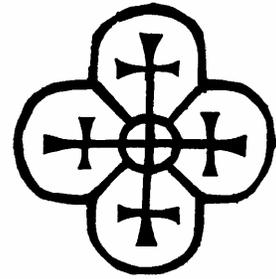
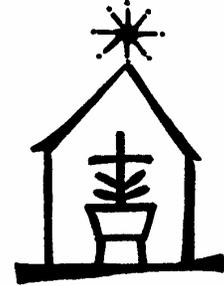


The Chase Benefice



The Chase
Benefice



*A light will shine on
us this day:
The Lord is born for us*

The Parish Eucharist

*in the Seasons of
Christmas and Epiphany*

Please do not take this booklet away.

We hope you will feel very welcome at our Church. This booklet contains all you need (apart from the hymns) to be able to join in the service fully. You will find the text of the service on the right-hand pages. On the left-hand pages we have printed some material in blue that we hope will help you deepen your reflection upon the service.

If you are a communicant member of another church, you are warmly invited to share in Communion with us. If you are not confirmed, may we urge you to consider it, and (if you live in the area) to have a word with the priest about what is involved?

Children are always welcome in our Church. At the back of the Church there are some activity bags, containing quiet toys and colouring books – please help yourself! We want you to enjoy worship so please don't worry if the children make a noise.

It is our practice, before the service begins, and especially after the candles have been lit, to keep the church as quiet and still as possible so that everyone can prepare to worship God 'in spirit and in truth'. Please pray for all involved in leading our worship, and for those sitting near you. You may like to use the 'Prayers before worship' on the following pages.

At the heart of our celebrations during this most holy season is the Incarnation of our Lord as a child. As we worship together may Christ be born in our hearts and be shown forth in our lives now and always.

A hymn may be sung.

The president gives a blessing and the service ends with

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The ministers leave the Church.

After the service please do stay and have a chat. If you are new, please introduce yourself to the Priest or to the Churchwardens. They will introduce you to other people and they can give you more information about our Church.

We hope that you have enjoyed being with us this morning and will come again.

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Order One

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go. Flood our souls with your spirit and life.

Shine through us, and be so in us, that every soul we come in contact with may feel your presence in our soul. Let them look up and see no longer us but only Jesus! Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine...

Let us preach you without preaching, not by words but by our example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do, the evident fullness of the love our hearts near to you.

John Henry Newman

The Incarnation presents us indeed with the supreme paradox, and I do not believe that we can ever eliminate from it the element of paradox without losing the Incarnation itself. But this is not the only point at which we are beset with paradox in the Christian belief: this is rather the point at which the constant and ubiquitous paradox reaches its peak. And if we try to isolate absolutely the mystery which is not a religious mystery at all and which has no bearing on our actual religious life. The mistake is not to assert paradox in the doctrine of the Incarnation, but to miss it everywhere else.

D.M. Baillie
God was in Christ

The people and the priest

- ¶ greet each other in the Lord's name
- ¶ confess their sins and are assured of God's forgiveness
- ¶ keep silence and pray a Collect
- ¶ proclaim and respond to the word of God
- ¶ pray for the Church and the world
- ¶ exchange the Peace
- ¶ prepare the Table
- ¶ pray the Eucharistic Prayer
- ¶ break the Bread
- ¶ receive Communion
- ¶ depart with God's blessing.

Entrance

*Pause at the threshold
Of the sacred space,
Bow low.
Prepare for fresh
Encounter
With the Holy One.*

Ann Lewin

*Surely the Lord is in this place
and this is none but the house of God
and the gate of heaven.*

John Donne

Before the Service – Speak to God

During the Service – Let God speak to you

After the Service – Speak to one another

*If you came this way,
Taking any route, starting from anywhere,
At any time or at any season,
It would always be the same:
you would have to put off
Sense and notion. You are not here to verify,
Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity
Or carry report. You are here to kneel
Where prayer has been valid.*

T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding

*When our lives are empty,
our hearts are cold and our spirits are low;
Christ of the Bethlehem stable, be born in us.*

*When we find temptation
and the snare of power and pleasure hard to bear;
Christ of the desert wilderness, pray with us.*

*When we rejoice in health and happiness and life
seems fair and good;
Christ of the roads of Galilee, walk with us.*

*When we seek our own interests and concerns
before those of others;
Christ of the Temple cleansing, deal with us.*

*When we tread the paths of suffering and loss,
of bitterness and despair;
Christ of the cross at Calvary, stay with us.*

*When our journey is ended
and we bring our souls into your keeping;
Christ of the empty tomb, welcome us.*

Carol Wilkinson

welcome to receive the sacrament.

If you are not confirmed or do not wish to receive the sacrament, please come for a blessing and kneel with your hands behind your back.

These words of distribution may be used

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life.
The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

*Each communicant replies **Amen**. Please wait until the person on your left has received the chalice before leaving the altar.*

After all have received, silence is kept.

Prayer after Communion

The president says the Post Communion prayer, then all say

All You have opened to us the Scriptures,
O Christ,
and you have made yourself known
in the breaking of the bread.
Abide with us, we pray,
that, blessed by your royal presence,
we may walk with you
all the days of our life,
and at its end behold you
in the glory of the eternal Trinity,
one God for ever and ever.
Amen

Dear Lord, help me keep my eyes on you. You are the incarnation of divine love, you are the expression of God's infinite compassion, you are the visible manifestation of the Father's holiness. You are beauty, goodness, gentleness, forgiveness and mercy. In you all can be found. Outside of you nothing can be found. Why should I look elsewhere or go elsewhere? You have the words of eternal life, you are food and drink, you are the Way, the Truth, and the Life. You are the light that shines in the darkness, the lamp on the lamp stand, the house on the hilltop. You are the perfect icon of God. In and through you I can see and find my way to the Heavenly Father. O holy One, Beautiful One, Glorious One, be my Lord, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Guide, my Consoler, my Comforter, my Hope, my Joy, and my Peace. To you I want to give all that I am. Let me be generous, not stingy or hesitant. Let me give you all – all I have, think, do, and feel. It is yours, O Lord. Please accept it and make it fully your own.

Henry Nouwen

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight, and not to heed the wounds;
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not seek reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.

Ignatius of Loyola

At the entry of the ministers a hymn may be sung.
The president may say

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

All Amen.

The Greeting

The president greets the people.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All and also with you.

The president welcomes the people and the children leave
if there is a crèche or Junior Church.

Prayer of Preparation

This prayer is said

All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*Accept me, O Lord, just as I am,
in my frailty, my inadequacy,
my contradictions and my confusions.
Accept me, with all those discordant currents
that pull me in so many directions.
Accept all of this,
and help me to so live with what I am,
that what I am may become my way to you.*

Anon.

*We need your healing, merciful God,
give us true repentance.
Some sins are plain to us
some escape us
some we cannot face.
Forgive us;
set us free to hear your word to us;
set us free to serve you.*

Carol Wilkinson.

*Three wonders mark this holy day,
as the Church is joined to a heavenly bridegroom.
This day a star leads the wise men to the manger.
This day water is made wine at the wedding feast.
This day Jesus is revealed as the Christ in the waters
of baptism.*

The Society of St Francis
Daily Office SSF

have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

The president says one of these invitations to communion

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

or
God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

All Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

All may say

All Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean,
our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit even to eat the crumbs
from under your table.
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,
and share your bread with sinners.
So cleanse and feed us with the precious
body and blood of your Son,
that he may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company of
Christ, may sit and eat in your kingdom.
Amen.

*We thought we knew here to find you;
we hardly needed a star to guide the way,
just perseverance and common sense;
why do you hide yourself away from the powerful
and join the refugees and outcasts,
calling us to follow you there?
Wise God,
give us wisdom.*

*We thought we had laid you safe in the manger;
we wrapped you
in the thickest sentiment we could find,
and stressed how long ago you came to us;
why do you break upon us in our daily life
with messages of peace and goodwill,
demanding we do something about it?
Just and righteous God,
give us justice and righteousness.*

*So where else would we expect to find you
but in the ordinary place with the faithful people,
turning the world to your purpose through them.
Bring us to that manger,
to that true rejoicing,
which will make wisdom,
justice and righteousness alive in us.*

Carol Wilkinson

A minister invites the people to confess using these or similar words

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.

Silence is kept

Lord of grace and truth,
we confess our unworthiness
to stand in your presence as your children.
We have sinned:

All forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call
to be the mother of Jesus.
Forgive our disobedience to your will.
We have sinned:

All forgive and heal us.

Your Son our Saviour
was born in poverty in a manger.
Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.
We have sinned:

All forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks
to go to Bethlehem.
Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.
We have sinned:

All forgive and heal us.

The wise men followed the star
to find Jesus the King.
Forgive our reluctance to seek you.
We have sinned:

All forgive and heal us.

Christ is born. He is born to us. And He is born today. For Christmas is not merely a day like every other day. It is a day made holy and special by a sacred mystery. It is not merely another day in the weary round of time. Today, eternity enters into time, and time, sanctified, is caught up into eternity. Today, Christ, the eternal Word of the Father, who was in the beginning with the Father, in whom all things were made, by whom all things consist, enters into the world which he created in order to reclaim souls who had forgotten their identity. Therefore, the church exults, as the angels come down to announce not merely an old thing which happened long ago, but a new thing which happens today. For today, God the Father makes all things new, in his divine Son, our redeemer, according to his words: behold, he makes all things new.

Thomas Merton

We sit or kneel for the prayers.

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 president breaks the consecrated bread.

Every time we eat this bread
and drink this cup,

All we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.

The Agnus Dei may be used as the bread is broken.

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.

or

*What has drawn Thee from above
To the manger and the altar –
All the silence answers – Love.*

*Digby Mackworth Dolben
Flowers for the Altar'*

*There is a morning:
Time brings it nearer.
Brittle with frost
And starlight. The owl sings
In the parishes. The people rise
And walk to the churches
Stone lanterns, there to kneel
And eat the new bread
Of love, washing it down
With the sharp taste
Of blood they will shed.*

*R.S. Thomas
Christmas*

*I left my candle burning. Lit from light
Borrowed from another, it stood there
Witness to Christ, Light of the world;
Prayer that light would overcome darkness.
As I left, another lit a candle from my light,
Dispelling gloom with added strength.
Who knows how many joined their light to those,
Or drew fresh courage from their company;
Who knows how many took a step, drawn by the
Light of Christ from darkness to new life?*

*Lord Christ, set me on fire.
Burn from me all that dims your light,
Kindle an answering flame in lives around;
That darkness may be driven back,
And glory stream into this world,
Transforming it with love.*

*Ann Lewin
Candlemas Prayer*

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you
in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.

The president declares God's forgiveness.

Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria may be said or sung

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.

Good Jesus, the water of your teaching flows in silence. Your gospel is not poured into our ears by an eloquent tongue, but is breathed into our hearts by your sweet spirit. Your voice never strains nor shouts. You do not force us to hear you. You ask only that we open our hearts to you, and in tranquillity your love enters our souls.

Aelred of Rievaulx

*O Mary, what did you feel when you first saw Him?
Did love nearly destroy you.
As you gazed upon Him,
how could you sustain such love?
... O Lady I am struck mute.
When I think of how you looked on Him...
How did you feel then
When you held Him at your breast?
The love that bound you makes me weep!*

Jacopone di Toda
13th Century Hymn

*Whom have you seen, O shepherds?
Speak and tell us, who has appeared on earth?
'We saw the new-born Child, and choirs of angels,
loudly praising the Lord'.
Speak, what have you seen?
And tell us of the birth of Christ.
'We saw the new-born Child, and choirs of angels,
loudly praising the Lord'.*

Roman Breviary
1st Nocturne of Christmas Day

and all respond

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 president recalls the Last Supper, and one of these
acclamations may be used*

[Great is the mystery of faith:]

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

[Christ is the bread of life:]

**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

Or the following responses may be made

This is his / our story

All This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.

*The Prayer continues and leads into the doxology, to
which all respond boldly, either*

All Blessing and honour and glory and
power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

or

All Amen.

*For us there are no certainties, no star
blazing our journey, no decisive dream
to reassure hurt hearts or warn us when
it's time to move. The shepherds, harassed men,
are given answers to the questions they
have never thought to ask. Told where to go
and what to look for. We try out our way
unlit with angels, wondering 'How far?'
Yet in the story we find who we are:
the baby is told nothing, left to grow
slowly to vision through the coloured scheme
of touch, taste, sound; by needing learns to pray,
and makes the way of the flesh, dark stratagem
by which God is and offers all we know.*

Jennifer Dines

*Washing is the sealing of faith, and the faith is begun
and commenced by faithful penitence. It is not for this
that we are washed, that we may cease from sin, since
in heart we have been washed already. Otherwise, if
we cease from sin as a result of the waters of baptism,
we put on innocence of necessity, not of free will. Now
whose is the more excellent kind of goodness: that of
the person who cannot, or of the one who will not, be
evil? Of one who is ordered to be free from wickedness,
or of one who desires to be free? And so the hearers
(catechumens) ought to desire baptism, not to claim it
hastily. For the person who desires it, honours it; the
one who claims it hastily, distains it.*

Tertullian (3rd Century)

*We keep a moment of silence to collect our thoughts and
concerns before the president says the Collect, which
reflects a theme of the season. All respond*

All Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word _____

Readings

*We sit for the readings from Scripture. At the end the
reader may say*

For the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

*A hymn or a Psalm is sung. We turn to face the minister
for the Gospel of the Day.*

Gospel Reading

*An acclamation may herald the Gospel reading with these
or other suitable words*

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we have seen his glory.

All Alleluia.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

*The miracle wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ at Cana in Galilee in which he turned water into wine is not marvellous to those who know that God did it...
...If only we would reflect upon life more carefully, we would come to see that it is a greater miracle for a child to be given existence who before did not exist, than a man to come back to life who already existed.*

Augustine of Hippo
Commentary on St John's Gospel.

*'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey;
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.*

T S Eliot
Journey of the Magi

*Christ is bathed in light;
let us also be bathed in light.
Christ is baptized;
let us also go down with Him,
and rise with Him.*

Gregory of Nazainzus

A hymn is sung, during which the altar is prepared and a collection may be taken. The gifts of bread and wine are brought from the people and placed upon the altar.

The following prayers may be used.

Generous God,
creator, redeemer, sustainer,
at your table we present this money,
symbol of the work you have given us to do;
use it, use us,
in the service of your world
to the glory of your name.

All Amen.

Blessed be God,
by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

All Blessed be God for ever.

The president takes the bread and wine.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president says

The Lord is here.

All His Spirit is with us.

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.

They gave to thee
Myrrh, frankincense and gold
But Lord, with what shall we
Present ourselves before thy majesty,
whom thou redeemest when we were sold?
We've nothing but ourselves, and scarce that neither;
Vile dirt and clay;
Yet it is soft and may
Impressions take.
Accept it Lord, and say, this thou hadst rather;
Stamp it, and on this sordid metal make
Thy image, and it shall outshine
The beauty of the holy mine.

Jeremy Taylor
The Offering

What can I give him
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man
I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give him
Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti

*We sit for the Sermon, after which there is a brief silence.
On Sundays and Principal Holy Days we then stand to
affirm our faith.*

Affirmation of Faith

- We proclaim the Church's faith in Jesus Christ
- All We believe and declare that
our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
is both divine and human.**
- God, of the being of the Father,
the only Son from before time began;
human from the being of his mother, born in the
world;
- All fully God and fully human;
human in both mind and body.**
- As God he is equal to the Father,
as human he is less than the Father.
- All Although he is both divine and human
he is not two beings but one Christ.**
- One, not by turning God into flesh,
but by taking humanity into God;
- All truly one, not by mixing humanity with
Godhead, but by being one person.**
- For as mind and body form one human being
so the one Christ is both divine and human.
- All The Word became flesh
and lived among us;
we have seen his glory,
the glory of the only Son from the Father,
full of grace and truth.**

from the Athanasian Creed

The ultimate purpose of we Christians – Christ’s Body, the Church – is not to live in hearty fellowship, doing good to others. It is so to have in and amongst us the mind of Christ, the spirit of sacrificial love, that as we live, profoundly sharing and caring in the world, we meet the assaults and effects of evil from whatever source, inside or outside ourselves, as he did: open, vulnerable, and loving on the cross.

Sister Jane SLG
The Hidden Joy
‘...and the Word was made flesh’

*Immensity cloistered in thy dear womb
Now leaves his well-beloved imprisonment,
There he hath made himself to his intent
Weak enough, now into our world to come;
But Oh, for thee, for him, hath the Inn no room?
Yet lay him in this stall, and from the Orient,
Stars, and wisemen will travel to prevent
The effect of Herod’s jealous general doom.
Seest thou, my Soul, with thy faith’s eyes how he
Which fills all place, yet none hold him, doth lie?
Was not his pity towards thee wonderous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss him, and with him into Egypt go,
With his kind mother, who partakes thy woe.*

John Donne
Nativity

We sit or kneel for the prayers. These responses may be used

- Jesus, Lord of love:
All in your mercy, hear us.
- or*
Lord, in your mercy
All hear our prayer.
- or*
Lord, hear us.
All Lord, graciously hear us.
- or*
Let us pray to the Lord
All Lord, have mercy.
- And at the end*
Merciful Father,
**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament —————

The Peace

The president introduces the Peace with a suitable sentence, and then says

- The peace of the Lord be always with you
All and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

We may exchange the Peace with those around us by shaking hands.