**Candlemas**

**31st January 2021**

Introduction & welcome:  *Rev Trish*

Simeon calls Jesus "a light to enlighten the Gentiles."

Accordingly this day of dedication became Candlemas, a feast of candles. The candlelight is a tangible reminder of that greater light which radiates from the figure of Jesus. We are reminded of the need to be prepared to burn brightly ourselves in the midst of this dark world. We light a candle this morning, to signify the light of Christ: the light which at the beginning of creation shined in the darkness and which no darkness could overcome. Jesus was a light to lighten all the nations and races and culture of people.

Bless our candles Lord, that through the prayer we offer as we light them, your light may shine brightly in our lives. **Amen**

*Hymn: Lord, the light of your love is shining*

Gathering*: Berwyn Thomas*

Lord God, you are the source of everlasting light. Your son, our Lord Jesus was presented in the temple forty days after his birth. Simeon and Anna recognised him, and welcomed him as the promised Messiah. May we like them, behold the glory of the Lord Jesus. May we stand before you with hearts cleansed by your forgiving love. May we serve you all our days and make your name known as we worship you as our Lord. **Amen**

A prayer of confession: *Chris Lawton*

God be gracious to us and bless us,

and make your face shine upon us:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May your ways be known on the earth,

your saving power among the nations:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,

and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus says ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’ Let us then bring our sins into his light and confess them in penitence and faith.

*Silence*

Hear the words of grace ‘Your sins are forgiven.’

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Collect:*Tish Pickles*

Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel: make your home among us, and present us pure and holy to your heavenly Father, your God, and our God. **Amen**

Old Testament reading*: Sue Tye*

*Malachi 3: 1-5*

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.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

This is the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God**

Prayer for light: *Des Roberts*

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the true light enlightening every soul born into this world.
Help us to live in that light, to make it our own, and to kindle it in the souls of others, increasing the area of light and lessening the darkness in the world.

May the flames of these little candles, a symbol of the light shining in the darkness of this world, help us to realise, this day and every day, that our own humdrum daily work, done for love of you, will shine brightly for all eternity. **Amen.**

Gospel:  *Ann Wilkinson*

*Luke 2:22 - 40*

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 (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 turtle-doves 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 for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped 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 favour of God was upon him.

This is the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God**

Address*: Rev Matt*

Prayers of intercession**:** *Shirley O’Neill*

We bring our cares and concerns, our prayers for the world, and for all God’s people before God.

*Silence*

We pray together as Jesus taught us, **Our Father…**

The Peace:  *Rev Yvonne*

The peace of the Lord be always with you;

**And also with you**

Tangnefedd yr Arglwydd a fo gyda chwi bob amser

**A hefyd gyda thi**

The Blessing: *Rev Heather*

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

And may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. **Amen.**

*Hymn: Christ, be our light!*

Go in the light and peace of Christ to love and serve the Lord.
**Thanks be to God. Amen**