



Family Communion

19th December 2021

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;"

Luke 1.46a

The Gathering

A call to worship

Come greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Come, bring all you have and be blessed.

Come, and worship the God of the great and the lowly,
and share your hopes and fears.

Come, young and old - for God is calling you.

Songs

O Come let us adore him (St Nic's version!) & Like a candle flame

**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.**

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!**

**God of God, light of light,
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, begotten, not created:
[Refrain]**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest:
[Refrain]**

From Alternative carols at St Nics Church, Durham, 8 December 2019. Performed by Seth Price, Sam Rankin, Anna Gorick, Tom Musson, Brandon Hurlbert, Logan Williams. Arrangements by Seth Price and Sam Rankin

Like a candle flame

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Advent 4

**As we light this Advent candle,
may its flame be for us a sign of blessing.
As Mary and Elizabeth greeted each other,
and Mary praised God for the blessings received,
may we know God's blessing in our lives and community,
as we offer prayer and praises in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

Summary of the law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: the first commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandments greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Confession

Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

cf Hosea 6

Absolution

May the God of love and power
forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Collect

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, our great
salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Reading Luke 1.39-55

39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of
Judea, **40** where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. **41** When Elizabeth
heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the
Holy Spirit. **42** In a loud voice she exclaimed: 'Blessed are you among women, and
blessed is the child you will bear! **43** But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my
Lord should come to me? **44** As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the
baby in my womb leaped for joy. **45** Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would
fulfil his promises to her!'
46 And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord **47** and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all
generations will call me blessed, **49** for the Mighty One has done great things for me –
holy is his name. **50** His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to

generation. **51** He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. **52** He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. **53** He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. **54** He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful **55** to Abraham and his descendants for ever, just as he promised our ancestors.'

Sermon Natasha is opening God's Word for us today

Song This Child

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Apostles Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, the third day he rose again from
the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Intercessions

Lord God of so much giving

Bless all for whom we pray this day.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Let us share together the peace ...

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

We know that Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church. In these times, it may seem strange to 'share the Peace.' But peace is from the heart and from God. God's peace in the Spirit moves among us and unites us, physically distanced yet one in the Body of Christ.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

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

Father, we give you thanks and praise through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, your living Word, through whom you have created all things; who was sent by you in your great goodness to be our Saviour.

By the power of the Holy Spirit he took flesh; as your Son, born of the blessed Virgin, he lived on earth and went about among us; he opened wide his arms for us on the cross; he put an end to death by dying for us; and revealed the resurrection by rising to new life; so he fulfilled your will and won for you a holy people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness; grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit, and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; 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.*

Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life: Lord Jesus, come in glory.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people and gather into one in your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we may praise and glorify you for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**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

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in the one bread.

Giving of Communion

The body of Christ bread for the world. The blood of Christ, the cup of abundance.

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

We are invited to make spiritual Communion with God, who comes to meet us wherever we are. And as we do so please listen to 'Holy Spirit'

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Prayer after communion

And we say together ...

**Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body
and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.**

Through him we offer you
our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.
Amen.

The Dismissal

Song Heaven invites you to a party

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Final Prayer

Walk with hope to the crib, rejoice as you go
Invite others to join you and may the love of the God
Who keeps his promises and fulfils his purposes,
Inspire, strengthen and excite you this Advent, this Christmas and always.
Amen.

Thank you for joining us today.



Blessed are you

 **Luke 1.39-45,(46-55)**

Mary travels to see her cousin Elizabeth during a time of both their pregnancies. As Elizabeth hears Mary's greeting, Elizabeth feels her baby leap for joy. She feels blessed by Mary's visit, and is surprised that she has been chosen in this way. Elizabeth also reassures Mary that it is because she believed in the word of the Lord that she too has been blessed.

Now read **Luke 1.39-45,(46-55)** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Any pregnancy is miraculous, but for Elizabeth who thought she could not conceive and Mary who was a virgin, they understandably felt very blessed! Sometimes, when someone is kind or over generous to us, we can become overwhelmed and possibly even feel not worthy enough to have received such a blessing. This passage reminds us that God loves us all – with overwhelming blessings – and we too can be blessings to the people that we meet.



Ask yourself: If we could see the signs of greeting we exchange, what would that look like?



LISTEN

Alongside the carols and Christmas number ones, start each day this week by listening to the song '10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)', Matt Redman on *Spirit & Song*, when you wake up, to focus your mind on the blessings around you. Try to also write down 10 reasons why you feel blessed each day. Or 10,000 reasons, if you have the time!



The week before Christmas can be a busy time. Can you guess how many people you might come into contact with in some way, e.g. on a bus, in the supermarket or at a school nativity? This week, challenge yourself to treat every greeting as a chance to bless someone new, wish them a Merry Christmas, share a smile or offer to help when needed.

Sing

Singing can bring great joy and blessing for those leading and listening. This week, safely organise a carol singing event at your local church, care home or even door to door. Be sure to include hymns of love, blessing and greeting.

WELCOME

How do you feel when you are reunited with friends and family after being distant for a while? Do you travel to see loved ones at Christmas, or do they come to you? If you are hosting in any way this year, make a 'Welcome' poster to greet your guests. Make it as bright and large as possible!



When you count your blessings, how many of those are family and friends? Spend some time looking through photographs of past Christmases remembering all the blessed times which you have had with your loved ones. Perhaps you could get one or two of the photos framed or printed out, if you only have digital copies. Can you remember what made you smile, what were you doing, and how were you feeling?

Name _____

ROOTS Activity sheet

19-24 December 2021 | Advent 4



Luke 1.39-45, (46-55)

As Mary and Elizabeth greet each other Elizabeth talks of the blessings that Mary has received.



Elizabeth and Mary greet each other.



Draw somebody you would like to see and greet: perhaps someone you haven't seen for a while or somebody who is important to you. How would you greet them?



Puzzle

Can you find these words from Mary's story, hidden in the word search?

believe
blessed
praise
greet
rejoice
Lord
God
holy

l	f	m	n	w	e	z	n	h	e	l	o
b	e	l	i	e	v	e	y	d	u	o	L
l	a	w	h	u	b	e	s	q	t	o	o
e	a	r	e	j	o	i	c	e	p	t	r
s	n	z	a	f	l	i	e	t	r	i	d
s	z	h	u	q	u	r	o	u	e	a	h
e	f	m	t	h	g	a	b	a	j	n	l
d	a	o	t	o	a	h	b	w	b	f	v
e	h	y	f	i	o	u	l	t	h	t	b
d	o	G	t	l	l	o	x	r	e	k	u
d	b	h	y	f	u	e	s	i	a	r	p



Write Mary's diary entry after she has been greeted by Elizabeth.
What sort of a day has she had?
How is she feeling?

