



*S*<sup>t</sup> HELEN'S CHURCH  
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Blessing of Water  
& Eucharist  
for the Festival of  
The Baptism of Christ

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Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
10.30 am

President: The Revd Dr Charles Miller  
Assisting: The Revd Canon Charles Masheder

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Mrs Linda Hobbs & Dr Geoff Meen  
Church Wardens

Dr Peter Foster  
Director of Music

Mr Andrew Shouler  
Assistant Organist

## **THE DOVE POINTS TO THE ARK AND TO CHRIST**

*Why like a dove? For the grace of the washing requires simplicity, so that we may be innocent like doves. The grace of the washing requires peace, as in an earlier image the dove brought to the ark that which alone was inviolable by the flood. He of whom the dove was the image, who now deigned to descend in the form of a dove, taught me that in that branch, in that ark, was the image of peace and of the church. In the midst of the floods of the world the Holy Spirit brings its fruitful peace to its church. David too taught, he who perceived the sacrament of baptism and said with the Spirit of prophecy, "Who will give me wings like a dove?"*

*from Exposition of the Gospel of Luke by St Ambrose.*

# Order of Service

*On a table are set a container of water and a small cross.*

*The President says:*

Dear Friends in Christ, we gather today to celebrate the Baptism of Christ, when Jesus of Nazareth was revealed as the beloved Son of the Father. In his baptism by John, Jesus showed his solidarity with all humankind in its separation from God, and with his entrance into the waters of the river Jordan he began the renewal of creation which, as St. Paul tells us, awaits with eager longing for the adoption of humankind as God's children. As we bless this water we recall our adoption as God's children through baptism and our first spiritual cleansing, and we reaffirm our part in the renewal of all things in Christ.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe.

All **From the rising of the sun to its setting your name is proclaimed in all the world.**

## THE BLESSING OF WATER

*The President says:*

God in Christ gives us water welling up for eternal life.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

All **Lord, give us this water and we shall thirst no more.**

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

All **who keeps his promise for ever.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks to the Lord our God.**

Father, we give you thanks and praise

for your gift of water in creation;

for your Spirit, sweeping over the waters, bringing light and life;

for your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,

baptized in the river Jordan.

We bless you for your new creation,  
brought to birth by water and the Spirit,  
and for your grace bestowed upon us your children,  
washing away our sins and giving us new life.  
May your holy and life-giving Spirit move upon these waters to  
restore and transform through them the beauty  
and abundance of your creation,  
and to give increase to all living things.  
Wash clean through the water of baptism  
those who are birthed anew in the family of your Son,  
the first-fruits of the new creation.  
Drowning sin in the waters of just judgement,  
raise up, we pray, what is fallen,  
anoint your children with power from on high,  
and make them one with Christ  
in the freedom and joy of your Kingdom.  
For all might, majesty, dominion, and power are yours,  
now and forever.

All **Amen.**

Holy Father, by this cross, a sign of your obedient and loving  
sacrifice for us and for all that you have made, bless this water.  
May the sign of the cross upon the water remind us that through  
baptism and the Spirit we have been born again, and so have  
received the mercy of God and are now partakers of his  
goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

## CONFESSION

**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.**

May almighty God have mercy on you,  
forgive you your sins  
and bring you to everlasting life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

Let us pray that we may be faithful to our baptism.

*Silence is kept.*

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;  
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.

**All Amen.**

The Old Testament Reading      Genesis 1: 1-5

The New Testament Reading      Acts 19: 1-7

Hymn      The sinless one to Jordan came,  
and in the river shared our stain.  
God's righteousness he thus fulfilled,  
and chose the path his Father willed.

Uprising from the waters there,  
the Father's voice did then declare  
that Christ, the Son of God, had come  
to lead the scattered people home.

Above him see the heavenly Dove,  
the sign of God the Father's love,  
now by the Holy Spirit shed  
upon the Son's anointed head.

O Christ may we baptized from sin,  
go forth with you a world to win:  
grant us the Holy Spirit's power  
to shield us in temptation's hour.

On you may all your people feed,  
and know you are the Bread indeed,  
who gives eternal life to those  
that with you died, and with you rose.

*G B Timms, b.1910*

## **THE GOSPEL**

Alleluia, alleluia.

this is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.

All **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark 1: 4-11

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*After the Gospel is read*

All **Praise to you, O Christ. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## **THE SERMON**

## **THE APOSTLES CREED**

*All stand and say together*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,**

suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## INTERCESSIONS

The response to the petition is: **Hear our prayer.**

*To conclude the Prayers the President then prays*

Almighty God,  
in our baptism you have consecrated us  
to be temples of your Holy Spirit.  
May we, whom you have counted worthy,  
be nurtured by your indwelling Spirit with a lively faith,  
and worship you with upright lives;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## The Peace

God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come, has given his Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**All and also with you.**

## The Offertory

*The following is sung by the choir or played on the organ.*

Hymn 87 Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
great David's greater Son!  
hail, in the time appointed,  
his reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free,  
to take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.

He comes with succour speedy  
to those who suffer wrong;  
to help the poor and needy,  
and bid the weak be strong;  
to give them songs for sighing,  
their darkness turn to light,  
whose souls, condemned and dying,  
were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers  
upon the fruitful earth,  
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,  
spring in his path to birth:  
before him on the mountains  
shall peace, the herald, go;  
and righteousness in fountains  
from hill to valley flow.

Arabia's desert-ranger  
to him shall bow the knee;  
the Ethiopian stranger  
his glory come to see;  
with offerings of devotion  
ships from the isles shall meet,  
to pour the wealth of ocean  
in tribute at his feet.

Kings shall bow down before him,  
and gold and incense bring;  
all nations shall adore him,  
his praise all people sing:  
to him shall prayer unceasing  
and daily vows ascent;  
his kingdom still increasing,  
a kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,  
he on his throne shall rest;  
from age to age more glorious,  
all-blessing and all-blest:  
the tidy of time shall never  
his covenant remove;  
his name shall stand for ever,  
his changeless name of love.

*James Montgomery, 1771-1854*

## **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

The Lord be with you  
All **and also with you.**  
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.**  
It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
You celebrated your new gift of baptism  
in signs and wonders at the Jordan.  
Your voice was heard from heaven  
to awaken faith in the presence among us  
of your Word made flesh.  
Your Spirit was seen as a dove,

revealing Jesus as your servant,  
and anointing him with the oil of gladness  
to preach the good news to the poor.  
Therefore, as we celebrate the union of earth and heaven,  
we rejoice to echo the song of the angels in heaven  
for ever praising you and singing:

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.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your  
Son our Saviour Jesus Christ;  
and as we follow his example and obey his command,  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us his body and his blood;

Who in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying,  
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.

Therefore, heavenly Father,  
we remember his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross;  
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;  
we look for the coming of your kingdom,

and with this bread and this cup  
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

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

Accept through him, our great high priest,  
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise;  
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts  
in the presence of your divine majesty,  
renew us by your Spirit,  
inspire us with your love,  
and unite us in the body of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Through him, and with him, and in him,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,  
we worship you, Father almighty,  
in songs of everlasting praise.

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

*The President invites everyone to pray together:*

**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 forever. Amen.**

*The President breaks the consecrated bread, saying*

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.**

*The President says the Words of Distribution.*

All **Amen.**

## **GIVING OF COMMUNION**

*Organ music is played.*

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise,  
that when we were still far off  
you met us in your Son and brought us home.  
Dying and living, he declared your love,  
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.  
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;  
we who drink his cup bring life to others;  
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.  
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,  
so we and all your children shall be free,  
and the whole earth live to praise your name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Blessing**

May God the Holy Spirit, who came upon the beloved Son  
at his baptism in the river Jordan, pour out his gifts on you  
who have come to the waters of new birth.  
And the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

We have come to Christ, the living water.  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The text for the service is from *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* © The Archbishops' Council, 2000. Church Copyright Licence 11689.