

Welcome & Introduction

Dear friends, we meet in joy to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany. As the wise men laid their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh before the Christ child, they offered their whole lives to Jesus as the acknowledged him as King, as God and as Saviour.

Today in common with churches across Lancashire, we launch the centenary celebrations of the Diocese of Blackburn. As we do so, we look back in thanksgiving for one hundred years of faithful service. And we look forward, imitating the wise men as we offer our whole lives afresh to Jesus and give our all to him.

Worship in Song

Light of the world, you stepped down into darkness,
Opened my eyes, let me see.
Beauty that made this heart adore you,
Hope of a life spent with you.

So here I am to worship,
here I am to bow down,
Here I am to say that you're my God:
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days, oh so highly exalted,
Glorious in heaven above,
Humbly you came to the earth you created,
All for love's sake became poor.

And I'll never know how much it cost,
To see my sin upon that cross.

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.

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. Amen.

Special Prayer for Today

O God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; 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.

Bible Readings

Colossians 3.12-17 (*Bible page 984*)

Matthew 2.1-12 (*Bible page 807*)

Placing of the Magi at the Crib

Gold: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe: to you be praise and glory for ever. As gold in the furnace is tried and purified seven times in the fire, so purify our hearts and minds that we may be a royal priesthood acceptable in the service of your kingdom. Blessed be God for ever.

Frankincense: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe: to you be praise and glory for ever. As our prayer rises up before you as incense, so may we be presented before you with penitent hearts and uplifted hands to offer ourselves in your priestly service. Blessed be God for ever.

Myrrh: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe: to you be praise and glory for ever. As you give medicine to heal our sickness and the leaves of the tree of life for the healing of the nations, so anoint us with your healing power that we may be the first-fruits of your new creation. Blessed be God for ever.

Sermon

Worship in Song

As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold
As with joy they hailed its light
Leading onward beaming bright
So most gracious Lord may we
Evermore be led to thee

As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger bed
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heaven and earth adore
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek thy mercy seat

As their precious gifts they laid
At thy manger roughly made
So may we with holy joy
Pure and free from sin's alloy
All our costliest treasures bring
Christ to thee our heavenly King

Holy Jesu every day
Keep us in the narrow way
And when earthly things are past
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide
Where no clouds thy glory hide

In the heavenly country bright
Need they no created light
Thou its light its joy its crown
Thou its sun which goes not down
There for ever may we sing
Alleluias to our King

Act of Dedication and Commitment

My brothers and sisters, today we launch the celebrations of the centenary of the Diocese of Blackburn. As we do so I invite you now with joy in your heart to declare your faith and trust in the God who reveals himself to us in Jesus.

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

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?
I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?
I believe and trust in him.

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

In this year of centenary and through the Spirit's power, will you give your all for Jesus, seeking to know him and love him ever more deeply through worship, study and prayer?
With the help of God I will

Will you love your neighbour and serve all people with devotion and generosity?
With the help of God I will

Will you share your faith with others, rejoicing to give reason for the hope that is within you?
With the help of God I will

Heavenly Father, as the wise men offered gold, frankincense and myrrh, so we make to you the gift of our lives at the start of this Centenary year. Through your spirit at work within us, may many come to know you in your Son and kneel to do him homage. For you live and reign ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Prayers

At the end: Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Peace

Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.

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

Worship in Song

In the darkness there's a light before me
And it drives away my fear
In the silence there's a voice that calls me
And it tells me you are near

In the chaos there's a hand that holds me
And will never let me go
Yes I know that you are always for me
For your word has told me so

I will follow you, I will walk by faith
You have brought me near by your unrelenting grace
I will set my mind on the things above
You have won my heart with your everlasting love

I was lost but then you came and found me
And in love you brought me home
I was dead in sin but then you raised me
I am saved by grace alone

For no height no depth no life no death
No power on earth can take us from your love
No height no depth no life no death
No power on earth can take us from your love

Offertory Prayer

Gracious God, accept the gifts that we bring, and
with them our lives, to be used in your service;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here. His Spirit is with us.

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.

All honour and praise be yours always and
everywhere, mighty creator, ever-living God,
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord: for at
this time we celebrate your glory made present in
our midst. In the coming of the magi the King of all
the world was revealed to the nations. In the
waters of baptism Jesus was revealed as the Christ,
the Saviour sent to redeem us. In the water made
wine the new creation was revealed at the wedding
feast. Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.
Therefore with all the angels of heaven we lift our

voices to proclaim the glory of your name and say
our joyful hymn of praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and
might, heaven and earth are full of your
glory. 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:
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 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.

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Giving of 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.

We receive communion

Worship in Song - during communion

All to Jesus I surrender

Worship in Song - during communion

Jesus, all for Jesus

Prayer after Communion

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the
nations seek: may we who with the wise men
have been drawn by your light discern the
glory of your presence in your Son, the Word
made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Diocesan Centenary Prayer

Heavenly Father, in this, our Centenary year, we
rededicate ourselves and our Diocese to you.
Send the Holy Spirit to give us confidence in our
witness, generosity in our service, and love for our
neighbours, that your Church may be renewed
and many come home to you, through your Son
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Worship in Song

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones he came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave he rose again.
And as he stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am his and he is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from his hand;
Till he returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Blessing

May God the Father, who led the wise men by
the shining of a star to find the Christ, the
Light from light, lead you in your pilgrimage to
find the Lord. Amen.

May God, who has delivered us from the dominion
of darkness, give us a place with the saints in light in
the kingdom of his beloved Son. Amen.

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ
shine in your hearts and fill our lives with his
joy and peace. Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father,
the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and
remain with you always. Amen.

We have seen his glory, the glory revealed to all the
nations. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.