'No-one has ever seen God; the only Son who is close to the Father's heart has made him known'

John 1:18

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist
3rd January 2021
Christmas 2B

Services at MtE are now live-streamed (live broadcast) via our YouTube channel. Cameras are principally directed at the lectern and table/sanctuary but shots will sometimes be taken from the back of the building (generally during hymns and communion).

COVID-19 health measures

- Please wear a mask in the church, unless you have an exemption, have a leadership role, or need to remove it to receive communion. We will join in congregational singing in the service but masks should still be worn during the singing.

- Please observe the usual hand sanitation routines on entering and leaving the building

- Please observe the appropriate distanginc between yourself and others who are not members of your family – whether seated or standing (family groups may move their seats closer together)

- Please see the relevant part of the service order regarding the distribution of the communion elements

Preparing for Worship Today

- Today's service is also being live-streamed for participation of those who can't join us physically today.
- Congregational responses are printed in ***bold italics***.
- Pray for those who will be leading us in our worship today!

A Service of Word and Sacrament

Prelude

The Gathering of the People of God

Processional

We stand as the Scriptures are brought into the worship space.

Call to Worship

The Lord be with you!
And also with you!

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.
He grants peace within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat. [Psalm 147:12-13]
Arise, shine, for your light has come;
the glory of the LORD has risen upon us!

Prayer of invocation

Hymn 246

1. Christ is the world's light, he and none other;
born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high.

1. Christ is the world's peace, he and none other;
no one can serve him and despise his brother.
Who else unites us, one in God the Father?
Glory to God on high.

3. Christ is the world's life, he and none other;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother —
he, who redeems us, reigns with God the Father:
Glory to God on high.

4. Give God the glory, God and none other;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;
give God the glory, God in man my brother:
Glory to God on high.

Frederick Pratt Green
1903–2000

Words by permission Stainer & Bell, London
Arrangement from the *English Hymnal* by permission Oxford University Press

Greeting and Welcome

With the Children

The Word Spoken: Scripture and Preaching

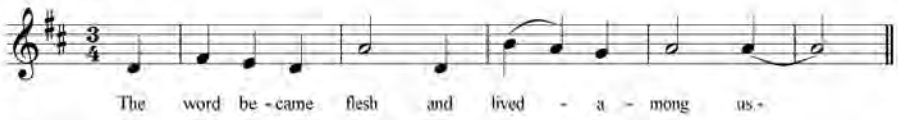
The Testimony of Scripture

We do not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes
from the mouth of God

First Reading Ephesians 1: 3-14

Psalm 147:12-20 *The Psalms – Psalms and Canticles for Singing*

Organ, then cantor, then all together:



The word became flesh and lived among us.

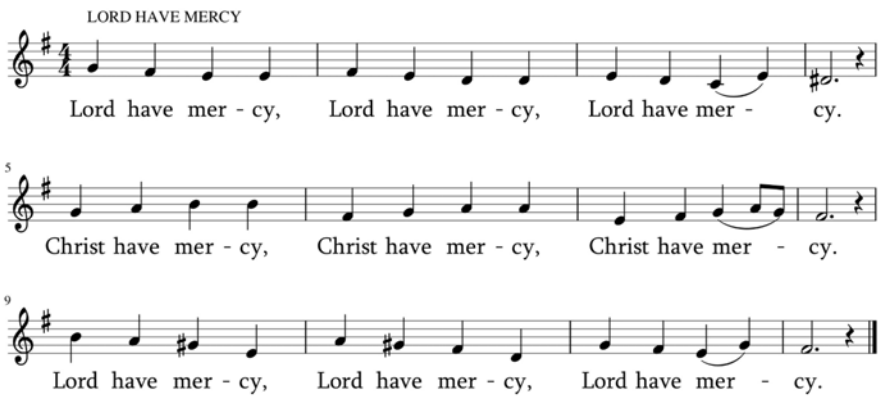
Gospel John 1:6-18

This is the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Light of the world

The Preaching of the Word

The text of the sermon will normally be available after worship and online

Prayer of Confession



Lord, have mercy; (3x)
Christ, have mercy; (3x)
Lord, have mercy. (3x)

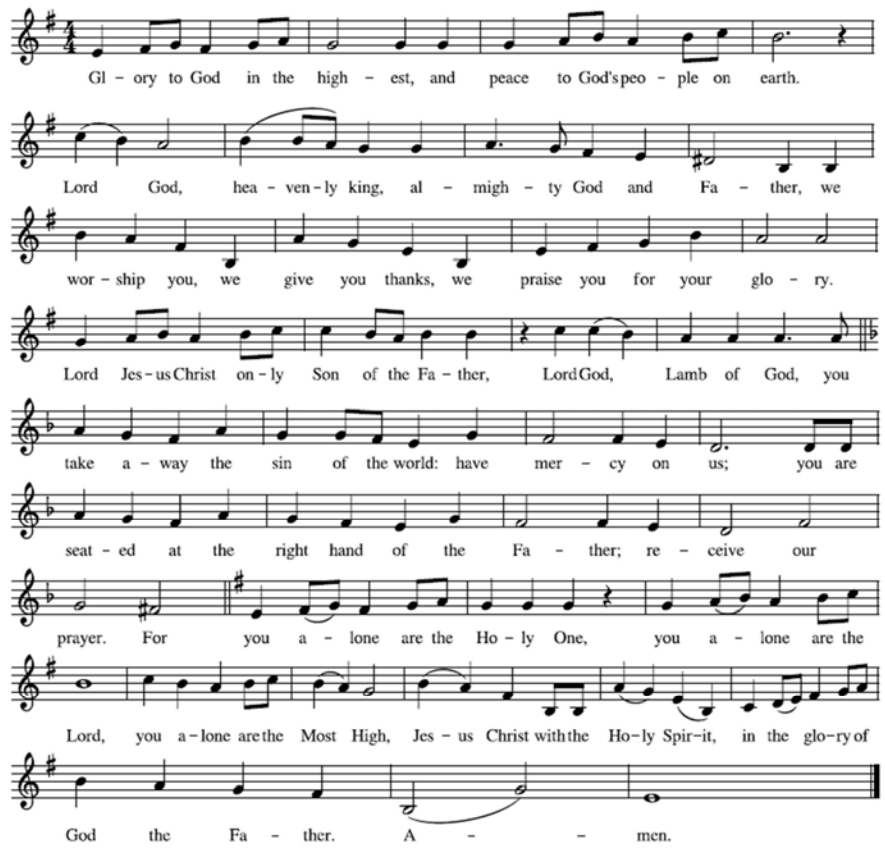
Declaration of Forgiveness

(We stand)

…hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:
Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

Doxology



The Peace

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

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 became truly human.
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,
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 Visible Word: Eucharist

Hymn 197

1. God's Son came to bless us,
from sin to release us,
as a servant lowly,
yet our God most holy,
bore the cross to save us,
hope and freedom gave us.

2. Still Christ comes within us,
still his voice would win us
from the sins that hurt us,
would to truth convert us;
from our folly spares us,
and his own declares us.

3. So, as you have known him,
be prepared to own him;
do not spurn him coldly,
but still trust him boldly;
for our Lord receives us,
heals us, and forgives us.

4. Christ, all grace possessing,
comes to us in blessing;
to his Supper leads us,
with himself he feeds us,
love and mercy showing,
peace on us bestowing.

5. Come then, O Lord Jesus,
from our bondage free us,
in your love enfold us,
in true faith uphold us.
Let us here confess you,
till in heaven we bless you.

The Bohemian Brethren (1544)
attrib. Johann Roh c.1480–1547
tr. based on Catherine Winkworth 1827–78

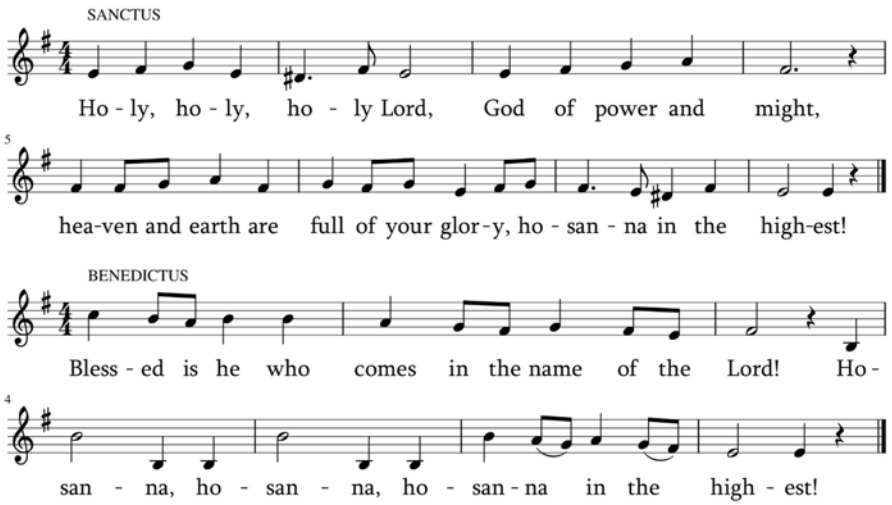
(We remain standing until after the Lord's Prayer)

The Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

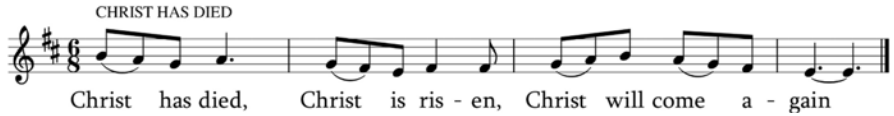
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.
(The prayer continues…)

…And so we praise you
with the faithful of every time and place,
joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation
in the eternal hymn:



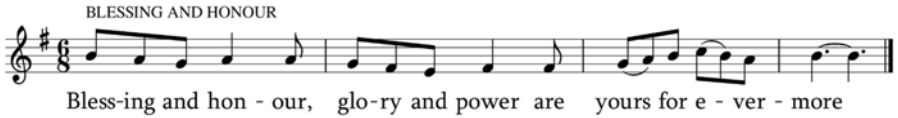
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

(The prayer continues…)



Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

(The prayer continues…)



Blessing and honour, glory and power

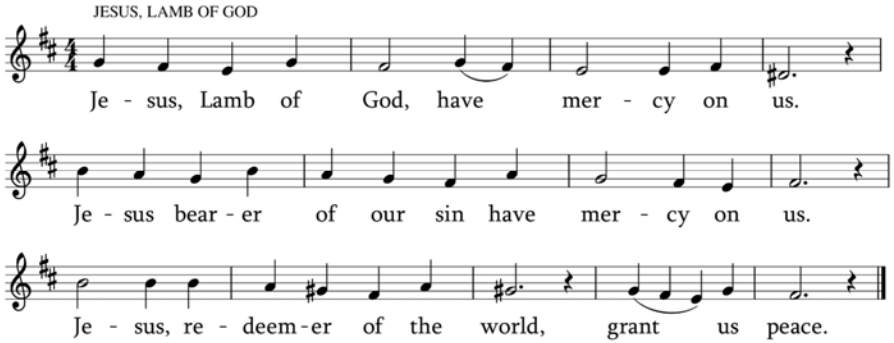
are yours forever more.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

(The people sit)

The Breaking of the Bread



Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sin, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.

The Communion

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

The Eucharist in the context of COVID-19. Given the present health crisis, the distribution of communion will be limited to one of the church's historic practices – 'under one kind', or receiving the bread only. The bread will be broken at the table after the hands of the celebrant have been sanitised, and the bread will be covered until that point.

The bread will be served to members who present themselves in a single file down the centre of the church; please maintain the usual C-19 distancing while waiting to receive. AND, please feel free to refrain from receiving under the current circumstances, if this feels appropriate to you.

Prayers of the People

(Names for inclusion in the prayers may be recorded in the book in the narthex)

[Offering]

For the time-being, financial offerings will not be collected from the pews but should be made in the designated offering box as you enter the church. If you miss the opportunity, you can put it in the box after the service!)

Notices

The Sending Forth of the People of God

Hymn 160

1. Father all-loving and ruling in majesty,
judgment is yours, and condemns all our pride;
stir up our rulers and people to penitence,
sorrow for sins that for vengeance have cried.

2. Blessèd Lord Jesus, born humbly in poverty,
sharing a stable with beasts at your birth,
stir us to work for your justice and charity,
truly to care for the poor upon earth.

3. Come, Holy Spirit, create in us holiness,
lift up our lives to your standard of right;
stir every will to new ventures of faithfulness,
flood the whole church with your glorious light.

4. Holiest Trinity, perfect in unity,
bind in your love every nation and race:
may we adore you for time and eternity,
Father, Redeemer and Spirit of grace.

Patrick Robert Norman Appleford
1925– *alt.*

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Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude

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