

The Parish Church  
of St. Paul, Wokingham



**Midnight Mass  
and Blessing of the Crib  
to Celebrate the Birth  
of Jesus Christ**

# **The Solemn Procession**

*(We stand as the choir enter)*

**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,  
O come, let us adore him,  
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;  
*O come...***

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

**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?  
*O come...***

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God, in the highest;  
*O come...***

*(As the procession bearing the Christ-child  
moves through the church, we turn to face the crib.)*

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

## **The Blessing of the Crib**

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father, on this night  
your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary  
for us and for our salvation; + bless this crib  
which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth.  
May all who see it be strengthened in faith  
and so receive the fullness of life he came to bring;  
who is alive and reigns forever. **Amen.**

*The crib is censed and sprinkled with Holy Water.*

## **The Greeting**

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

Blessed are you, Sovereign God, our light and our salvation,  
to you be glory and praise for ever.

When all in peaceful silence lay then

from your throne on high leapt your almighty Word.

In this mystery of the Word made flesh you sent forth your Son,  
the firstborn of all creation, to dispel the darkness of our night.

**He is our Christ, the light of the world,  
and him we acclaim as all creation sings to you.**

**Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## Prayers of Penitence

Christ the light of the world has come  
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.  
In his light let us examine ourselves.  
Let us call to mind our sins and our failings,  
and let us make our confession to Almighty God.

*In silence, we reflect on our failure to love others as God loves us.*

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.  
Forgive our disobedience to your will.  
We have sinned: **forgive us and heal us.**

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty in a manger.  
Forgive our greed and our rejection of your ways.  
We have sinned: **forgive us and heal us.**

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.  
Forgive our self-interest and our lack of vision.  
We have sinned: **forgive us 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.**

## Gloria in Excelsis

*(We remain standing)*

***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**

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

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.**

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

*(We sit for the reading)*

*At the end of the reading:*

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
from heaven's all gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and man at war with man, hears not  
the love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise ye men of strife  
and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophet-bards foretold,  
when, with the ever-circling years,  
comes round the age of gold;  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

## **Gospel Reading**

*(We turn to face the Deacon at the crib)*

Today Christ is born: **Alleluia.**

Today the Saviour has come: **Alleluia.**

Today the angels sing on earth:

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

*As the gospel is announced:*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*After the Gospel has been read:*

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(We remain standing until the procession has returned)*

## **The Sermon**

### **The Nicene Creed**

*(We stand)*

**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,  
*he became 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**

*(We sit or kneel to pray)*

Kneeling among the shepherds, gazing on the face of the newborn King, let us join our prayers with those of Mary and Joseph and the angels who sing “Glory to God in the highest, and peace on the earth.”

*At the end of each prayer:*  
**Holy God: hear our prayer.**



# The Liturgy of the Sacrament

## The Peace

The Lord be with you: **and also with you.**  
This most holy night the angels sang,  
“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.**

*We exchange a greeting of peace with those around us.*

## Offertory Hymns

*(During these carols a collection will be taken for the mission and ministry of the parish. If you are a UK tax payer, please put your donation in a white Gift Aid envelope and fill in the details on the front.)*

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around.**

**“Fear not,” said he, (for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind);  
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and all mankind.**

**“To you, in David’s town, this day  
is born of David’s line  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:**

**“The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
and in a manger laid.”**

**Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus  
addressed their joyful song:**

**“All glory be to God on high  
and on the earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to men  
begin and never cease.”**

**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!

## **The Preparation of the Gifts**

*(We remain standing)*

Blessed be God,  
by whose grace creation is renewed,  
by whose love heaven is opened,  
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.  
**Blessed be God forever.**

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

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

## Offertory Prayer

Lord, let praise and thanksgiving  
be the pure offering of this holy night's feast;  
and as your eternal Word takes up our human nature,  
so may we be taken up into the divine life of Christ,  
who is alive and reigns, now and forever. **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.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty creator, ever-living God....

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:

**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!**

*We remember the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper,  
and the Deacon says:*

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

*The Eucharistic Prayer concludes with the doxology:*

Through Christ, and with Christ and in Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,

for ever and ever. **AMEN!**

# **The Lord's Prayer**

*(We sit or kneel)*

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,  
let us pray 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.**

## **The 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**

**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**

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.

**Lord, give us this bread always.**

*Please wait until you are instructed to come forward  
to receive communion by a Sidesperson.*

*If you usually receive Communion in your own Church, or you have done  
so in the past, you are welcome to receive the Body and Blood of Christ  
here tonight. Please tell the priest if you need a gluten free wafer.  
If you would prefer to receive a prayer of Blessing, simply come forward  
with everyone else carrying this order of service.*

*During Communion the Choir will sing Christmas music.*

## **Post Communion Prayer**

*(We stand)*

God our Father,  
in this night you have made known to us again  
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him  
until the day dawns  
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.  
**To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise,  
that when we were still far off  
you met us in your Son and brought us home.  
Dying and living, he declared your love,  
gave us grace and opened the gate of glory.  
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;  
we who drink his cup bring life to others;  
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.  
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,  
so we and all your children shall be free,  
and the whole earth live to praise your name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

# A Christmas Poem

## The Blessing

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

May the Father,  
who has loved the eternal Son  
from before the foundation of the world,  
shed that love upon you his children. **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who by his incarnation gathered into one  
things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,  
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## Recessional Hymn

*(As the procession moves west,  
we turn to face the Door and the world beyond.)*

**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 with man to man 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 us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth.**

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

## **The Dismissal Gospel**

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

Hear the good news of the Word made flesh according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the end:* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.

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

*Please sit and enjoy the organ voluntary, and the sanctity of this place,  
and the holiness of this night. When you leave, please do so quietly.*

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***We wish you a joyful, and a holy, and a happy Christmas!***

There are a wide range of events in the Parish during the week, as well as on Sundays, for people of all ages- see websites:

[www.spauls.org.uk](http://www.spauls.org.uk)

[www.thechurchonwoosehill.org.uk](http://www.thechurchonwoosehill.org.uk)



St Paul's  
Church  
*Wokingham*

Fr Richard Lamey (Rector) 0118 327 9116

Fr Patrick King (Associate Priest) 0118 977 3397

Mthr Deborah Davison (Asst. Curate) 0118 978 7658

The Parish Office (weekdays am) 0118 979 2122

[office@stpauls-wokingham.org.uk](mailto:office@stpauls-wokingham.org.uk)



The angel said to the shepherds:  
“Do not be afraid, for see,  
I bring you good news of great joy  
for all the people- to you is born  
this day a Saviour.” (Luke 2)



*And, perhaps less poetic but not less heartfelt...*  
He (Santa) sprang to his sleigh,  
to his team gave a whistle,  
and away they all flew like the down of a thistle:  
but I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night.”

# **Main Sunday Services in the Parish Church of St. Paul**

## **8.00am Low Mass**

A traditional language service in the style of 1662 Book of Common Prayer

## **9.30am Parish Mass**

A modern language sung Mass with a sermon and music led by the outstanding choir. During term time 'J-Club' for 4-11 year olds meets in the Parish Rooms.

The service is followed by Fair Trade coffee!

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# **The Community Church of St. Nicholas, Emmbrook**

meets in Emmbrook Village Hall

## **11.00am Community Eucharist**

A modern language Eucharist with Sunday School for children in term time.

Sunday service is always followed by Fair Trade coffee!

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# **Woosehill Church**

is situated on Chestnut Way, near The Hawthorn's Primary School.

The main service of the week is at **10am on a Sunday**. Services are friendly and relaxed and reflect the ecumenical roots of the Church community. Provision is also made for children during the service.

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## **Evening Services in the Parish**

### **6.15pm Sung Evensong 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays (with Benediction 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday)**

One of the great glories of Anglicanism – Sung Evensong, followed by the quiet and reflective devotion of Benediction on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, and by a Special themed Sermon from a visiting Preacher on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

### **6.15pm Mass for Healing & wholeness (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday)**

An opportunity to receive anointing and the laying-on-of-hands

**6.15pm (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday) at Woosehill Church, Quiet and Reflective Evening Service**

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