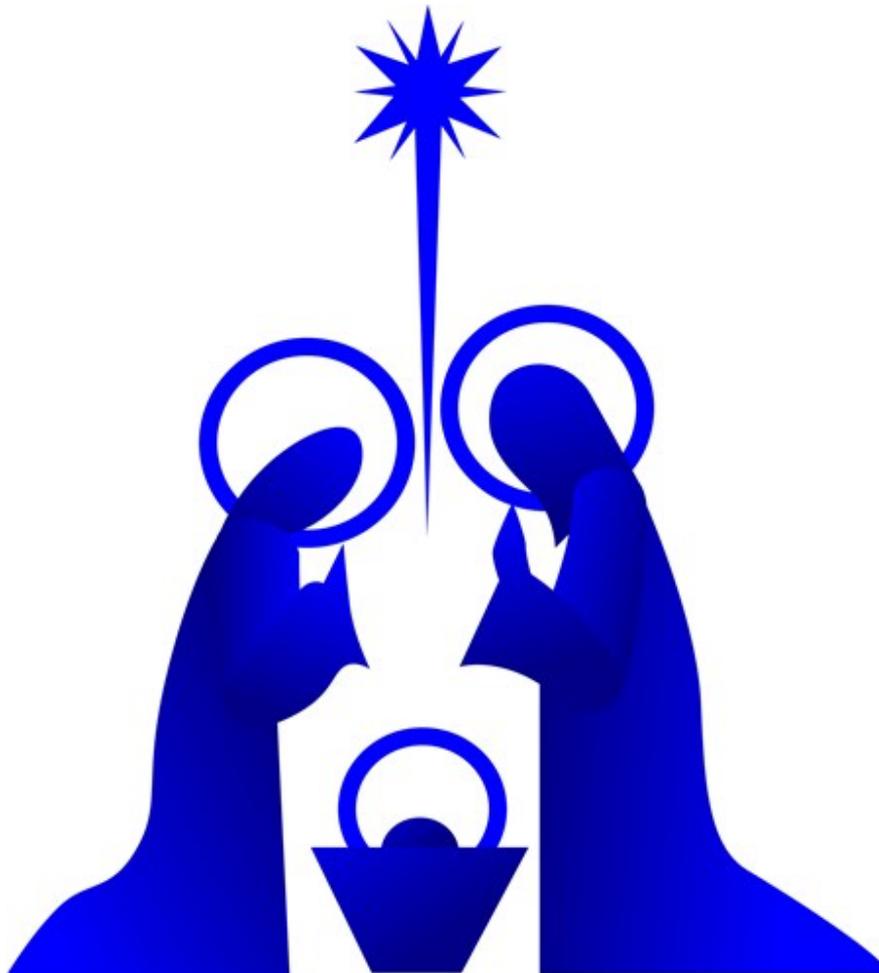


St Matthew's Church  
Chichester Road, Croydon



Christmas Morning 2017



Welcome to St Matthew's on this Christmas morning. We wish you God's richest blessings as we worship the new-born King together. Please join in the words in **bold**.

Please remember to silence your mobile!

Our Celebrant and Preacher is  
Revd Chidi Mbanude.

## ¶ The Gathering

### ♪ Carol ♪

God rest you merry, gentlemen,  
let nothing you dismay!  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
was born on Christmas day,  
to save us all from Satan's power  
when we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
comfort and joy;  
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

From God our heavenly Father  
a holy angel came;  
the shepherds saw the glory  
and heard the voice proclaim  
that Christ was born in Bethlehem —  
and Jesus is his name:

'Fear not,' then said the angel,  
'Let nothing cause you fright;  
to you is born a Saviour  
in David's town tonight,  
to free all those who trust in Him  
from Satan's power and might.'

The shepherds at these tidings  
rejoiced in heart and mind,  
and on the darkened hillside  
they left their flocks behind,  
and went to Bethlehem straightway  
This holy Child to find:

And when to Bethlehem they came,  
Where Christ the Infant lay,  
they found Him in a manger  
where oxen fed on hay;

and there beside her new-born child  
His mother knelt to pray:

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
all people in this place!  
with Christian love and fellowship  
each other now embrace,  
and let this Christmas festival  
all bitterness displace:

*Traditional possibly 18th century; adapted by Jubilee Hymns*

'Do I not fill heaven and earth?'  
says the Lord.

**Now the Word is made flesh and laid  
in a narrow manger.**

From eternity to eternity you are God,  
**and now we see you as a  
newborn child.**

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
**and also with you.**

## Lighting of the Christmas Candle

**Holy Jesus,  
by being born one of us,  
and lying humbly in a manger,  
you show us how much God loves  
the world.**

**Let the light of your love always  
shine in our hearts, until we reach  
our home in heaven,  
and see you on your throne of glory.  
Amen.**

*Please sit or kneel*

## The Confession and Absolution

### Invitation to confession

The sun of righteousness has dawned  
with healing in his wings.

Let us come to the light of Christ,  
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

*cf Malachi 4.2*

Lord of grace and truth,  
we confess our unworthiness  
to stand in your presence as  
your children.

We have sinned:  
**forgive and heal us.**

The Virgin Mary accepted your call  
to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our disobedience to your will.  
We have sinned:  
**forgive and heal us.**

Your Son our Saviour  
was born in poverty in a manger.  
Forgive our greed and rejection  
of your ways.

We have sinned:  
**forgive and heal us.**

The shepherds left their flocks  
to go to Bethlehem. Forgive our  
self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:  
**forgive and heal us.**

The wise men followed the star  
to find Jesus the King.  
Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:  
**forgive and heal us.**

May the God of all healing and forgiveness  
draw you to himself  
and cleanse you from all your sins,  
that you may behold the glory of his Son,  
the Word made flesh,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Please stand*

## **Gloria in Excelsis**

**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 Christmas Day**

*A period of silent prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your birth at Bethlehem  
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven  
touching earth:  
accept our heartfelt praise  
as we worship you,  
our Saviour and our eternal God.  
**Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy Scripture.

**Our hearts and minds are open.**

### First Reading

*Isaiah 62.6-12*

Thus says the LORD:

<sup>6</sup>Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,

I have posted sentinels;  
all day and all night  
they shall never be silent.

You who remind the Lord,  
take no rest,

<sup>7</sup>and give him no rest  
until he establishes Jerusalem  
and makes it renowned throughout the  
earth.

<sup>8</sup>The Lord has sworn by his right hand  
and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain  
to be food for your enemies,  
and foreigners shall not drink the wine  
for which you have laboured;

<sup>9</sup>but those who garner it shall eat it  
and praise the Lord,  
and those who gather it shall drink it  
in my holy courts.

<sup>10</sup>Go through, go through the gates,  
prepare the way for the people;  
build up, build up the highway,  
clear it of stones,  
lift up an ensign over the peoples.

<sup>11</sup>The Lord has proclaimed  
to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,  
'See, your salvation comes;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.'

<sup>12</sup>They shall be called, 'The Holy People,  
The Redeemed of the Lord';  
and you shall be called, 'Sought Out,  
A City Not Forsaken.'

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Second Reading

*Titus 3.4-7*

When the goodness and loving-kindness  
of God our Saviour appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved  
us, not because of any works of  
righteousness that we had done, but  
according to his mercy, through the water  
of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>6</sup>This Spirit he poured out on us richly  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour, <sup>7</sup>so that,  
having been justified by his grace, we  
might become heirs according to the  
hope of eternal life.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

### ♪ Carol ♪

See Him lying on a bed of straw,  
a draughty stable with an open door;  
Mary cradling the babe she bore:  
the Prince of glory is His name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem  
to see the Lord of Love again:  
just as poor as was the stable then,  
the Prince of glory when He came!*

Star of silver, sweep across the skies,  
show where Jesus in the manger lies;  
shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise  
to see the Saviour of the world!

Angels, sing again the song you sang,  
sing the glory of God's gracious plan;  
sing that Bethl'em's little baby can  
be salvation to the soul.

Mine are riches, from Your poverty;  
from Your innocence, eternity;  
mine, forgiveness by Your death for me,  
Child of sorrow for my joy.

*Michael Perry (1942-1996) © 1965 Mrs B Perry/  
Jubilate Hymns*

## **The Gospel**

Today Christ is born:

**alleluia.**

Today the Saviour has come:

**alleluia.**

Today the angels sing on earth:

**alleluia. Glory to God in the highest.**

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

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

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Luke 2.8-20*

In that region there were shepherds living  
in the fields, keeping watch over their  
flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord  
stood before them, and the glory of the  
Lord shone around them, and they were  
terrified. <sup>10</sup>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:

<sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of  
David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the  
Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will  
find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and  
lying in a manger.' <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there  
was with the angel a multitude of the  
heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the highest  
heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom  
he favours!

<sup>15</sup>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.'  
<sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found  
Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the  
manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made  
known what had been told them about  
this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were  
amazed at what the shepherds told them.  
<sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and  
pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>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.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated*

## **The Sermon**

Let us stand to declare our faith in God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## **The Creed**

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family,  
in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts by faith,  
and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.  
We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

*Please sit or kneel*

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Unto us a child is born,  
unto us a Son is given.  
Let us bring before God the needs of the  
world.

Wonderful counsellor,  
give your wisdom to the rulers

of the nations.  
Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Mighty God,  
make the whole world know  
that the government is on your shoulders.  
Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father,  
establish your reign of justice and  
righteousness for ever.  
Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Prince of peace,  
bring in the endless kingdom  
of your peace.  
Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

Almighty Lord,  
**hear our prayer**  
**and fulfil your purposes in us,**  
**as you accomplished your will**  
**in our Lord Jesus Christ.**  
**Amen.**

## ¶ **The Liturgy of the Sacrament**

*Please stand*

### **The Peace**

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and  
on earth peace to all in whom he delights.

*cf Luke 2.14*

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

Let us offer one another a sign of  
God's peace.

*We offer our gifts to God through a collection  
during the following carol:*

## ♪ **Carol** ♪

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting Light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to men on earth.  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love;

How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive Him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel!

*Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)*

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

## The Eucharistic Prayer

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.**

*Please sit or kneel*

Lord of all life,  
you created the universe,  
where all living things reflect your glory.  
You give us this great and beautiful earth,  
to discover and to cherish.

You give us happy times, like Christmas  
Day, and things to celebrate.  
In these we taste your kingdom,  
a feast for all your children.

And now we give you thanks  
because in coming to dwell among us,  
Jesus shows us your glory and brings us  
out of darkness  
into your own marvellous light.

You made us all,  
each wonderfully different,  
to join with the angels  
and sing your praise:

**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.**

We thank you, loving Father,  
because, when we turned away,  
you sent Jesus, your Son.  
He gave his life for us on the cross  
and shows us the way to live.

Send your Holy Spirit  
that these gifts of bread and wine  
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

On the night before he died,  
when darkness had fallen,  
Jesus took bread.  
He gave thanks, broke it,  
and shared it with his disciples, saying:  
'This is my body, given for you.  
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten,  
he took the cup of wine,  
gave thanks, and shared it with his  
disciples, saying:  
'This is my blood, poured out for you and  
for many,  
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup  
we celebrate his love, his death,  
his risen life.

As you feed us with these gifts,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
and change us more and more  
to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Help us, Father, to love one another,  
as we look forward to that day  
when suffering is ended,  
and all creation is gathered in  
your loving arms.

And now with St Matthew, St Andrew and  
all your saints  
**we give you glory,  
through Jesus Christ,  
in the strength of the Spirit,  
today and for ever.  
Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God  
here among us,  
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**

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.**

### **Agnus Dei**

**Jesus, Lamb of God:  
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins:  
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world:  
give us your peace.**

### **Invitation to Communion**

Christ is the true bread which has come  
down from heaven.  
**Lord, give us this bread always.**

*Communicant members of any Christian  
Church are invited to receive Holy  
Communion. Children and those who are not  
confirmed are welcome to come forward for  
a blessing. If you wish to receive a blessing  
please bow your head.*

### **♪ Carol during Communion ♪**

In the bleak mid-winter  
frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
snow on snow,  
in the bleak mid-winter  
long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him  
nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee away  
when He comes to reign:  
in the bleak mid-winter  
a stable-place sufficed  
the Lord God almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels  
may have gathered there,  
cherubim and seraphim  
thronged the air;  
but only His mother  
in her maiden bliss  
worshipped the Belovèd  
with a kiss.

What can I give Him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man  
I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give Him,  
give my heart.

*Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)*

### **Prayer after Communion**

*Silence is kept.*

God our Father, whose Word has come  
among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:  
may the light of faith make our hearts  
bright and shine through our words

and deeds; through him who is  
Christ the Lord.

**Amen.**

**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.**

♪ **Carol** ♪

Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold Him come,  
offspring of a Virgin's womb!  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:  
Hail, the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
risen with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
born that man no more may die,  
born to raise the sons of earth,  
born to give them second birth.

*Charles Wesley, (1707-1788) and others*

## ¶ **The Dismissal**

### **Blessing**

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered  
into one things earthly and heavenly,  
fill you with peace and goodwill  
and make you partakers of the divine  
nature;

and the blessing of God Almighty, the  
Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be  
upon you and remain with you all  
those whom you love and all those for  
whom you pray this Christmas Day and  
for evermore.

**Amen.**

Go in peace.

Proclaim the Word made flesh.

**Glory, thanks and praise to God.**

# **Wishing you a truly Blessed Christmas and a Peaceful New Year**

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