit moves among us to unite us with one another and with all who have served God in every age, distant in time and space yet one in the Body of Christ.

After the Peace, the Organist will improvise.
Preparation of the Table

President  Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, 
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; 
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.  

All  All things come from you, 
and of your own do we give you.

The Eucharistic Prayer

President  The Lord be with you 
All  and also with you.

President  Lift up your hearts.  
All  We lift them to the Lord.

President  Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
All  It is right to give thanks and praise.

President  All honour and praise be yours always and everywhere, 
mighty creator, ever-living God, 
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord: 
for at this time we celebrate your glory 
made present in our midst.

In the coming of the magi 
the King of all the world was revealed to the nations.  
In the waters of baptism 
Jesus was revealed as the Christ, 
the Saviour sent to redeem us.  
In the water made wine 
the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.  
Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.

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:
The Cantor sings the Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus  Holy, holy, holy
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:  Lord God of hosts:
pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.  heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in excelsis.  Hosanna in the highest.

President  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.

All  Christ has died. 
Christ is risen. 
Christ will come again.
President
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 Virgin Mary,
Frideswide, Birinus, 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.

All
Amen.

Please sit or kneel.
The Lord’s Prayer

President  As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All   Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

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

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

Giving of Communion

President  Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you
and in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.
The Cantor sings the Agnus Dei.

Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.

Communion Motet

Three Kings from Persian lands afar
To Jordan follow the pointing star:
And this the quest of the travellers three,
Where the new-born King of the Jews may be.
Full royal gifts they bear for the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

How brightly shines the morning star!
With grace and truth from heaven afar
Our Jesse tree now bloweth.

The star shines out with a steadfast ray;
The kings to Bethlehem make their way,
And there in worship they bend the knee,
As Mary’s child in her lap they see;
Their royal gifts they show to the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

Of Jacob’s stem and David’s line,
For thee, my Bridegroom, King divine,
My soul with love o’erfloweth.

Thou child of man, lo, to Bethlehem
The Kings are travelling, travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace,
Shall lead thy heart to its resting place.
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring;
Offer thy heart to the infant King.

Thy word, Jesu, Inly feeds us,
Rightly leads us, Life bestowing.
Praise, O praise such love o’erflowing.

WORDS: Peter Cornelius (1824–1874) and Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608)
MUSIC: Peter Cornelius

We pause together to rest in the presence of Christ in us and all around us; trusting that wherever we are, however we are, whoever we are with, Jesus comes to meet us as he has promised. Jesus invites us to receive him in our hearts by faith; to unite our prayers and our wills with his; and to rest in his perfect and eternal love. Without physically eating and drinking, we yet receive his body and his blood by grace.

There are no special words or prayers for this. All the Church has ever thought necessary is true desire, lively faith and genuine love. So you are invited to come honestly before God the way you know how. You may like to close your eyes, or to look at a picture; to pause the recording, or to listen to the music; to keep silence, or to pray one of the following prayers:

In union, O Lord with the faithful at every altar of thy Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to thee my soul and body with the earnest wish that they may always be united to thee. And since I can not now receive thee sacramentally, I beseech thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to thee, and embrace thee with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate thee from me. May I live and die in thy love. Amen.

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.
President    Let us pray.

Please sit or kneel. A time of silent prayer may be kept.

All    Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.
The blessing of homes is an old Epiphany custom. As we remember the journey of the magi to the Christ-child, we ask God to be present in our homes to bless us in all that lies ahead this year. This year especially, it might have particular meaning to bless our homes in this time of lockdown, asking God to be present in all that takes place under our roof, whether that is work, education, leisure, conversation or rest; and praying that our families, households, bubbles, and all those we love may be held in God’s care.

The president will bless chalk now. Please send us your address if you would like us to post chalk to you with a prayer card to ‘chalk the door’ as a prayer of blessing for your home; or use chalk you already have, and the prayer of blessing at the end of this service sheet.

Presidential Lord God, giver of all good gifts, we praise you for the coming of the Christ-child, revealed to all peoples; for the Magi as they came to worship at the feet of the Christ-child and for your promise to be with us in all the year ahead. In your generous love, now bless this chalk and bless too the chalk brought before you in our homes: that all the homes marked with it may be your home, where love and charity dwell, peace, rest and hope be present, and your Christ is ever found.

All Amen.
Please stand.

**Blessing**

*President* Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

*All* Amen.

*President* Go in the peace of Christ.

*All* Thanks be to God.

Please follow the vergers’ directions as you leave the cathedral via Tom Quad and Tom Gate.

**Music after the Service**

*Sinfonia, Cantata 29* J S Bach arr. Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

**Prayer for the Week**

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek: may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light discern the glory of your presence in your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
You are welcome here, whether you are a long-standing member of our congregations or worshipping with us for the first time. Although the pattern of our life has changed so much, our prayers continue; and please let us know if we can pray for you, or if you need our support. You are warmly invited to continue to participate in our community worship, prayer and spiritual life, both online and offline.

If you would like to be put on our mailing list to receive our weekly e-news, with a link to the online ‘Zoom Tea,’ please contact us at cathedraloffice@chch.ox.ac.uk or speak to one of the clergy as you leave.

We will continue to provide online worship; please don’t put yourself under any pressure to come to church if it is safer for you to stay at home. Wherever you are, you remain a valued member of our community.

**Online worship resources from Christ Church Cathedral**

The Cathedral website contains an archive of sermons and services, alongside a regular series of blog reflections. You can find worship, resources and prayers at:

- [www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship)
- [www.chch.ox.ac.uk/Christmas2020](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/Christmas2020)
- [www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedralblog](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedralblog)
- [www.chch.ox.ac.uk/services-and-events/sermons](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/services-and-events/sermons)
- [@chchcathedralox](http://@chchcathedralox)
The Epiphany Blessing of Homes

You are invited to ‘chalk the door’ with a sign of your Christian faith and your household’s commitment to Christ. This might be simply a cross, but you might also like to use the traditional formula:

\[20 + C + M + B + 21\]

The year 2021 enfolds the initials of the wise men (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar) which are also the initials of the Latin phrase ‘Christus mansionem benedicat’: ‘may Christ bless this house’. Four crosses separate each element of the blessing. The traditional prayer as you mark the doorpost with this formula is:

The three Wise Men, Caspar (C), Melchior (M), and Balthazar (B) followed the star of God’s Son who became human two thousand and twenty years ago (2020). May Christ bless our home (++) and remain with us throughout the new year (++). Amen.

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.


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