



SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

**Midnight
Eucharist**

Tuesday 24 December 2020

8.30pm

Welcome to Southwark Cathedral

Set on the south bank of the River Thames in one of the most vibrant and diverse communities in London, this building has been a constant witness in a place of change.

The first church was built on this site around the year 606. First a convent, then a monastery, it became in 1106 the Augustinian Priory of St Mary Overie. With Westminster Abbey and St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield it is one of the three remaining great monastic churches of London. At the Reformation the Priory became a parish church and it remains so for the people of Bankside. In 1905, as south London was rapidly expanding, the church was consecrated as the cathedral for the new Diocese of Southwark.

As well as a place of constant witness to our faith in Jesus Christ, this church has a momentous and proud history and has had links with many famous and influential characters including St Thomas Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens.

In the 20th century this cathedral was at the heart of the new movement in theology termed 'South Bank Religion'. This movement asked challenging questions of people about faith in the modern age which continue to be

explored at Southwark Cathedral which describes itself as 'inclusive: faithful: radical'.

Whatever has brought you here today, you are most welcome. Become part of the life here if you can; it will change your life as you encounter with us our living God.

—

Setting

Messe Solennelle · Louis Vierne

The Midnight Eucharist or Midnight Mass is one of the most popular services in the Christian year. It marks the beginning of the celebration of Christmas and the great twelve days that take us through into the New Year to the Feast of the Epiphany.

As we gather in the Cathedral this evening we are mindful that around the world Christians have been and will be gathering to celebrate this special service on this special night. Principally our thoughts are with those pilgrims who have gathered in Bethlehem to celebrate Midnight Mass at the Church of the Holy Nativity and the Church of St Catherine which stands alongside it.

The site on which the Church of the Holy Nativity stands has a very long tradition as being the place where Jesus was born. The Christian apologist Justin Martyr (c. 100–165), wrote in his Dialogue with Trypho that the Holy Family had taken refuge in a cave outside of town. Later, Origen of Alexandria (185 AD–c. 254) wrote: ‘In Bethlehem the cave is pointed out where He was born, and the manger in the cave where He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. And the rumour is in those places, and among foreigners of the Faith, that indeed Jesus was born in this cave that is worshipped and revered by the Christians.’

The first basilica on the site was begun by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine

I. Under the supervision of Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem, the construction was completed in 333. That structure was burnt down in the Samaritan Revolt of 529 and the current basilica was rebuilt in its present form in 565 by the Emperor Justinian I. One lovely feature is the very small entrance door that confronts pilgrims as they approach the church. The doorway was made smaller so that horses could not be ridden into the church. One consequence is that every visitor to the basilica enters bowed down, as if in humility.

The name of the city 'Bethlehem' means 'House of Bread'. This is because the fields that surround the city were not just the place where sheep grazed but where wheat was grown. In the Book of Ruth, which is set in Bethlehem, we read of how Ruth went out into the fields with the reapers. The city was always a place where bread was made.

In this House of Bread, on this night, Mary gave birth to Jesus and in this Eucharist in humility we approach the altar where in bread and wine we receive the one who was made flesh and dwelt among us. As John Betjeman says at the end of his poem 'Christmas' nothing can compare with this single truth that we celebrate tonight

'That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.'

The Cathedral Consort enters and then sings.

Choir

Wake, O wake ·Johann Sebastian Bach

Please stand as the Cathedral procession enters and gathers at the crib

Blessing of the Crib

The Bishop's Chaplain says

Today you will know that the Lord is coming to save us:
and in the morning you will see his glory.

Hear the words of the book of Wisdom:
When peaceful silence lay over all and night was in
the midst of her swift course, from your royal
throne, O God, down from the heavens leapt your
almighty word.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The bishop then says

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.

The Bishop turns to face the crib.

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 has been 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 lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All Amen.

*The Bishop sprinkles and censes the crib and the Consort
sings O Come 1st and 6th.*

The Greeting

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

All Amen.

Peace be with you
All and also with you.

The Bishop welcomes the congregation.

The Deacon then says

On this holy night,
shepherds approached the newborn Christ child
in humility.

With them we open our hearts to Jesus
in penitence and faith
seeking the forgiveness for which we long.

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

All 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.

All Christ, have mercy.

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

All Lord, have mercy.

The Bishop 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.

All Amen.

We sit for

The Gloria

Sung by the Consort.

*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.*

We stand for

The Collect

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration
that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

Eternal God,
in the stillness of this night
you sent your almighty Word
to pierce the world's darkness with the light
of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for,
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven,
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ,

who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

We sit for

First Reading

Isaiah 9. 2-7

Read by Constance Boggis-Rolfe.

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.

All Thanks be to God.

Carol

Sung by the Consort.

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht
Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

Silent night, holy night
All is sleeping, alone watches
Only the close, most holy couple.
Blessed boy in curly hair,
Sleep in heavenly peace!
Sleep in heavenly peace!

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Hirten erst kundgemacht
Durch der Engel Halleluja,
Tönt es laut von fern und nah:
Christ, der Retter ist da!
Christ, der Retter ist da!

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds just informed
By the angels' hallelujah,
It rings out far and wide:
Christ the Savior is here!
Christ the Savior is here!

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht
Lieb' aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund'.
Christ, in deiner Geburt!
Christ, in deiner Geburt!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, oh how laughs
Love out of your divine mouth,
For now the hour of salvation strikes for us.
Christ, in Thy birth!
Christ, in Thy birth!

Second Reading

Titus 2. 11–14

Read by Maggie Still.

A reading from the Letter of St 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.

All Thanks be to God.

We stand for

The Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people. Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Gospel

Luke 2. 1–20

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

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

All 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.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Bishop of Southwark, the Right Reverend
Christopher Chessun

*We keep a period of silence to meditate on the words of
the Gospel and Sermon and then stand for*

The Creed

**All 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.**

We sit or kneel for the

Intercessions

Led by Nigel Paine.

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,

All 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,

All 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,

All 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,

All 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,

All 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,

All 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,

All hear our prayer.

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth,
and earth is raised to heaven.

Keep in safety all those who have passed through
death in the hope of heaven.

Holy God,

All hear our prayer.

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate
his birth.

Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God,

All hear our prayer.

The Bishop concludes the prayers by saying

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.

All Amen.

We stand for

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'.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

We sit for

Offertory Anthem

God is with us · John Tavener

We stand for

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All 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:

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

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.

Great is the mystery of faith.

**All Christ has died : Christ is risen :
Christ will come again**

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 Mother of Jesus,
St Joseph 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.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
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 this day 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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

**All God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

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.

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

The president makes their communion saying

The Body of Christ

We respond

All Amen.

The Blood of Christ

We respond

All Amen.

Please follow the directions of the Stewards and make your way to the communion stations via the side aisles, returning to your seat by the central aisle. Communion is given in one kind only and in silence. If you would like to receive a blessing please bow your head. The blessing will be given in silence. Please return to your seat by the side aisles and respect your distance at all times.

The choir sings Agnus Dei and the

Communion Anthem

Bethlehem Down · Peter Warlock

Please stand for the final prayers.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

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.

All Amen.

**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.**

Blessing and Dismissal

The Lord be with you

All 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.

All Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.

All Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary became the
God-bearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.

All Thanks be to God.

Voluntary

Please assist the Stewards and Vergers by taking unwanted orders of service with you to the west end of the Cathedral as you leave. Thank you.

Thank you for joining us. We look forward to welcoming you back.

If you have not set up a regular donation to the Cathedral, please consider supporting us by making a donation. You can donate at the Cathedral by using the contactless donation points.

You can also donate online by visiting southwarkcathedral.org.uk/support-us/, or by texting SOUTHWARK (Amount) to 70085 (one standard rate message also charged).

Thank you for any support that you are able to give.

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