

Holy Communion for the Third 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 for a thousand tongues to sing

- 1 O for a thousand tongues to sing
my dear Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace.
- 2 Jesus - the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.
- 3 He speaks; and, listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice;
the humble poor believe.
- 4 My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim
and spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of thy name.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

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 (Isaiah 9:1-4)

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

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.

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

The New Testament Lesson (1 Corinthians 1:10-18)

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Minister: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading (Matthew 4:12-23)

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 Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 'Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles - the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.' From that time Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.' Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

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 who has called us to his service.

Give to the Church a burning zeal to win souls for Christ. Empower the shared ministry of all believers, so that human love may serve the love of God and make it known. Let your people never be deaf when you call them to your work, whether it is great or little.

May the people who sit in darkness see the great light of God and know his presence among them. Bless all our work in this world, but help us to know that it is not the whole of life. Enrich the skills and talents of daily labour, opening them to new service for the Kingdom.

Be present with our families and all the families of this community. Increase our love for one another but save us from the clinging selfishness that will not share our security with those who have none. When we are called to be apart from one another, keep us confident that we are not separated from your protecting love.

Come close to those who have had to leave their homes and loved ones. Comfort parents who are lonely when children have gone away. As the disciples were given the power of healing, bless all those who care for the sick in mind or body.

Receive into the heavenly light those who have passed through the shadow of death. Healed of all their infirmity, may they rejoice with those who first heard the call of Jesus and walked with him in Galilee.

We pray in the name of Christ, the source of all strength to those who hear his call.

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.

Great is the mystery of faith:
**All: 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 – King of glory, King of peace

1 King of glory, King of peace,
 I will love thee;
 and that love may never cease
 I will move thee.
 Thou hast granted my request,
 thou hast heard me;
 thou didst note my working breast,
 thou hast spared me.

2 Wherefore with my utmost art
 I will sing thee,
 and the cream of all my heart
 I will bring thee.
 Though my sins against me cried,
 thou didst clear me;
 and alone, when they replied,
 thou didst hear me.

3 Seven whole days, not one in seven,
 I will praise thee;
 in my heart, though not in heaven,
 I can raise thee.
 Small it is, in this poor sort
 to enrol thee:
 e'en eternity's too short
 to extol thee.

George Herbert (1593-1633)

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