



St John's Weekly News 31st January 2021

A message from Fr Christopher

And so, we celebrate another of our great feasts from the comfort or prison of our own homes, depending on your view or experience. This Sunday we celebrate Candlemas, traditionally the time when we bless the year's candles, the day on which we celebrate Christ's presentation in the Temple - when Mary and Joseph offered a pair of doves or pigeons for their firstborn son. This might seem like a rather arcane ceremony, with no relevance to us. What does the Temple even mean to us, when it was destroyed by the Romans 1950 years ago? Well, the Temple was not just the place where ritual happened, but the centre of all life in Jerusalem and for the people of Israel. And Jesus's relationship with the Temple reminds us that He grew up and found sustenance for His ministry, not just in His family, but in the religious structures of His day. And as He went out from the Temple to change the world, so we should take our faith out from church (and even from our virtual worship) into the world around us, to care for our neighbours, to fight for justice for those who are oppressed, to feed the homeless, and to love all whom we encounter. The church should nourish us, but it nourishes us for doing God's work and being Jesus's hands and feet in the world. Even if you cannot help others in person at the moment, may God bless you as you pray for them and for each other.



The Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

The Gospel reading describes the bringing of Jesus by Mary and Joseph to the Temple and their offering of a sacrifice as required by the Law (Leviticus 12:8; Luke 2:24) after the birth of a first-born son (Exodus 13:2,15). It continues by presenting Simeon, a devout Jew, who was waiting to see the Messiah of his people.



On seeing Jesus, he knew that he was looking at the Messiah and so taking him in his arms, he praised God and uttered the prayer we now call "Nunc dimittis."

Then Simeon turned to bless Mary and Joseph and prophesied concerning the messianic vocation and work of Jesus. This small group was then joined by Anna, a godly widow, who also was waiting for the advent of the Messiah. After she had seen Jesus and also recognised him as the Messiah, she thanked God and spoke of him as the Messiah to many people.

Please pray this week for:

David F, Linda, Kay, Jean, Wayne and all those celebrating their birthday this week.

All those living on Oldstead Road.



Lord God, you are the source of everlasting light. Your son, our beloved Lord Jesus was presented in the temple 40 days after his birth. He was recognised by Simeon and Anna, and welcomed as the promised Messiah.

May we like them, behold the glory of the Lord Jesus. Grant that we may 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. So, may we come by your grace to eternal life.

Amen.

Luke 1

W	A	N	G	R	E	A	T	A	G	E	G	P	P
I	S	A	L	V	A	T	I	O	N	S	E	I	U
D	M	G	S	D	E	E	I	M	R	I	G	G	R
O	A	I	L	M	E	E	Y	F	G	V	A	E	I
W	R	A	P	O	E	S	W	H	S	R	N	O	F
M	Y	L	T	O	R	S	T	I	O	P	N	N	I
O	E	N	N	I	U	Y	S	I	S	G	A	S	C
S	W	O	R	D	F	S	B	I	N	D	I	P	A
E	I	E	W	O	O	L	T	S	A	E	O	G	T
S	N	E	U	P	E	A	C	E	U	H	D	M	I
J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M	L	A	W	R	O
M	O	I	S	A	G	E	N	T	I	L	E	S	N
M	W	E	R	Y	U	I	N	O	E	M	I	S	A
G	D	S	E	V	O	D	E	L	T	R	U	T	E

SIMEON
TEMPLE
PIGEONS
DESTINED
TURTLEDOVES
WISDOM
GREAT AGE
BLESSED
JERUSALEM
EIGHTY FOUR
WIDOW
LAW
ANNA
PURIFICATION
GENTILES
SALVATION
MESSIAH
SWORD
PEACE
MARY
MOSES
GLORY

I hope the church reopens soon,
because we've nearly eaten all
the Friday Coffee Club's snacks.

