



*The Parish Church of St. Lawrence Little Stanmore
alias Whitchurch*



**The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Sunday, 10th January, 2021**

Welcome to our Parish Eucharist - please observe the following throughout:

- It is mandatory to wear a face covering/mask in church unless you are exempt.
 - Sit on your own, or with members of your household/bubble, in one of the marked socially distanced places.
 - Stay in your place, except at the distribution of Holy Communion.
 - The congregational responses and texts should be said, not sung, and in a normal conversational tone
– not in a loud voice.
-

Entrance Antiphon *Cf. Mt 3: 16-17*

After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened,
and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered:
This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

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

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Introduction

Today is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. We learn that God the Father blesses his "Beloved", his Son Jesus, who, with the Holy Spirit, will bring healing and peace to the whole world.

Penitential Act

Let us confess our sins and demonstrate God's love to all around us.

Lord, you have shown us how to care for others.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, you call us to be a healing presence in the world.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, you teach us to appreciate water and the gifts of the natural world.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

**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

Almighty ever-living God,
who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan
and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him,
solemnly declared him your beloved Son,
grant that your children by adoption,
reborn of water and the Holy Spirit,
may always be well pleasing to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

First Reading *Isaiah 55:1-11*

Come to me and your soul will live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy corn without money, and eat, and, at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant out of the favours promised to David. See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples, a leader and a master of the nations. See, you will

summon a nation you never knew, those unknown will come hurrying to you, for the sake of the Lord your God, of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *Isaiah 12*

R/ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Truly, God is my salvation,

I trust, I shall not fear.

For the Lord is my strength, my song,

he became my saviour.

With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation. **R/**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!

Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!

Declare the greatness of his name. **R/**

Sing a psalm to the Lord

for he has done glorious deeds;

make them known to all the earth!

People of Zion, sing and shout for joy,

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **R/**

Second Reading | *John 5:1-9*

Jesus Christ came by water and blood

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot him loves the child whom he begets. We can be sure that we love God's children if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us; this is what loving God is – keeping his commandments; and his commandments are not difficult, because anyone who has been begotten by God has already overcome the world; this is the victory over the world – our faith.

Who can overcome the world? Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God: Jesus

Christ who came by water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood; with the Spirit as another witness – since the Spirit is the truth – so that there are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood, and all three of them agree. We accept the testimony of human witnesses, but God’s testimony is much greater, and this is God’s testimony, given as evidence for his Son.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *cf. Jn 1:29*

Alleluia, alleluia!

John saw Jesus coming towards him, and said:

This is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

Alleluia!

The Gospel

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mark 1:7-11 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you'

In the course of his preaching John the Baptist said:

‘Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.’

It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

**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.**

Prayers of Intercession *These responses may be used*

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

(or)

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

And at the end

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

The Peace

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
and also with you.

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice
at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good
and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, the offerings
we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son,
so that the oblation of your faithful
may be transformed into the sacrifice of him
who willed in his compassion
to wash away the sins of the world.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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 truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the waters of the Jordan
you revealed with signs and wonders a new Baptism,
so that through the voice that came down from heaven
we might come to believe in your Word dwelling among us,
and by the Spirit's descending in the likeness of a dove
we might know that Christ your Servant
has been anointed with the oil of gladness
and sent to bring the good news to the poor.

And so, with the Powers of heaven,
we worship you constantly on earth,

and before your majesty
without end we acclaim:

**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.**

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 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 Our Blessed Lady, S Paul,
S Lawrence 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. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

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.**

**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.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon *Jn 1: 32, 34*

Behold the One of whom John said:
I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

Prayer after Communion

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord,
that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son,
we may be your children in name and in truth.
Through Christ our 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.**

Final Blessing

May the Lord grant you grace to know our common purpose
as prophetic witnesses and bridges of reconciliation and healing.
And may almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In most years, this feast is celebrated on the Sunday after Epiphany. In today's Gospel we hear John the Baptist contrast his baptism of repentance with the baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John the Baptist says that he has baptized with water, but that the one who is to come will baptize with the Holy Spirit. John's baptism was not yet a Christian baptism; it was a preparation for the Christian Baptism we celebrate today, and through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received. In accepting John's baptism, Jesus, though sinless, united himself with all sinners.

The baptism of Jesus is reported in each of the three Synoptic Gospels - Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Clearly, Jesus' baptism was an event of great significance for Jesus and for the early Christian community. Mark and Luke report the story from Jesus' perspective; the voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, the voice from heaven speaks to all who are present. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism shows that

something new is beginning through the baptism and ministry of Jesus.

The baptism of Jesus is considered an important manifestation of God in the person of Jesus, another epiphany. Jesus' baptism inaugurates his mission. Mark's Gospel moves quickly from the report of Jesus' baptism to Jesus' temptations in the desert to his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest. The end of the ministry of John the Baptist is the beginning of Jesus' ministry. In an analogous way, our Baptism inaugurates our mission as Christians.

Surprisingly, on this the last day of the Christmas season the Gospel does not tell a story from Jesus' childhood. Instead the Gospel reveals Jesus' relationship to God: the Son of Mary and Joseph is also God's own Son. We believe that through Baptism we are also made children of God.

THE RECTOR WRITES. . .

I'm sure that many of you like me sat up quite late watching the events unfolding in Washington DC as the United States Capitol building was invaded by an angry mob who were trying to prevent the certification, by the Congress, of Joe Biden as the next President of the USA.

The scenes were shocking – as I am sure most people would agree – and sent shock waves around the world. How can this happen in America which has long boasted that it values and protects Democracy and has been critical of other countries which don't have such a democratic system? How can there be such a degree of hatred between people of the same nation? Is there any hope for humanity?

At the same time, we have entered another period of lockdown as we battle against the spread of the corona virus. And that might make us want to despair as we see the freedoms and the lifestyle that we so enjoy being restricted yet again.

And yet, we see the good side of humanity coming to the fore. Neighbours are looking out for one another. People are shopping for those who cannot do it for themselves. Our local businesses have risen to the challenge of making sure folk have what they need.

And in a sense, we are seeing the two faces of humanity. The bad – as seen in Washington DC, and the good – as typified by folk in our local communities and in similar acts of kindness throughout the world. Perhaps we might even say we have seen the presence of darkness and light, of good and evil!

This weekend we reflect on the Baptism of Jesus. He had gone to the Jordan River to be baptised by John the Baptist and, as he came out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And he heard those awesome words coming from heaven, "You are my Son, the beloved, with you I am well pleased". It was an event which was to change Jesus' life and set him on a journey which was to end on the cross in Jerusalem. But as he made that journey, he preached a gospel of love and reconciliation.

Jesus saw the dark-side of humanity but he believed that good could always defeat evil and that is what his followers have believed ever since.

So, do I despair when I see events unfolding as they did last night in the USA? Yes, in a way I do. But I also believe that God can work through us to bring about his kingdom on earth "as it is in heaven". May all people respond to his calling and make this world a better and more caring place for all.

WE REALLY NEED YOUR CONTINUED FINANCIAL HELP THROUGH COVID-19! It would be really good if you could continue with your weekly/month thank offerings if at all possible. You can transfer money electronically by using the following details:

Account Name: *Parochial Church Council of St Lawrence Whitchurch*

Bank: *HSBC*

Sort Code: *40 - 11 - 58*

Account: *20126942*

Reference: *Just use your surname!*

A WISH FOR THE NEW YEAR

That you have someone to love,
have meaningful work to do,
and have things greater than yourself to believe in;
that you have a reason to smile every day
and a shoulder to cry on when you need it;
that you keep your integrity
even when the choices are hard;
that you love deeply,
give freely, forgive willingly, laugh easily,
and live well enough to be grateful for every day

In Your Prayers This Week

*Please pray for our Parish and for its needs; for the dead of the wars of the twentieth century;
for those parts of the world, where there is currently violence or civil strife;
for those in Harrow in trouble or in need as a result of the present Tier 4 Regulations*

The Sick *Those who are known to us personally and those whose names are read out in Church,
the patients and staff of The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital & St Luke's Hospice,
those who live in Henry Nihill House, Knights Court & Whitchurch Lodge
the elderly & housebound of our Parish.*

The Departed

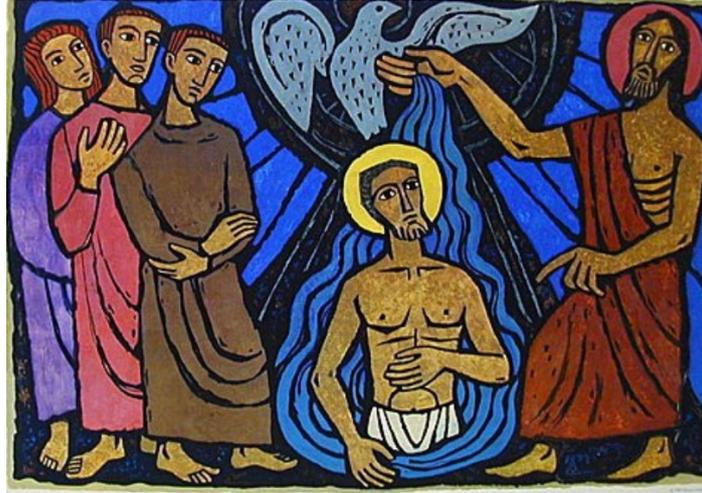
Recently *all those who have died as a result of the Covid -19 pandemic, those who died alone,
or through the violence of others and Ann Atkins, Bryan Davies, Joan Ducker, Carlos Da Fortuna, Pat Lawford,
Doreen Sutton, John Waine Bishop*

Years' Mind *Rev Keith Marshall, Sheila Austin, Rose Baccarini, Phyllis Baker, Derek Barnes, Doreen Bartleman,
Lillias Bignell, Frances Booth, Paul Bugden, Meg Bushnell, Daphne Callender, Bob Clark, Sid Clewlow,
Marian Connell, Rene Cootes, Freda Cunningham, Dorothy Darby, Colin Davidge, Reg De Viel, Robina Dixon,
Den Dolling, Joan Easton, Thomas Elvins, Thora Emmerson, Hilda Freeman, William Goodbrand, Harris Graham,
Madeline Gray, Rose Green, George Hancock, Ernest Hawkins, Wilf Heppolette, Pete Hill, Margaret Howells,
Susan Hull, Dorrie Humpheries, Marjorie Hunt, John Huntley, Jean Ivemay, Frank Johnson, Beryl Kearns,
John Keeble, Sidney Kempner, Eileen Knight, Arnold Lawson, Rosella Matthey, John McKenzie, John Mitchell,
David Mullery, Ken Netsall, Olwyn Norman, Louis O'Reardon, Ivy Pike, Reg Portsmouth, Dennis Pyne,
Valerie Robinson, Iris Saywell, Dorothy Sharratt, John Smith, William Sperinck, John Talbot priest,
Florence Thickett, Sheila Turner, Edith Venn, Elsie Venters, Raymond Way, Vera Webber, Vernon Whaley.*

THIS WEEK AT S LAWRENCE LITTLE STANMORE

both here in church & online

*we are an inclusive Anglican Catholic Church (Church of England)
serving Canons Park (HA8) and its surrounding area*



10 Sun

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

10:00 The Parish Eucharist

12 Tue

09:30 The Eucharist

14 Thu

18:00 The Eucharist

17 Sun

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

10:00 The Parish Eucharist

Rector & Parish Priest - Fr Paul M Reece

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PAWS FOR THOUGHT aka THE TAIL END

One of the hardest decisions in life
is when to start middle age!

As found by George & Bertie the Rectory Retrievers