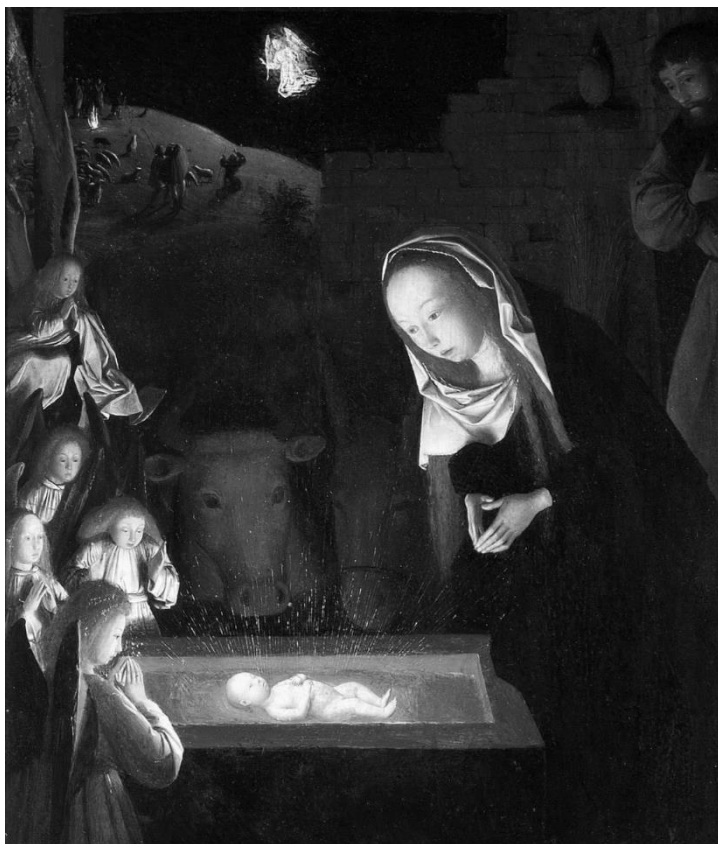


The Parish of St Paul, Wokingham

Midnight Mass

with the blessing of the crib



St Paul's
Church
Wokingham

 **DIOCESE of OXFORD**
A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world

Introduction

Welcome to this house of prayer. We are a Church family committed to welcoming all those who come as God's precious and beloved child, whatever their age or race, sexuality, or experience, background or confidence in Church. We only become the Church God is calling us to be when everybody is made welcome and everybody is free to contribute and join in.

Anybody, of any age, who has been baptised in any Christian Church, is warmly invited to receive Holy Communion here. You are welcome to receive the bread and the wine, or, if you prefer, to take the bread only.

Communion can be received either at the altar rail or in your pew. Please tell the priest if you need a gluten-free wafer. If you would prefer to receive a prayer of blessing please come forward with everyone else and keep your head bowed at the rail. If you would like to receive communion or a blessing in the pew, please tell one of the welcomers (the people wearing name badges).

Welcome home.

*Please keep talking to a minimum before the service begins
to allow yourself and others to prepare to encounter God*

¶ The Gathering

Opening carol

Please stand to sing the opening carol.

During the carol, the altar is honoured with incense.

The Greeting

The priest says

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

All **Amen.**

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

The priest introduces the service.

Prayers of Penitence

The priest introduces the 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 and confess our sins.

God our Father,
you sent your Son full of grace and truth:
forgive our failure to receive him.

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus our Saviour,
you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Spirit of love,
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:
forgive the hardness of our hearts.

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

The priest says

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.

All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

All stand to sing

**All 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.**

The Collect

The priest says

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
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.**

Please sit.

¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

First Reading

A reading from the Old or New Testaments is read. At the end, the reader says,

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Carol

Please stand to sing the carol.

Gospel Reading

The deacon or priest says,

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

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

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After the reading

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

A sermon is preached.

The Creed

Please stand. It is customary to kneel or bow at the words in italics.

**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

Please sit or kneel.

After each petition, one of these responses is used:

Lord, in your mercy

All **hear our prayer.**

At the end, we all say

Merciful Father,

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

¶ *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*

The Peace

Please stand. The priest says

This 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

All and also with you.

You are invited to share the sign of peace with those around you, by shaking hands, waving, or bowing, and saying 'Peace be with you.'

The Preparation of the Altar

A carol is sung and the gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar on behalf of the congregation

A collection is taken to support the mission and ministry of St Paul's.

When the altar is prepared and the gifts and people have been honoured with incense, the priest says,

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

**All 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 Church.**

Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

All Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Please remain standing if you are able. The priest says or sings

The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All It is right to give thanks and praise.

The priest says or sings the Eucharistic preface, calling to mind the great works of God in bringing about our salvation.

All sing together

**All 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.**

The priest recalls the Last Supper, when Christ gave us the Eucharist, and says the Words of Institution by which the bread and wine are consecrated for us. The priest then says

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

The priest continues in prayer, concluding

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.
All Amen.

Please sit or kneel. Silence is kept.

The Lord's Prayer

The priest introduces the Lord's Prayer.

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

The Breaking of the Bread

The priest breaks the consecrated bread and says

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

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

As the bread is broken, all sing

**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.**

The Giving of Communion

The priest holds the consecrated bread and says

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
 but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

*The priest and people receive Holy Communion. Please come to the altar if
you wish when invited by the sidespeople.*

*If you normally receive communion in your own church or have done so in the
past, you are very welcome to do so here.*

During communion carols are sung.

Post-Communion Prayer

The priest says

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.

All **Amen.**

Blessing of the Crib

Carol

A carol is sung as the procession goes to the crib.

Blessing of the Crib

All turn to face the crib. The priest says

All Our help is in the name of the Lord
who has made Heaven and earth.

Let us pray.

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,
that all who see it may be strengthened in faith
and receive the fullness of life he came to bring,
who is alive and reigns
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The crib is sprinkled with holy water and honoured with incense.

¶ The Conclusion

Blessing

The priest says

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with peace and goodwill
and make you partakers of the divine nature;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

The deacon or priest says

Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The ministers leave the church as an organ voluntary is played. Please be seated, and stay and enjoy the music, the holiness of this place, and the joy of this night. If you wish to leave before the end of the voluntary, please do so quietly.

We wish you a happy and holy Christmas.

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