

## CAMEL-ALLEN CHURCHES

WORSHIP AT HOME - SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 2021

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (CANDLEMAS)



*Today we celebrate Jesus as the light of the world, recognised as such by Simeon as he joyfully welcomed this long-awaited child at his presentation in the temple. Subsequently this day became the one when household and church candles were gathered to be blessed for use in the year ahead – hence ‘Candlemas’.*

*Traditionally this service marks the end of our Christmas/Epiphany services as we pack away the Crib and turn towards Lent and Easter.*

*In these dark days of winter and the darkness of the pandemic we look for light to comfort and bring us hope. You might like to gather a variety of candles, large or small, to light as we begin our service – we will use one or more at various points as a symbol of Christ the Light of the World.*

*Wherever ‘here’ is for you today - The Lord is here*  
**His Spirit is with us**

### **Psalm 24 - Entrance into the Temple**

- <sup>1</sup> The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it,  
the world, and those who live in it;
- <sup>2</sup> for he has founded it on the seas,  
and established it on the rivers.
- <sup>3</sup> Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?
- <sup>4</sup> Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,  
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,  
and do not swear deceitfully.
- <sup>5</sup> They will receive blessing from the Lord,  
and vindication from the God of their salvation.
- <sup>6</sup> Such is the company of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.
- <sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.
- <sup>8</sup> Who is the King of glory?  
The Lord, strong and mighty,  
the Lord, mighty in battle.
- <sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.
- <sup>10</sup> Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord of hosts,  
he is the King of glory.

## Hymn

Light of the world  
You stepped down into darkness  
Opened my eyes, Let me see  
Beauty that made this heart adore you  
Hope of a life spent with you

Here I am to worship  
Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that you're my God  
You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy  
Altogether wonderful to me

King of all days  
So highly exalted  
Glorious in heaven above  
Humbly you came to the earth you created  
All for love's sake became poor  
And I'll never know how much it cost  
To see my sin upon that cross

*(Tim Hughes 2000)*



## Confession and Absolution

*You might like to hold a candle as we seek and receive God's forgiveness...*

How much it cost to see my sin upon that cross...

Jesus shine as a light in the dark places of our lives.  
Illuminate those things in us that grieve the Father  
and scatter the darkness from our path.

Lord forgive us when we are drawn to the darkness,  
**Lord have mercy.**

Lord forgive us when we blame others for the darkness  
**Christ have mercy.**

Lord forgive us for failing to reflect your light  
**Lord have mercy.**

May Almighty God,  
who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,  
bring us his pardon and his peace,  
now and forever.

**Amen**

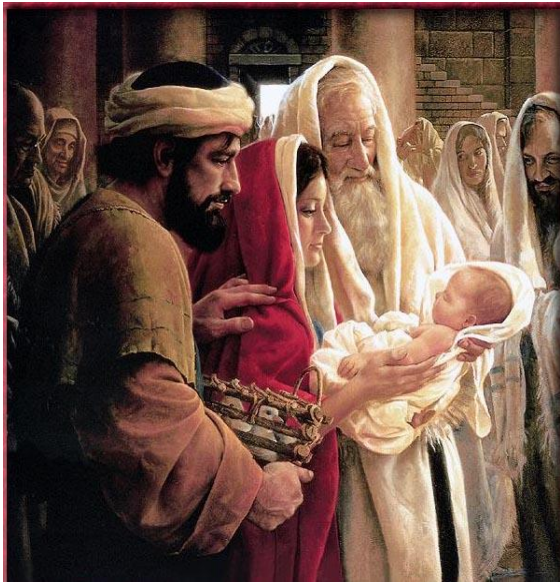
## Hymn

Come down, O love divine, seek Thou this soul of mine,  
And visit it with Thine own ardour glowing.  
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,  
And kindle it, Thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn, 'til earthly passions turn  
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
And let Thy glorious light, shine ever on my sight,  
And clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

Let holy charity mine outward vesture be,  
And lowliness become mine inner clothing;  
True lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,  
And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,  
Shall far out pass the power of human telling;  
For none can guess its grace, till we become the place  
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling.



### Reading Luke 2.22-40 Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male

shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.'

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

## Reflection

Women and children not safe in their own homes due to abuse; the prejudice highlighted by the 'Black lives matter' movement, still rife in our society; the inequalities leading to the rise in the need for foodbanks; constant attempts on-line and by phone to scam the vulnerable and unworthy. And then there is this week's shocking and sad milestone of more than 100,000 dead from Covid 19 in our own country alone. How many are grieving around the world? The darkness all around us is only too evident.

And what about within us too; which of us can claim to be all sweetness and light? Aren't there things in all our lives, petty actions, unworthy thoughts and destructive attitudes that we are glad to keep hidden from others? (Or is it only me?)

Old Simeon in our Gospel reading recognised the infant Jesus as '*a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.*' Light then for everyone, the Light of all the world!

This light of Christ shines in the dark places of our world and our hearts, illuminating the darkness for what it is and bringing cleansing purity and hope. Showing God's way of love and forgiveness: bringing us hope.

What in these dark days is Christ's light illuminating? The new shoots of spring; the selfless dedication of so many key-workers; wonderful knowledge and hard work resulting in new treatments and

vaccines. Small acts of love and kindness that lift our hearts and spirits.

Pause for a moment and consider what has encouraged you this week?

For me it was a bullfinch visiting my bird-feeder after a long absence; a note of appreciation, and emails from Archdeacon Audrey and the Canon Precentor at the Cathedral saying, 'we are praying for you all', as our churches came-up in the Diocesan prayer-diary. Little things perhaps, but light in the darkness non-the-less: welcome reminders of the love of God in these difficult days.

Jesus *is* the light of the world, bringing forgiveness, wholeness and hope. So, as we used to say in our childhood games, 'pass it on!' How might you pass on the light of Christ this week?



## Hymn

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only light,  
Sun of righteousness, arise,  
triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Dayspring from on high, be near;  
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn  
unaccompanied by thee:  
joyless is the day's return,  
till thy mercy's beams I see,  
till they inward light impart,  
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine;  
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
fill me, radiancy divine;  
scatter all my unbelief;  
more and more thyself display,  
shining to the perfect day.

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the church.

**This is our faith, we believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### **Prayers – you might like to hold a candle as you pray - add in your own thoughts and prayers**

Light of the world, you stepped down into darkness...  
We thank you for the light we see, for ...

We pray for your world, so often in darkness ...

For the leaders of the nations, we pray for....

We bring before you those suffering in body, mind or spirit, praying especially for ...

We pray for your church, that we might take up the challenge of sharing the light of Christ. We ask that ...

We pray for one-another, wherever we are worshipping today, for your blessing upon ...

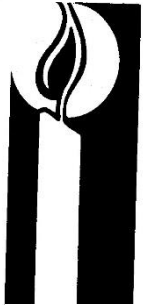
We bring ourselves before you, asking ...

**Light of the world, shine in our hearts, Lord we pray. Amen**

### **We say the Lord's prayer and a Celtic collect**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name....

**Christ, as a light illumine and guide me.  
Christ as a shield, overshadow me.  
Christ under me; Christ over me;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.  
This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.**



**Be in the heart of each to whom I speak;  
in the mouth of each who speaks to me.  
This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.  
Christ as a light; Christ as a shield;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.**



### **Closing Hymn**

Lord, the light of your love is shining  
In the midst of the darkness, shining  
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us  
Set us free by the truth you now bring us  
Shine on me, shine on me

*Shine, Jesus, shine  
Fill this land with the Father's glory  
Blaze, Spirit, blaze  
Set our hearts on fire*

*Flow, river, flow  
Flood the nations with grace and mercy  
Send forth your word  
Lord, and let there be light*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence  
From the shadows into your radiance  
By the blood I may enter your brightness  
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness  
Shine on me, shine on me

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
So our faces display your likeness  
Ever changing from glory to glory  
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story  
Shine on me, shine on me

### **Blessing – hold a candle as we pray**

Christ, whose glory fills the skies fill you with radiance  
and scatter the darkness from your path. **Amen**

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,  
gladden your eyes and warm your heart. **Amen**

Christ, the dayspring from on high,  
draw near to guide your feet into the way of peace  
as you reflect his light in the world. **Amen**

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