



*Anna and Simeon*

# THE EUCHARIST

Holy Communion

***of Candlemas***

*The Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple*

## *Candlemas*

Candlemas, or the Presentation of Christ, marks the end of Christmas, as we take a last look at the infant Jesus before turning towards the cross. For us in the northern hemisphere, it also marks the turning from winter to spring, and the shift from darkness to light.

Often called Candlemas, it has traditionally been when churches would

### ***Candlemas***

*They came, as called, according to the Law.  
Though they were poor and had to keep things simple,  
they moved in grace, in quietness, in awe,  
for God was coming with them to His temple.  
Amidst the outer court's commercial bustle  
they'd waited hours, enduring shouts and shoves,  
buyers and sellers, sensing one more hustle,  
had made a killing on the two young doves.  
They come at last with us to Candlemas  
and keep the day the prophecies came true  
we glimpse with them, amidst our busyness,  
the peace that Simeon and Anna knew.  
For Candlemas still keeps His kindled light,  
against the dark our Saviour's face is bright.*

*Malcolm Guite*

# The Gathering



Lord, the light of your love is shining,  
in the midst of the darkness, shining;  
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth you now bring us.  
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,  
fill this land with the Father's glory;  
blaze, Spirit, blaze,  
set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow,  
flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth your word, Lord,  
and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,  
from the shadows into your radiance;  
by the blood I may enter your brightness,  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness.  
Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory,  
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.  
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Graham Kendrick (b. 1950) © 1987 Make Way Music*

## GREETING



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

**Amen.**

Open me the gates of righteousness:  
**and I will enter and give thanks to the Lord.**

The Lord of glory be with you.

**The Lord bless you.**

*The president introduces the service*

Dear friends, forty days ago we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people. As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognized him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this eucharist, we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.



## PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

Hear the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ:

'I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness  
but shall have the light of life.'

Let us therefore bring our sins into his light  
and confess them 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.**

✠ 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.**

## **THE GLORIA**

**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.**

**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** *(Prayer of the Day)*

*The president introduces a period of silent prayer using these or other suitable words.*

Let us pray that we may know and share the light of Christ.

*Silence is kept.*

Almighty and ever-living God,  
clothed in majesty,  
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,  
in substance of our flesh:  
grant that we may be presented to you  
with pure and clean hearts,  
by your Son Jesus Christ 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

### *FIRST READING – MALACHI 3.1-5*

*A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi.*

Thus says the LORD God:

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*PSALM* – Psalm 24.7-10

**The Lord of hosts,  
he is the king of glory.**

Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high , O everlasting doors;  
and the King of glory shall come in.

‘Who is this King of glory?’  
‘The Lord, strong and mighty,  
the Lord, mighty in battle.’

**The Lord of hosts,  
he is the king of glory.**

Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high , O everlasting doors;  
and the King of glory shall come in.

‘Who is he, this King of glory?’  
‘The Lord of hosts,  
he is the King of glory.’

**The Lord of hosts,  
he is the king of glory.**

## *SECOND READING – Hebrews 2.14-18*

*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.*

Since the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



## GOSPEL READING

*We stand to hear the Gospel.*

*This or another acclamation may herald the Gospel reading.*

Alleluia, alleluia.

This child is the light of the nations and the glory of your people Israel.

**Alleluia.**

*When the Gospel is announced the reader says*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (2.22-40).

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation,

which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed — and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**



**SERMON**



## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Please sit or kneel*

*This response may be used*

Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

*At the end*

**Amen.**

## *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*



### THE PEACE

In the tender mercy of our God,  
the dayspring from on high has broken upon us,  
to give light to those who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

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



### TAKING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

*The president takes the gifts of bread and wine and praises God for them*

Father, in Christ there has sprung up a light for the righteous;  
accept the gifts we bring before you  
and grant that Christ may shine in us  
to the praise and glory of your name.

**Amen.**



## **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER** *(Prayer of Consecration)*

*Please sit or kneel.*

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

*or*

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.**

*The president praises God for his mighty acts and all respond*

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

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

*The president recalls the Last Supper and this acclamation is used*

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*The prayer continues and at the end we make it our own, responding boldly*

**Amen.**



## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Believing the promises of God,  
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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*

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.**

*The Agnus Dei may be said as the bread is broken.*

**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.**



## GIVING OF COMMUNION

*The president invites the congregation to receive communion, using these or other suitable words*

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

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

*HYMNS* may be sung during the administration of communion

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts.*

*Shine through the darkness.*

*Christ be our light!*

*Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has pow'r to save us.

Make us your living voice.

Longing for food, many are hungry.

Longing for water, many still thirst.

Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.

Longing for warmth, many are cold.

Make us your building, sheltering others,  
walls made of living stones.

Many the gifts, many the people,

many the hearts that yearn to belong.

Let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.

*Bernadette Farrell (born 1957)*

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## After Communion



### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna,  
who lived to welcome the Messiah:  
may we, who have received these gifts beyond words,  
prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes  
to bring us to eternal life;  
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

### NOTICES

## *The Candlemas Procession*

*The ministers gather around the font.*

*The candles are lit. All hold aloft their lighted candles and the president says*

Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light,  
pour into the hearts of your faithful people  
the brilliance of your eternal splendour,  
that we, who by these kindling flames  
light up this temple to your glory,  
may have the darkness of our souls dispelled,  
and so be counted worthy to stand before you  
in that eternal temple where you live and reign,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

# NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:  
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen  
thy salvation,

which thou hast prepared  
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:  
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son  
and to the Holy Ghost:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be  
world without end.

Amen.

## FINAL RESPONSORY

Father, here we bring to an end our celebration of the Saviour's birth.

**Help us, in whom he has been born,  
to live his life that has no end.**

Here we have offered the Church's sacrifice of praise.

**Help us, who have received the bread of life,  
to be thankful for your gift.**

Here we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.

**Help us, who have found the Lord in his temple,  
to trust in your eternal promises.**

Here we have greeted the Light of the world.

**Help us, who now bear these candles,  
never to forsake the light of Christ.**

Here we now stand near the place of baptism.

**Help us, who are marked with the cross,  
to share the Lord's death and resurrection.**

Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.

**Help us, for whom Lent is near,  
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

Here we bless one another in your name.

**Help us, who now go in peace,  
to shine with your light in the world.**

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

 **HYMN**

Ye holy angels bright,  
who wait at God's right hand,  
or through the realms of light  
fly at your Lord's command,  
assist our song,  
for else the theme  
too high doth seem  
for mortal tongue.

Ye blessèd souls at rest,  
who ran this earthly race,  
and now, from sin released,  
behold the Saviour's face,  
his praises sound,  
as in his sight  
with sweet delight  
ye do abound.

Ye saints, who toil below,  
adore your heavenly King,  
and onward as ye go  
some joyful anthem sing;  
take what he gives  
and praise him still,  
through good and ill,  
who ever lives.

My soul, bear thou thy part,  
triumph in God above,  
and with a well-tuned heart  
sing thou the songs of love;  
let all thy days  
till life shall end,  
whate'er he send,  
be filled with praise.

*Richard Baxter (1615-1691) & John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862)*