

# ST. MARY'S CHURCH WELWYN



## Midnight Mass

**11pm December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**We wish you all a very Happy Christmas**

**Welcome back to church – it's great you are here. We think of those still shielding and just to note that we will be livestreaming the service this morning. The cameras are at the front of the nave.**

**Please remember to maintain social distance with those outside your household, and sanitise your hands on entry. The wearing of face masks is now mandatory in places of worship unless you are exempt. There will be some other differences in the service, which you will see by following this sheet.**

***If you are new to this church please introduce yourself to one of the clergy. There is an induction loop for those with hearing aids.***

***Our Parish Eucharist Service is held every Sunday at 9.30am. You are most welcome to join us.***

***Our Christmas Charity this year – and needed more than ever in this COVID winter - is one which we have regularly supported here at Welwyn for many years – THE WHITECHAPEL MISSION***

***WE CAN'T PASS A COLLECTION PLATE AROUND BUT THERE IS A DONATION PLATE FOR THE END OF THE SERVICE, AND YOU CAN ALSO GIVE ON LINE. PLEASE DO GIVE GENEROUSLY.***

***The Whitechapel Mission have been helping Londoners to help the homeless since 1876, meeting the specific needs of each man and woman who walks through our doors.***

We are a volunteer led work with very few staff, but this does not mean we are a small organization.

- We can see as many as 600 people a day, looking for our assistance.
- We remain open every day
- We can do this for a fraction of the cost of other day centres.
- We do this without any statutory funding.
- We do this without spending a penny of your donations on fundraising or administration.
- We recognize the true strength of our volunteers.
- And we recognize the value of everybody coming through our doors.

First, we help people by meeting immediate needs: food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. In our recovery programs, we address deeper needs for life-skills and job-skills training, and addiction recovery. We measure our progress against four criteria, which indicate to us that a life has been transformed from homelessness to hope: connection to family, commitment to sobriety, a job and a place to live, and a plan for the future.

Today, The Whitechapel Mission is a results-oriented organization that is recognized as one of London's most effective.

### **Our Purpose**

The Whitechapel Mission is called to serve the men and women caught in the cycles of poverty, hopelessness and dependencies of many kinds, and to see their lives transformed to hope, joy and lasting productivity.

### **Our Goal**

To be the most effective provider of compassionate care and life transformation for hurting people in London.

We promote the concept of being part of the Mission and taking ownership of the Mission. Any and all who come are welcome. The services we offer are built upon trust and belonging. We are an inclusion centre rather than an exclusion centre.

## **THE SERVICE BEGINS HERE:**

*Unfortunately the big difference is that we have to ask you not to sing (until the end – see order of service)! Our church choir (real and virtual) can however, so please do not stand and sing, but you can hum along. The first hymn is:*

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold;  
"Peace on the earth good will to men,  
From heav'ns all-gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come  
With peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heav'nly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing;  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessèd angels sing.

For lo! The days are hastening on,  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When, with the ever-circling years,  
Comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendours fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

## **The Blessing of the Crib**

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us pray that God will bless this crib, that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary, may come to share his life in glory.

God our Father on this day your Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation; bless this crib which we have prepared to celebrate that holy birth; may all who see it be strengthened in faith,

and receive the fullness of life he came to bring; who is all and reigns for ever. **Amen**

## The Greeting

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

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

All

## Prayers of Penitence

Hear the words of the angel to Joseph:  
You shall call his name Jesus,  
for he will save his people from their sins.  
Therefore let us seek the forgiveness of God  
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

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.**

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

*We remain standing to say:*

**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.**

## **The Collect**

*Please remain standing*

*The priest introduces a period of silent prayer with the words "Let us pray". The priest then says the Collect:*

Eternal God,  
who made this most holy night  
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:  
bring us, who have known the revelation  
of that light on earth,  
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

# *The Liturgy of the Word*

## **Readings**

*Please sit for two readings from the Bible.*

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah (52.7-10)

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news, who announces salvation,  
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

<sup>8</sup>Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,  
together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see  
the return of the LORD to Zion.

<sup>9</sup>Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem;  
for the LORD has comforted his people,  
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD has bared his holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations;  
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

*All*            **Thanks be to God.**

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (1:1-4)

<sup>1</sup>Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,  
<sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all  
things, through whom he also created the worlds. <sup>3</sup>He is the reflection of God's glory  
and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful  
word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the  
Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has  
inherited is more excellent than theirs.

This is the word of the Lord.

*All*            **Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual:** (music by A Grandi):

*Hodie nobis de caelo pax vera descendit. Alleluia.*

*Hodie per totum mundum melliflui facti sunt caeli. Alleluia.*

*Hodie illuxit nobis dies redemptionis nostrae,*

*reparationis antiquae, redemptionis nostrae, Felicitatis aeternae. Alleluia.*

Today true peace has descended upon us from heaven, alleluia.

Today the heavens echo throughout the world with a sweet sound, alleluia. Today there has dawned upon us the day of our redemption, our release from the sins of old, and eternal happiness, alleluia.

*Please stand for the Gospel*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to John

**Glory to you O Lord**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.

<sup>4</sup>What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ**

*Please sit*

**Sermon**

*Please stand*

*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.**

Let us pray

*Please kneel*

*These responses may be used*

All Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

*And at the end*

All Merciful Father,  
**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 with this sentence:*

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,  
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

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

*Do feel free to say 'Peace be with you' to your neighbours, but please refrain from sharing it physically with those outside your household.*

*As the organ plays the altar prepared. We will NOT be passing around a collection – however there will be a plate left at the end of the service.*

*The priest takes the bread and wine*

### **Preparation of the Table.**

### **Taking of the Bread & Wine.**

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,  
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;  
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.  
All things come from you,  
and of your own do we give you.**

## Eucharistic Prayer E

*Please stand throughout*

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

*All* Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

*All* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty creator, ever-living God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,  
was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of your  
Spirit, and lived as one of us.

In this mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,  
to give knowledge of your glory  
in the face of Jesus Christ.

In him we see our God made visible  
and so are caught up in the love  
of the God we cannot see.

Therefore with all the angels of heaven  
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name  
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

***Sung by the choir:***

**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.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured

may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.  
On the night before he died  
he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.  
When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.  
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross.  
Bringing before you the bread of life  
and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.  
Great is the mystery of faith:

**All**

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

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.  
Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Alban, and  
all the saints, to feast at your table in heaven.  
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Please kneel*

*Silence is kept*

## The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

**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.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

*The priest breaks the consecrated bread*

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.**

## Giving of Communion

***The choir sings:***

**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**

Jesus is the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin 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.**



Please come forward to receive communion at the Nave Altar. Communion will be given in one kind only (the bread), and received standing. Please form a socially distanced queue, returning to your place via the side aisles. If you have your own hand sanitizer this would be good time to use it (please do not borrow from neighbour).

Baptised Christians are welcome to receive the bread, all others are welcome to come for a blessing (please indicate this by crossing your arms and bowing your head).

## **Prayer of Spiritual Communion for those at home**

**My Jesus, I believe that You  
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You  
as if You were already there and unite myself wholly  
to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.**

*Music during communion: **Anthem:***

Before the marvel of this night,  
adoring, fold your wings and bow;  
then tear the sky apart with light  
and with your news the world endow.  
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace,  
that fear and death and sorrow cease,  
sing peace; sing peace; sing gift of peace,  
sing peace; sing gift of peace!

Awake the sleeping world with song,  
This is the day the Lord has made.  
Assemble here, celestial throng,  
In royal splendour come arrayed.  
Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss,  
A teasing taste of what they miss.  
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss,  
Sing bliss, sing endless bliss!

The love that we have always known,  
Our constant joy and endless light,  
Now to the loveless world be shown,  
Now break upon its deathly night.  
Into one song compress the love,  
That rules our universe above:  
Sing love, sing love, sing God is love,  
Sing love, sing God is love!

Music: C Schalk, Words: J J Vajda

***Communion hymn, sung by the choir:***

Silent night, holy night:  
all is calm, all is bright,  
round yon virgin mother and child;  
holy infant so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace.  
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night.  
shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heav'nly hosts sing alleluia:  
Christ the Saviour is born.  
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night.  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

*The last candle on the Advent wreath is lit*

*Prayer after Communion*

*All*            **God our Father,  
in this night you have made known to us again  
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him  
until the day dawns  
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.  
To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

*The choir sing our **Final Hymn***

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him, born the King of angels;  
*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

Child, for us sinners, poor and in the manger,  
fain we embrace thee with awe and love;  
who would not love thee,  
loving us so dearly? *O come, let us, etc.*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing all ye citizens of heaven above:  
Glory to God in the highest:  
*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesu, to thee be glory given: Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing: *O come, let us, etc.*

## *The Dismissal*

*The priest gives the blessing:*

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one  
things earthly and heavenly,  
fill you with peace and goodwill  
and make you partakers of the divine nature;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All*           **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ.

*All*           **Thanks be to God.**

*The ministers and people depart.*

*Organ Voluntary: Dieu parmi nous – Toccata ('God among us') by  
Olivier Messiaen*

*Please take this booklet home with you*

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