

Sunday 1st February 2026

Informal Communion - Candlemas

Welcome & Notices

Introduction

[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. 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.] These words not on screen

Opening Prayer

**Come to us, Lord, as we gather here today.
Live with us, Lord through our worship and our prayers.
Help us to hear you, help us to know you
and help us to be with you, today, and always.
Amen.**

Opening Hymn: Jesus Stand Among Us

**Jesus stand among us
At the meeting of our lives;
Be our sweet agreement
At the meeting of our eyes.
O Jesus, we love you, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

**So to you we're gathering
Out of each and every land;
Christ the love between us
At the joining of our hands.
O Jesus, we love you, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

**Jesus, stand among us
At the breaking of the bread;
Join us as one body
As we worship you, our Head.**

**O Jesus, we love you, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

**O Jesus, we love you, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.**

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Gloria (said)

**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.**

Collect for the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

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

**Lord Jesus Christ,
light of the nations and glory of Israel:
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy
to your heavenly Father,
your God, and our God.
Amen.**

First Reading: Malachi 3: 1-5 (Leigh)

3 'I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,' says the LORD Almighty.

2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. **3** He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, **4** and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

5 'So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me,' says the LORD Almighty.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song: Great is the darkness

Great is the darkness that covers the earth
Oppression, injustice and pain
Nations are slipping in hopeless despair
Though many have come in your name.
Watching while sanity dies
Touched by the madness and lies.

*Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out your spirit we pray.
Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out your spirit on us today.*

May now your Church rise with power and love
This glorious gospel proclaim
In every nation salvation will come
To those who believe in your name.
Help us bring light to this world
That we might speed your return.

Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus

***Pour out your spirit we pray.
Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out your spirit on us today.***

**Great celebrations on that final day
When out of the heavens you come
Darkness will vanish, all sorrow will end
And rulers will bow at your throne.
Our great commission complete
Then face to face we shall meet.**

***Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out your spirit we pray.
Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out your spirit on us today.***

(repeat chorus)

Gerald Coates, Noel Richards © 1992 Thankyou Music

Gospel Acclamation

Today the Lord is presented in the Temple
in substance of our mortal nature.

Alleluia.

Today the Blessed Virgin comes
to be purified in accordance with the law.
Alleluia.

Today old Simeon proclaims Christ
as the light of the nations and the glory of Israel.
Alleluia. Praise to Christ, the light of the world.

Gospel Reading Luke 2: 2-40 (Leigh)

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the

Lord'),²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: 'a pair of doves or two young pigeons'.

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ 'Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.'

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.'

³³ The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: 'This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon - Lindsey

Song: We Believe (to serve as the Creed)

We believe in God the Father,

maker of the universe,
and in Christ his Son our Saviour,
come to us by virgin birth.
We believe he died to save us,
bore our sins, was crucified.
Then from death he rose victorious,
ascended to the Father's side.

**Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Name above all names.
Name above all names.**

We believe he sends his Spirit,
on his church with gifts of power.
God his word of truth affirming,
sends us to the nations now.
He will come again in glory,
judge the living and the dead.
Every knee must bow before him,
then must every tongue confess.

**Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Jesus, Lord of all, Lord of all,
Name above all names.
Name above all names.**

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Prayers of Intercession (Richard)

Let us pray to the Father through Christ who is our light and life.

Father, your Christ is acclaimed as the glory of Israel:
look in mercy on your Church, sharing his light.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Father, your Christ in his temple brings judgement on the world:
look in mercy on the nations, who long for his justice.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Father, your Christ, who was rich, for our sakes became poor:
look in mercy on the needy, suffering with him.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Father, your Christ is the one in whom faithful servants find their
peace:
look in mercy on the departed, that they may see your salvation.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Father, your Christ is revealed as the one destined to be rejected:
look in mercy on us who now turn towards his passion.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord God, you kept faith with Simeon and Anna,
and showed them the infant King.
Give us grace to put all our trust in your promises,
and the patience to wait for their fulfilment;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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.

cf John 8.12

[silence]

**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.**

Absolution

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *us*,
pardon and deliver *us* from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness,
and keep *us* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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 the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.78,79

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn: Come Down, O Love Divine *(instrumental)*

**Come down, O love divine, seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.**

**O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
And let thy glorious light shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illumining.**

**Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;
True lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.**

**And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
For none can guess its grace, till they become the place
where-in the Holy Spirit finds a dwelling.**

Richard F Littledale (1833-90)

Offertory Prayer

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.

Eucharistic Prayers

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.

It is indeed right and good,

always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ, who is one with you from all eternity.
For on this day he appeared in the Temple
in substance of our flesh
to come near to us in judgement.
He searches the hearts of all your people
and brings to light the image of your splendour.
Your servant Simeon acclaimed him as the light to lighten the nations
while Anna spoke of him to all who looked for your redemption.
Destined for the falling and rising of many,
he was lifted high upon the cross
and a sword of sorrow pierced his mother's heart
when by his sacrifice he made our peace with you.
And now we rejoice and glorify your name
that we, too, have seen your salvation
and join with angels and archangels
in their unending hymn of praise:
saying

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
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 your Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share in this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of 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

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.**

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.**

**We do not presume to come to this your table,
merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.**

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

**Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.**

Amen.

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

The Giving of Communion

[Joyce to choose an instrumental track]

Post Communion Prayer:

**God of glory, you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life:
fill us with your Holy Spirit
that though us your light of glory
may shine in all the world.**

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lighting of Candles

Joyce to choose short instrumental music while this is happening]

We are going to light our candles and say a prayer together. We will then take the candles home to be a symbol the presence of Christ in our homes.

Candles distributed and lit. Remain lit for the prayer.

Prayer

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 city where you live and reign,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Nunc Dimittis

**A light to lighten the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.**

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:
your word has been fulfilled.

**A light to lighten the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.**

My own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people.
**A light to lighten the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.**

A light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

**A light to lighten the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.**

Luke 2.29-32

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever.

Amen.

**A light to lighten the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.**

[Candles out]

Final Responsory

Father, we have sung your praise with shepherds and angels:
may Christ be born in our hearts today.

Praise to Christ our light.

We have shared in the joy of Simeon and Anna;
help us, like them, to trust your word.

Praise to Christ our light.

We have greeted Jesus, the light of the world;
may we be filled with the light of your love.

Praise to Christ our light.

Sharing Time

Final Hymn: Lord the light of your love is shining (Shine Jesus Shine)

**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 into 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.

*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.*

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.

*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. (repeat chorus)*

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The Blessing

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
fill you with radiance
and scatter the darkness from your path.
Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,
gladden your eyes and warm your heart.
Christ, the Dayspring from on high,
draw near to guide your feet into the way of peace.
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The Conclusion

We stand near the place of new birth.
Let us shine with the light of your love.
We turn from the crib to the cross.
Let us shine with the light of your love.
We go to carry his light.
Let us shine with the light of your love.
Thanks be to God.

Prayer ministry at the front and refreshments at the back.