

The Parish of St Paul, Wokingham

The Parish Mass

during the Christmas season



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.

The Season of Christmas

Christmas isn't just one day.

After the joy of Christmas Day, the season stretches on, allowing us to spend time celebrating the great mystery that is the Incarnation of the Son of God, the moment when God became human, so that we might become like God.

The Christmas season is punctuated by two great feasts. The first is the Epiphany commemorating the visit of the Magi and celebrating Christ's manifestation to the whole world. The second is Candlemas, the 40th day of Christmas, celebrating his presentation in the Temple in Jerusalem. At that point, our eyes turn to this extraordinary baby's future: his path leads to the Cross of Calvary for our salvation.

¶ The Gathering

Processional hymn

Please stand to sing the opening hymn. See the boards on the pillars or Pews News for the hymn numbers.

During the hymn, 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, then all say

All Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.

The Kyrie Eleison ('Lord, have mercy') is sung.

All Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. 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, 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. Amen.**

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

The Collect

The priest says

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

All

Let us pray.

The priest says the collect of the day and all respond

All **Amen.**

¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

First Reading

Please sit.

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.

Gospel Reading

Please stand. The Gospel is read from the midst of the congregation as a sign of the presence of Christ among us.

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 bow your head 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.**

or

Lord, hear us.
All **Lord, graciously hear us.**

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 introduces the Peace, and then says

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. This is done by shaking hands, by waving, or by bowing, and saying 'Peace be with you.'

The Preparation of the Altar

A hymn is sung.

During the hymn, 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.**

The priest says a prayer over the gifts and all respond

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 and all say

**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,
 because 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.

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 a hymn is sung by all, and then an anthem sung by the choir

Post-Communion Prayer

The priest says the post-communion prayer set for the day, then all say

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 Conclusion

Notices

Notices are given and banns of marriage read.

Final hymn

A hymn is sung.

Blessing

Please remain standing. The priest says

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

The priest says a blessing, which ends

and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among 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 use the music for prayer and stillness, or leave the church quietly if you need to.

Coffee and refreshments are served in the Parish Rooms after mass: you are very warmly invited to come along.

If this is your first visit to St Paul's, please introduce yourself to one of the clergy, who will be delighted to meet you and have a chat. Please take the weekly 'Pews News' home so you can know what is happening in the life of the church: maybe there will be something that you might want to join in.

You can also get regular updates from our weekly email newsletter on the parish website: <https://www.spauls.co.uk>

*If you have any questions, do contact the church office:
church.office@spauls.co.uk / 0118 979 2122.*

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