

Welcome to Mulbarton Church: 4th Sunday of Advent

Special Prayer for Today

Eternal God, as Mary waited for
the birth of your Son, so we wait for
his coming in glory;
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her,
our great salvation
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Once in royal David's city,

Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall:
With the poor and meek and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all His
wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly mother
In whose gentle arms He lay.
Christian children all should be
Mild, obedient, good as He.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars
His children crowned,
All in white shall wait around.

(Sorry Prayers) Confession:

**Father God, we are sorry
for the things we do
and say and think
which make you sad,
and for not thinking of**

**others before ourselves.
Please forgive us,
and help us to love you
and other people
more and more.
Amen.**

(Affirmation of our forgiveness) Absolution:

May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: Amen.

The Profession of Faith:

The minister addresses the congregation
Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess
the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the
Father, source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?
All: We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son,
Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world?
All: We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?
All: We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.
All: This is our faith.
**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**



- Anyone taken a risk with a present for someone this year? Or ever?
 - Ever had a surprising present? For good or bad?!
- What do you think Mary's experience of meeting an angel was really like?
 - What did Mary risk when she said 'Yes' to God?
 - What are you prepared to risk for God or God's plans?

See amid the winter's snow

Born for us on earth below
See the tender Lamb appears
Promised from eternal years

*Hail, thou ever blessed morn
Hail, redemption's happy dawn
Sing through all Jerusalem
Christ is born in Bethlehem*

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Hail, redemption's happy dawn
Sing through all Jerusalem
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Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
what's your joyful news today?
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
on the lonely mountain steep?

"As we watched at dead of night,
Lo! we saw a wondrous light;

angels singing 'Peace on earth'
told us of the Saviour's birth."

Sacred Infant, all divine,
what a tender love was Thine,
thus to come from highest bliss
down to such a world as this!

Teach, O teach us, Holy Child,
by Thy face so meek and mild,
teach us to resemble Thee,
in Thy sweet humility!

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

³⁰But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over Jacob's descendants for ever; his kingdom will never end.'

³⁴'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?'

³⁵The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷For no word from God will ever fail.'

³⁸'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled.' Then the angel left her.

A Mother's Treasure

- Mary "treasured these things in her heart"
 - Miracles happen every day
 - Questions are welcome
 - Consent is necessary
 - There is an eternal throne
 - God's words never fail
 - Jesus is great!

From the squalor of a borrowed stable,

By the Spirit and a virgin's faith;

To the anguish

and the shame of scandal
Came the Saviour of the human race.
But the skies were filled
with the praise of heaven,
Shepherds listen as the angels tell
Of the Gift of God come down to man
At the dawning of Immanuel.

King of heaven now
the Friend of sinners,
Humble servant in the Father's hands,
Filled with power and the Holy Spirit,
Filled with mercy for the broken man.
Yes, He walked my road
and He felt my pain,
Joys and sorrows that I know so well;
Yet His righteous steps
give me hope again –
I will follow my Immanuel.

Through the kisses of a friend's betrayal,
He was lifted on a cruel cross;
He was punished
for a world's transgressions,
He was suffering to save the lost.
He fights for breath, He fights for me,
Loosing sinners from the claims of hell;
And with a shout our souls are free –
Death defeated by Immanuel.

Now He's standing
in the place of honour,
Crowned with glory
on the highest throne,
Interceding for His own beloved
Till His Father calls to bring them home!
Then the skies will part
as the trumpet sounds
Hope of heaven or the fear of hell;
But the Bride will run
to her Lover's arms,
Giving glory to Immanuel!

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"To an Infant"

by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Ah cease thy tears and sobs, my little life!
I did but snatch away the unclasped knife:
Some safer toy will soon arrest thine eye,
And to quick laughter change this peevish cry!

Untaught, yet wise! mid all thy brief alarms
Thou closely clingest to thy mother's arms,
Nestling thy little face in that fond breast
Whose anxious heavings lull thee to thy rest!
Man's breathing miniature!
thou mak'st me sigh--
A babe art thou -- and such a thing am I!

To anger rapid and as soon appeased,
For trifles mourning and by trifles pleased;
Break friendship's mirror with a tetchy blow,
Yet snatch what coals of fire on pleasure's altar glow!

Oh thou that rearest with celestial aim
The future seraph in my mortal frame,
Thrice holy Faith! whatever thorns I meet
As on I totter with unpractised feet,
Still let me stretch my arms and cling to thee,
Meek nurse of souls through their long infancy!

The Liturgy of Thanksgiving:

The minister welcomes the family and lights the Pascal Candle

Do you receive this child
as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God
and seek his blessing?

We do.

God our creator, we thank you
for the wonder of new life
and for the mystery of
human love.

We thank you for all
whose support and skill
surround and sustain the
beginning of life.

We thank you that we are
known to you by name
and loved by you from all eternity.

We thank you for Jesus Christ,
who has opened to us
the way of love.

We praise you, Father,
Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God forever.

The minister affirms the given names by asking this question:

What name have you
given this child?

A parent or supporting friend replies:

His name is Samuel Cody Erik.

The minister takes the child in his arms:

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them,
so now we ask God's blessing on Sammy.

Heavenly Father,
we praise you for his birth;
surround him with your blessing
that he may know your love,
be protected from evil,
and know your goodness all his days.
May Sammy learn to love
all that is true,
grow in wisdom and strength
and, in due time,
come through faith and baptism
to the fullness of your grace;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

May God the Father of all
bless these parents and
give them grace to love
and care for Sammy.
May God give them wisdom,
patience and faith,
help them to provide for
their child's needs and,
by their example,
reveal the love and truth
that are in Jesus Christ.

Amen.

A Prayer of Support:

God our creator, we thank you for
the gift of this child,
entrusted to our care.
May we be patient and understanding,
ready to guide and to forgive,
so that through our love
they may come to know your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Presentations:

A certificate, holding cross and children's bible are presented to Sammy, with the words:

Receive this book. It is the good news
of God's love. Take it as your guide.

A lit candle is presented to the newly baptised with the words:

You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All: Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

Responding in Prayer

Our prayers use the following response:

Lord, in your mercy
Take away fear and give life, light and hope.

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
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.**

In the bleak midwinter

frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone:
snow had fallen,
snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter,
long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him whom cherubim
worship night and day,
a breastful of milk
and a mangerful of hay:
enough for him
whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel
which adore.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air,
but only his mother,
in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the Beloved
with a kiss.

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.

The Blessing:

Christ Jesus,
the splendour of the Father and the image of his being,
draw you to himself that you may live in his light and share his glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you, now and always.

All: Amen