



BELFAST
CATHEDRAL

CHORAL EUCHARIST
11.00am Christmas Day
Friday 25th December 2020

Preacher:

Right Reverend George Davison - Bishop of Connor



*Please follow the instructions from the Churchwardens.
Under government guidance for the purposes of keeping
Contact Tracing Records
it is essential that you complete the following information.
Please leave this service sheet **IN YOUR SEAT**
when you leave at the end of the service.
Service sheets will be retained for 21 days, after which they will be
destroyed.*

Name(s): _____

Telephone contact: _____



The Eucharist will be celebrated and distributed in accordance with the Covid precautions as laid down by the Church of Ireland.

As a result, Communion will be in one kind only today.

Baptised members of Christian churches are welcome to join in this Eucharist.

It is the Lord's table and this invitation is given in his name.

The cathedral is open to all - please keep personal possessions with you at all times.



THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE



Music before the Service: The Holy Boy John Ireland (1879-1962)

Please stand to sing the **OPENING HYMN** (172) during the entrance of the clergy:



**O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him
born, the King of angels:**

**O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.**

**God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:**

**See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:**

**Lo! star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
we to the Christ-child
bring our hearts' oblations:**

**Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?**

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heavens above;
glory to God
in the highest:**

**Yea, Lord we greet thee,
born this happy morning,
Jesu to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing:**

*Words: 18th and 19th century latin, tr. Frederrick Oakeley (1802-80) and W. T. Brooke (1848-1917) based on
Luke 2: 11-15; Matthew 2: 11; John 1: 14
Music: Melody possibly by John F. Wade (1711-86)*

The Dean welcomes the congregation.

THE GREETING

The people who walked in darkness:
Have seen a great light.

For unto us a child is born
unto us a Son is given.

And his name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, mighty God,
The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PENITENCE

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

Lord, have mercy on us, and write these your laws in our hearts.

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

Please kneel or sit.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned in thought and word and deed, and in what we have left undone. **We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may walk in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

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

*Please stand whilst the choir sings the **GLORIA IN EXCELSIS:** Missa Brevis Joannis de Deo Kleine Orgel-Messe', Hob XXII: 7 Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)*

Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra
pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te,
gratias agimus tibi propter magnum
gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus
Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili Unigenite, Iesu Christe,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius
Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere
nobis;
qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe
deprecationem nostrum.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus
Dominus, tu solus Altissimus,
Iesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu: in
gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace to people of goodwill.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your
great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God,
almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the
Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
You are seated at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.
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.*

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have given us your only begotten Son, to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



PROCLAIMING AND RECEIVING THE WORD



Please sit for the **EPISTLE READING:** Titus 3:4-7

When the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, 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. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, 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 as the choir sings the **GRADUAL HYMN** (159)



**Good Christians all, rejoice
with heart, and soul, and voice;
give ye heed to what we say;
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!**

**Good Christians all, rejoice
with heart, and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss;
Jesus Christ was born for this;
he has opened heaven's door,
and all are blessed for evermore.
Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christians all, rejoice
with heart, and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save:
calls you one, and calls you all,
to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!**

Words: John Mason Neale (1818-66) alt.

Tune: IN DULCI JUBILO German medieval carol melody harm. R. L. de Pearsall (1795-1856)

Please remain standing to join in singing the **ALLELUIA**:



A hallowed day has dawned upon us: come, you nations, worship the lord,
for today a great light has shone down upon earth

Please remain standing and turn towards the Gospel reader:

THE GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:8-20

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



In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

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.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 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.



*Please sit for the **SERMON** by the Right Reverend George Davison, Bishop of Connor*

*Please stand and face east for the **NICENE CREED**:*

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 by the Holy Spirit of 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.



THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE



Please kneel or sit for the prayers

Versicle: Lord, in your mercy

Response: **hear our prayer.**

concluding with:

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

THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

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.

Please stand.

THE PEACE

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all on whom His favour rests. *Luke 2:14*

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



CELEBRATING AT THE LORD'S TABLE



Please remain standing during the singing of the **OFFERTORY HYMN (198)**:



The musical notation consists of four staves of music in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef. The music is written in a simple, melodic style with various note values and rests. The first staff contains 10 measures, the second 10 measures, the third 10 measures, and the fourth 10 measures. The music concludes with a double bar line.

**The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields
as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep:
*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.***

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night:**

**And by the light of that same star,
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for the king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went:**

**This star drew nigh to the north-west,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay:**

**Then entered in those wise men three
most reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence,
their gold and myrrh and frankincense:**

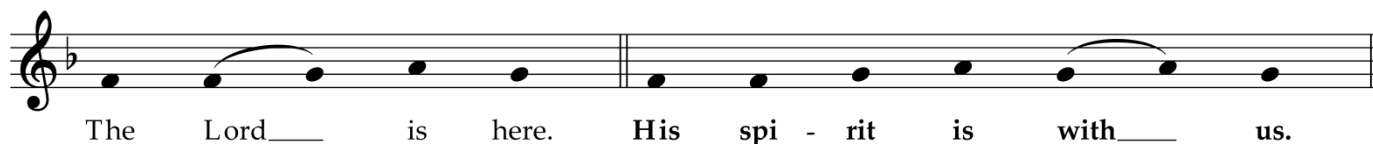
**Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought
and with his blood mankind hath bought:**

*Words: William Sandys' Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern (1833) based on Luke 2: 10-11 & Matthew 2: 1-11
Tune: THE FIRST NOWELL English traditional carol melody from William Sandys' Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern (1833) harm. John Stainer (1840-1901)*

THE TAKING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

Word made flesh, life of the world, In your incarnation you embrace our poverty; by your spirit may we share your riches. **Amen.**

Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us
therefore let us celebrate the feast.



Father, almighty and everliving God, at all times and in all places it is right to give you thanks and praise;

You have given Jesus Christ your only Son to be born of the Virgin Mary, and through him you have given us power to become the children of God:

And so with all your people, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

The choir sings the **SANCTUS:**

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra
gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of
your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

Blessed are you, Father, the creator and sustainer of all things; you made us in your own image, male and female you created us; even when we turned away from you, you never ceased to care for us, but in your love and mercy you freed us from the slavery of sin, giving your only begotten Son to become man and suffer death on the cross to redeem us; he made there the one complete and all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world: he instituted, and in his holy Gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until he comes again:

On the night that he was betrayed he took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, 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 when he had given thanks to you, he gave it to them, saying, Drink this, all of you, for 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, Father, with this bread and this cup we do as Christ your Son commanded: **we remember his passion and death, we celebrate his resurrection and ascension, and we look for the coming of his kingdom.**

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; and as we eat and drink these holy gifts, grant by the power of the life-giving Spirit that we may be made one in your holy Church and partakers of the body and blood of your Son, that he may dwell in us and we in him:

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, Almighty Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

Please kneel or sit.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, so we say:

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

We being many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

Christ is the true bread which is come down from heaven:

Lord, give us this bread always.

*Please remain seated whilst the choir sings the **AGNUS DEI:***

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi, dona nobis pacem.

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
the world, grant us peace.*

THE COMMUNION

If you wish to receive communion, please move to the Quire Steps when directed by the cathedral wardens. Those seated on the North (shop) side of the Nave will move first, then those seated on the South (Baptistery) side afterwards. Please keep 2m social distance at all times and continue wearing your face covering until you return to your seat. Only then remove your face covering to take the wafer bread. Please indicate if you require a Gluten-free wafer. If you wish to receive a blessing only, please keep your hands by your side or cross your arms.

During communion, the organist plays A Christmas Canon on 'Forest Green' Andrew Carter (b. 1939)

*The choir sings the **ANTHEM:** The Sans Day Carol Cornish traditional carol arranged by John Rutter CBE (b. 1945)*

Now the holly bears a berry
as white as the milk,
And Mary bore Jesus,
all wrapped up in silk:

*And Mary bore Jesus Christ
our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree in the greenwood,
it was the holly. Holly! Holly!
And the first tree in the greenwood,
it was the holly!*

Now the holly bears a berry
as green as the grass,
And Mary bore Jesus,
who died on the cross:

Now the holly bears a berry
as black as the coal,
And Mary bore Jesus,
who died for us all:

Now the holly bears a berry,
as blood is it red,
Then trust we our Saviour,
who rose from the dead:

THE GREAT SILENCE

When all have received communion, the presiding minister, other ministers and people keep silence for reflection.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: May the light of faith illumine our hearts, and shine in our words and deeds, through him who is Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of 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.

*Please stand as the choir sings the **CLOSING HYMN (160):***



**Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all you 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 us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:**
*Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

**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 we no more may die;
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth:
*Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.***

Words: Charles Wesley (1708-88) based on Luke 2: 1-20

Music: MENDELSSOHN from Mendelssohn's Festgesang (1849) adpt. 1855 W. H. Cummings (1831-1915)

THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

May the obedience of Mary, the humility of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the joy of the angels, and the peace of the Christ Child be God's gift to you this Christmas time and always; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

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

*Please remain quiet during the **ORGAN VOLUNTARY***

I saw three ships Richard Elliott (b. 1957)



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Services Sunday 27th December:
The First Sunday of Christmas and Feast of St John the Evangelist
11.00am Morning Prayer: A Service of the Word *Preacher: The Dean*
*There will be **no** 3.30pm Afternoon Service.*

Cathedral Closures:

The Cathedral will be closed from lunchtime today until Monday 4th January, 2021 in line with Covid Restrictions.
The Office will also be closed from 25th December until Monday 4th January 2021.

Thanks from the Dean

Our thanks at this most challenging Christmas time to: our Readers, Cathedral Vergers, and to the technical team of Cameron McGaughey and Bishop Trevor Williams who have produced the cathedral Livestream.

Thanks to all who worked so hard to decorate the cathedral with seasonal arrangements of flowers and greenery.

Thanks to the Members of Belfast Cathedral Choir, Mr Jack Wilson Assistant Director of Music & Organist and to Mr Matthew Owens, Director of Music,

Our thanks also to everyone who has assisted in any way with this year's Black Santa Appeal, and to you for attending this Christmas Morning Eucharist.

May you each know the close presence of Christ at this Christmas, and God's health and strength for all that lies ahead in 2021.

