

Holy Communion for the 3rd Sunday of Epiphany



The Stour Valley Benefice

*The Parishes of Cavendish, Clare, Hundon, Poslingford,
Stoke-by-Clare & Wixoe*

- A short introduction to the Season –

The season of joyful celebration that begins at Christmas now continues through the successive Sundays of Epiphany, and the festal cycle ends only with the Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas).

The child who has been manifested to the magi at his birth is now recognized by Simeon and Anna, when he comes to be presented in the Temple according to the Law of Israel.

He is both 'a light to lighten the Gentiles' and 'the glory of God's people Israel'. But the redemption he will bring must be won through suffering; the Incarnation is directed to the Passion; and Simeon's final words move our attention away from the celebration of Christmas and towards the mysteries of Easter.



Spiritual Communion

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.

In joining with Revd Mark today as he celebrates the Eucharist from his own home, you too are able to join with him in communion. The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn - O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray

- 1 O thou, who at thy eucharist didst pray
that all thy church might be for ever one,
grant us at every eucharist to say
with longing heart and soul, 'Thy will be done:'
O may we all one bread, one body be,
through this blest sacrament of unity.
- 2 For all thy Church, O Lord, we intercede;
make thou our sad divisions soon to cease;
draw us the nearer each to each, we plead,
by drawing all to thee, O Prince of peace:
thus may we all one bread, one body be,
through this blest sacrament of unity.
- 3 We pray thee too for wanderers from thy fold;
O bring them back, good Shepherd of the sheep,
back to the faith which saints believed of old,
back to the Church which still that faith doth keep;
soon may we all one bread, one body be,
through this blest sacrament of unity.
- 4 So, Lord, at length when sacraments shall cease,
may we be one with all thy Church above,
one with thy saints in one unbroken peace,
one with thy saints in one unbounded love:
more blessed still, in peace and love to be
one with the Trinity in Unity.

William Henry Turton (1856-1938)

The Gathering

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

All: Amen.

The Greeting

Minister: The Lord be with you.

All: and also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from who no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

Minister: By the mercies of God, let us confess our sins and present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him, which is our spiritual worship.

(Romans 12:1)

Kyrie Confession

Minister: Lord Jesus, illuminate the darkness in our hearts:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Minister: Lord Jesus, open our eyes to your saving love:
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Minister: Lord Jesus, unstop our ears to hear your living word:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Absolution

Minister: 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.

Gloria in Excelsis

All: ***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.***

**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.**

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

**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.**

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

**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.**

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

The Collect

Minister: Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles
the wonder of your saving presence: renew your people
with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness
sustain us by your mighty power; through Jesus Christ

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

All: Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

The Old Testament Lesson (Genesis 14:17-20 NRSV)

After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. He blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

The New Testament Lesson (Revelation 19:6-10 NRSV)

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure' - for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are true words of God.' Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow-servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading (John 2:1-11 NRSV)

Minister: Alleluia, alleluia. Our eyes have seen your salvation, a light to enlighten the nations and the glory of your people Israel. Alleluia.

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

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Minister: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

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.**

Prayers of Intercession

Minister: Let us pray to God, the giver of all good things to the Church and to the world.
Grant that the Church may so obey the commands of God that she may be strengthened by the good wine of

his love. May we find the mystery of grace in the life of every day.

We pray for the needs of the world, for fellowship and mutual care in sorrow and in joy. Have compassion on those who have not enough for their needs, and guide those who are able to bring relief.

We ask for your blessing on our families. Bless all who are recently married or soon to be married. Give them joy at the weddings and constancy in their love.

We pray for the broken marriages and the families where bitterness has driven out love. Revive in them the first vision of their joy and restore their love in the unbounded love of Christ.

Receive the souls of those who have passed through the pleasures and troubles of this world and found the good wine at last. May they rejoice in the great wedding feast of heaven.

We offer our prayers in the name of Christ who gives abundantly to all who bring their need to him.

All: Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Minister: Christ is our peace. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old has passed away: behold, everything has become new.

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

Preparation of the Altar

Minister: God of power and love, by your Holy Spirit, draw the scattered flock of Christ into a visible unity and make your Church a sign of hope to our divided world; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Minister: The Lord be with you

All: and also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: it is right to give thanks and praise.

Minister: All honour and praise be yours always and everywhere mighty creator, ever-living God, through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord: for at this time we celebrate your glory made present in our midst.

In the coming of the magi the King of all the world was revealed to the nations.

In the waters of baptism Jesus was revealed as the Christ, the Saviour sent to redeem us.

In the water made wine the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.

Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.

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:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

Minister: Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood; 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.

Therefore, heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

All: Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

Minister: Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

**All: Blessing and honour and glory and power
 be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Minister: Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught
 us

**All: 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

Minister: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body, because we
 all share in one bread.**

The Agnus Dei

**All: 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

Minister: 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.

**All: 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.**

Prayer after Communion

Minister: Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is
the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your
word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his
glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed
to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now
and for ever. 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.

The Dismissal

Minister: May God, who in Christ gives us a spring of water welling up to eternal life, perfect in you the image of his glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be amongst you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn – Will you come and follow me

- 1 Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown,
in you and you in me?
- 2 Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?
- 3 Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
and never be the same?

Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean
in you and you in me?

4 Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

5 Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

*John L Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (1958-2019)
© 1987 WGRG, c/o Iona Community, 21 Carlton Court, Glasgow, G5 9JP, Scotland.*

Common Worship: Times & Seasons and New Patterns for Worship, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2006.

Extracts (and adapted extracts) from *The Book of Common Prayer*, the rights in which are vested in the Crown, are reproduced by permission of the Crown's Patentee, Cambridge University Press.

Scripture quotations from *The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, is copyright © The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the USA, 1989.

(January 2024)