



THE FEAST OF CANDLEMAS
FEBRUARY 4, 2024

If you wish, you may place your offering in the offertory basin at the door before the start of the liturgy

Each Household may also take a pair of tapers to bring home after the service

Bell calling us together

Opening Hymn Morning Has Broken #8

Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

And Blessed be God's Kingdom, both now and forever. Amen

The Collect for Purity – Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,**

**you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Old Testament

Malachi 3:1-4

Thus says the Lord, See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Response

Psalm 24:7-10

Domini est terra

- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.**
- 8 "Who is this King of glory?" ***
"The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle."
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors; *
and the King of glory shall come in.**
- 10 "Who is he, this King of glory?" ***
"The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory."

The Epistle

Hebrews 2:14-18

Since God's children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Sermon

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

**he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Or

[LK 2:22-32](#)

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,* and to offer the sacrifice of *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,* in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
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**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
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and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
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who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Let us pray to our Lord Jesus, who is the saving light of all nations and the glory of his people, and let us say: R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.

- For the Church, that it may show the world the true face of Christ and be the sign that in him all are to be saved, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- For the pope, and for all in the Church who render a service of authority, that they may have the courage to speak out and act in the name of truth and justice, and that they bear witness to the love of Christ, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- For all fathers and mothers, that they may inspire their children by their own way of living, to follow the light of Christ, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- For all Christians, that the Spirit of the Lord may guide them to be true to the light of their conscience, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- For the poor, the sick, and the discouraged, that they may still keep their eyes turned to the light of Christ and that they may discover it particularly in dedicated Christians, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- For all of us in this community, that we may be at least a pale reflection of the light of Christ, let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.
- . . . I Invite you to share any intentions you may wish to share now with the community...(pause) ... for all of these let us pray:
R/ Lord, let your light shine on us.



Holy Source of our joy,
you entrust your Good News of life
to weak and fallible people like Simeon and Anna.
Keep us from discouragement
and give us the strength to speak your message
with the language of our life.
Let Jesus your Son work with us and in us,
that each of us may have the courage to say:
Here I am, Lord,
send me as your messenger
to share your glad tidings of happiness
with all willing to listen.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R/ Amen.**

The Confession

We have at times followed other "lights"
than Christ, the true Light.
We ask now the Lord to forgive us

(pause)

Lord Jesus, let your light guide us
on the road to the Father:
Lord have mercy. **R/ Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus Christ, shine on us
the light of your truth and wisdom of the Spirit:
Christ, have mercy. **R/ Christ have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, let the light of your mercy
gather all nations in your love:
Lord, have mercy. **R/ Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus
Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in
eternal life. **Amen.**

Hymn for the Preparation of the Table and Gifts

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them up to the Lord Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give God thanks and praise. All honor and praise be yours always and everywhere, mighty creator, ever-living God, through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord: Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory shining in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.: Therefore with all the angels of heaven we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

Celebrant and People

**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.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he 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. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

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

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN**

And now, as our Savior
Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,
All: **Our Father...**

Priest: Alleluia, Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, **Therefore let us keep the feast, Alleluia!**

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The gifts of God for the People of God, take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Act of Spiritual Communion for those at home: In union, O Lord, with the faithful of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. We present to you our souls and bodies with the earnest wish that we may always be united to you. And sacramentally, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. We unite ourselves with you and embrace you with all the love of our souls. Let nothing ever separate you from us. May we live in you, and may you live in us, both in this life and in the life to come. Amen

Communion Meditation after the reception of the Sacrament

Christ whose glory fills the skies Ami Andersen

1 Christ, whose glory fills the skies Christ, the true, the only Light, Sun of Righteousness, arise, Triumph o'er the shades of night; Dayspring from on high, be near, Daystar, in my heart appear.

Chorus Christ, whose glory fills the skies Christ, the true, the only Light, Sun of Righteousness, arise, Triumph o'er the shades of night

2 Dark and cheerless is the morn Unaccompanied by you Joyless is the day's return, Till Your mercy's beams I see Till You inward light impart, Cheer my eyes, and warm my heart

3 Visit then this soul of mine, Pierce the gloom of sin and grief Fill me, Radiance divine, Scatter all my unbelief; More and more yourself display, Shining to the perfect day

Prayer after Communion Let us pray

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members

of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,

and you have fed us with spiritual food

in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

Send us now into the world in peace,

and grant us strength and courage

to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dear people of God, just over forty days ago we celebrated the joyful feast of the incarnation of Jesus. Today we recall the day on which he was presented in the temple, fulfilling the law of Moses. Led by the Spirit, Simeon and Anna came to the temple, recognized the child as the Christ, and proclaimed him with joy therefore Let us pray

O eternal God, who have created all things; on this day you fulfilled the petitions of the just Simeon: we humbly ask you to bless and sanctify these candles for our use. Graciously hear our prayers and be merciful to us, whom you have redeemed by your Son, who is the light of the world, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray. O God, source of all light, today you revealed to the aged Simeon your light which enlightens the nations. Fill our hearts with the light of faith, that we who bear these candles may walk in the path of goodness, through Jesus Christ the Light of the World. **Amen.**

The Blessing

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
fill us with radiance
and scatter the darkness from our paths. **Amen**

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,
gladden our eyes and warm our hearts. **Amen**

Christ, the Dayspring from on high,
draw near to guide our feet into the way of peace. **Amen**

Closing Hymn Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies #7

Go in peace to Love and serve the Lord

Thanks be to God

Blessing of throats will be offered

We Pray for the Healing & Support:

Candlemas: History, Traditions “In Christian communities today, it continues to be a day of purification, renewal, and hope. Some call the day *Candlemas* (Candle Mass)... local churches hand out candles, or people bring their own, to be blessed.”

What is Candlemas? On February 2, exactly 40 days after Christmas, we commemorate Mary’s adherence to the Mosaic law as she entered the Temple for the ritual purification, as explained in *Leviticus 12:2-8*. Also, forty days was the time when a firstborn was brought to the Temple to be dedicated to the Lord (*Exodus 13:2-12*). The Gospel reading for The Feast of the Presentation describes the scene: “And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.” The story continues as Simeon holds the baby in his arms and says that Jesus will be a light for the Gentiles (Luke 2:22-32).

In Christian communities today, Candlemas continues to be a day of purification, renewal, and hope. Some call the day *Candlemas* (Candle Mass), which comes from the activities associated with the feast. Often local churches hand out candles, or people bring their own, to be blessed. After an antiphon, during which the candles held by the people are lighted, there is a procession into the church. During the procession to the church, the *Nunc Dimittis* is sung, replicating the words that Simeon proclaimed. In Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, the procession into the church for Mass commemorates Christ’s entrance into the temple.

Candlemas Traditions Various traditions developed about Candlemas, including the following:

Weather Predictions Candlemas was the day when some cultures predicted weather patterns. An old English song goes: *If Candlemas be fair and bright, Come winter, have another flight; If Candlemas bring clouds and rain, Go winter, and come not again.* Thus if the sun cast a shadow on Candlemas day, more winter was on the way; if there was no shadow, winter was thought to be ending soon. Of course, this practice led to the folklore behind “Groundhog Day,” which falls on Candlemas Day, February 2. The Reformed Protestant German settlers were uncomfortable with a liturgical association.

Crepes and Coins It is traditional to eat crepes (thin pancakes) on Candlemas in some parts of Europe, such as France. Each family member prepares and cooks a crepe while holding a coin in hand. This is believed to assure wealth and happiness until the next Candlemas celebration. Another tradition involves taking turns to flip the pancake with a flick of the wrist, deftly maneuvering the pan with the right hand while holding a coin in the left. The crepe must not fall, stick to the ceiling, or come back down in shreds. Achieving this feat successfully will bring happiness.

Candlemas Bells Flowers Snowdrops (*galanthus nivalis*) are known as Candlemas Bells because they often bloom early in the year, even before Candlemas. According to folklore, an angel helped these Candlemas bells to bloom and gave them as a sign of hope to Eve, who wept in despair over the cold and death that had entered the world. Many Christians see the flower as a symbol of Jesus Christ being the hope for the world.