

I bring you good news of great joy: A Saviour has been born to you. Alleluia!  
**Unto us a child is born, unto to us a son is given. Alleluia!**

He is Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

**We worship and adore him. Alleluia!**

*A candle may be lit and silence is kept.*

Jesus has brought us out of darkness,  
**to live in his marvellous light.**

Jesus Christ is the light of the world:  
**a light no darkness can quench.**

The shepherds kept watch by night,  
**and your glory shone round about them.**

### **Prayer of Confession**

As we bow down & worship with the shepherds before the newborn Christ child,  
we open our hearts in penitence and faith, and seek the forgiveness of God  
through Jesus the Saviour of the world.

You, Lord Jesus were born for our salvation.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

You, Lord Jesus came as Saviour to bring wholeness and peace.  
Christ, have mercy.

*All:* **Christ, have mercy.**

You, Lord Jesus came to bring light into the darkness of our lives.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All:* **Lord, have mercy.**

### **The Absolution**

May the God of all healing and forgiveness  
draw *us* to himself, and cleanse *us* from all *our* sins  
that *we* may behold the glory of his Son  
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Blessed are you, sovereign God,  
creator of heaven and earth,  
to you be praise and glory for ever.

As your living Word, eternal in heaven,  
assumed the frailty of our mortal flesh,  
may the light of your love be born in us  
to fill our hearts with joy as we sing:

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*All:* **Blessed be God for ever.**

## CHRISTMAS CANTICLE

- 1 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; ♦  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
upon them the light has dawned.
- 2 You have increased their joy and given them great gladness; ♦  
they rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest.
- 3 For you have shattered the yoke that burdened them; ♦  
the collar that lay heavy on their shoulders.
- 4 For to us a child is born and to us a son is given, ♦  
and the government will be upon his shoulder.
- 5 And his name will be called: Wonderful Counsellor; the Mighty God; ♦  
the Everlasting Father; the Prince of Peace.
- 6 Of the increase of his government and of peace ♦  
there will be no end,
- 7 Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, ♦  
to establish and uphold it with justice and righteousness.
- 8 From this time forth and for evermore; ♦  
the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. *Isaiah 9.2, 3b, 4a, 6, 7*  
To us a child is born, to us a son is given.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning in now  
and shall be for ever. Amen**

## The Bible readings for the First Sunday of CHRISTMAS

- 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 – *Samuel continues his training with Eli, growing in faith.*  
Colossians 3:12-17 – *Instructions from St. Paul to act with compassion, kindness, humility,  
gentleness & patience and over all these to clothe ourselves with love.*  
Luke 2:41-52 – *Unbeknown to Mary & Joseph, Jesus stays behind in the Temple after the  
Passover Festival in Jerusalem, & they spend 3 days frantically looking for him.*  
*A few moments of quiet for thought, thanksgiving & reflection.*

After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.'  
'Why were you searching for me?' he asked. 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?'  
'But they did not understand what he was saying to them. *Luke 2:46-50*

## Creed

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**Though he was divine,  
he did not cling to equality with God,**

**but made himself nothing.  
Taking the form of a servant,  
he was born in human likeness.  
He humbled himself and was obedient to death,  
even the death of the cross.  
Therefore God has raised him on high,  
and given him the name above every name:  
that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bow,  
and every voice proclaim  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*(Philippians 2.6-11)*

**Prayers** *(we can add our own prayers at each section)*

Let us pray to our incarnate Lord, who has brought us out of darkness  
and into his own marvellous light.

Christ born for us, Son of God given for us:  
help us to know you,  
to worship and to serve you ...  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Wonderful counsellor, you order all things with your wisdom:  
help the Church to reveal the mystery of your love  
and fill her with the Spirit of truth ...  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, the government is on your shoulders:  
guide the leaders of the nations  
and bring in your kingdom of justice and righteousness ...  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Everlasting father, you call us to live together in unity:  
protect by your mercy all your children,  
bless our families and renew our communities ...  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Prince of peace, you bring reconciliation through the cross:  
by your healing power give to all who suffer...  
your gift of wholeness and peace.  
Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Son of the Father, full of the Spirit,  
hear our prayer,  
receive our praises,  
fill our lives. **Amen.**

## **The Collect for the First Sunday of CHRISTMAS**

Almighty God,  
who wonderfully created us in your own image  
and yet more wonderfully restored us  
through your Son Jesus Christ:  
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,  
so we may share the life of his divinity;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**    *(or traditional form, if you prefer)*

**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.**

Heavenly Father,  
whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home:  
help your Church to live as one family,  
united in love and obedience,  
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **The Blessing**

May the joy of the angels,  
the eagerness of the shepherds,  
the perseverance of the wise men,  
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,  
and the peace of the Christ-child  
be ours this Christmas;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be with us and all who we love and  
pray for this Christmas and for evermore. **Amen**