

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (Candlemas)



Hymn: Christ, whose glory fills the skies.

1. Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true the only light,
Sun of righteousness arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night.
Dayspring form on high be near,
Daystar, in my heart appear.
2. 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.
3. Visit then, this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief,
Fill me radiance divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more thyself display,
Shining to thy perfect day.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, all hearts are open to you. No secrets are hidden from you. Purify us with the fire of your Holy Spirit that we may love and worship you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, mighty God and Prince of Peace. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, Word made flesh and splendour of the Father.. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect: Almighty and everliving God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi

3. 1-5

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

'This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 24. 7-10

Response: The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory.

Lift up your heads, O Gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the King of glory may come in. (R)

Who is the King of glory?
The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord, mighty in battle. (R)

Lift up your heads, O Gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the King of glory may come in. (R)

Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory. (R)

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

2. 14-18

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Our eyes have seen your salvation, Lord, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke

2. 22-40

Glory to you, O Lord.

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 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), 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.' 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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' 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, 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. 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. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

'This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation *Today we mark the end of the Christmas-Epiphany season of light as we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. We celebrate the occasion when forty days after his birth Jesus is taken by Mary and Joseph to the Temple in Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. Jewish custom dictated that when boys were forty days old they were brought to the temple and, if the boy was a first-born, be given to God. This visit to the Temple also marked the end of Mary's confinement, giving today the alternative title of "The purification of Mary". The requirement in Levitical law was for Mary to be 'cleansed', the completion of her purification following the birth of a male child. Until that day, she could touch no holy thing nor enter the sanctuary. And so, forty days after his birth Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple. As they make their way through the Temple they meet a man named Simeon, an elderly priest. Simeon recognised the child Jesus as the Messiah. Simeon had been waiting patiently for this day all his life. God had promised him that he would not die until he had seen his Son. We can only imagine Simeon's excitement and joy as he held the baby Jesus in his arms and hailed him as a "light to the Gentiles", giving today its third name, "that of Candlemas." On this day candles are blessed and distributed in Churches, their light a symbol of the presence of Christ the Light of the world with us. Having seen the Messiah*

*Simeon is now content to go to his rest "Lord, now lettest thy servant go in peace, according to thy word," he prayed, "for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou has prepared in the sight of every people." A prayer we know as the Nunc Dimittis and which we sing at Evensong. Today though is also tinged with sadness because Simeon has a warning for Mary as he tells her "this child is set for the rising and falling of many in Israel and a sword will pierce your own soul also." Simeon is looking forward to the rejection and death that Jesus would suffer on Calvary and the pain this would bring to his mother who would be at his side throughout his life and ministry. Today is a turning point in the Churches year. We turn away from celebrating Christmas and the coming of Christ into the world as a man and begin looking forward the season of Lent, which is not far away, when we will begin to prepare ourselves to journey with Christ to Jerusalem, to share his passion and death and celebrate again the joy of the resurrection at Easter. All that is to come, today we give thanks to God for the wonderful gift of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ who lived and walked among us, whose presence brings light, meaning and purpose to our lives. The light of his presence, like the light of a candle brings us comfort and encouragement with its warmth and a sense of security and protection with its brightness. Something that we all need. Today let us like Simeon proclaim Jesus our King and let us bathe ourselves in his light and his love. **Amen.***

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own ministry area; may the Church be a true temple witnessing to the glory of Christ in the world. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May the glory of Jesus enlighten the nations in the ways of justice and peace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; we have seen your glory, may it shine through us on those among whom we live.- Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; comfort and relieve them according to their needs, strengthen them with the Holy Spirit and embrace them with the love of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. Welcome them and all the departed into the eternal joy and peace of your heavenly kingdom. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Let us bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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 Peace:

Jesus said, Peace I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.

The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received your gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing:

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

Christ the Son of God gladden your hearts with the good news of his Kingdom and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Ye who own the faith of Jesus

1. Ye who own the faith of Jesus
Sing the wonders that were done,
When the love of God the Father
O'er our sin the victory won;
When he made the Virgin Mary
Mother of his only son.
Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, full of grace.
2. Wherefore let all faithful people,
Tell the honour of her name,
Let the Church in her foreshadowed
Part in her thanksgiving claim;
What Christ's mother sang in gladness
Let Christ's people sing the same.
Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, full of grace.
3. Let us weave our supplications;
She with us and we with her,
For the advancement of the faithful,
For each faithful worshipper.
For the doubting, for the sinful,
For each heedless wanderer.
Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, full of grace.
4. For the sick and for the aged,
For our dear ones far away,
For the hearts that mourn in secret,
All who need our prayers today,
For the faithful gone before us,
May the Holy Virgin pray.
Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, full of grace.
5. Praise, O Mary, praise the Father,
Praise thy Saviour and thy Son.
Praise the everlasting Spirit,
Who hath made thee ark and throne:
O'er all creatures high exalted,
Lowly praise the Three in One.
Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, full of grace.