



St Mary
the Virgin



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER
Ezekiel 47:9, 12



St. Francis of Assisi
The Eucharist
with Holy Baptism
Sunday October 4th 2026
10.45am

Welcome to Saint Mary's Church in the Parish of Witney.

We are an inclusive church embracing a hospitable Christianity.

Everyone is welcome at this service. If you usually receive communion please join us – or please come forward to receive a blessing.

If you are interested in becoming a part of what is happening through the church please speak to one of the welcomers afterwards. We also have Welcome Packs available with more information – please ask!

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is a simple and secure way for churches to receive regular donations. It is an established service for managing Direct Debit donations, designed to support churches to fund their mission and ministry. Talk to one of the church wardens to find out more or for help signing up, or pick up a leaflet at the North door.

This service is live-streamed. If you do not want to appear on the stream please speak to the Welcomers or Duty Wardens.

As the sacristy bell sounds all stand

The Procession

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Alleluya, alleluya!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam:
O praise him, O praise him
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise him! Alleluya!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice: *[Refrain]*

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear,
Alleluya, Alleluya!
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light: *[Refrain]*

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfoldest blessings on our way,
O praise him, Alleluya!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
Let them his glory also show: *[Refrain]*

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness,
O praise him! Alleluya!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, three in One: *[Refrain]*

Words: St. Francis of Assisi, paraphrased William H Draper
Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN

The Greeting

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

In baptism, God calls us to be his friends and to make us holy
in his Son Jesus Christ.

On this journey of faith we have no abiding city, for we have
the promise of the heavenly Jerusalem, where the whole
creation is brought to a new birth in the Holy Spirit.

Here we are united in the company of all the faithful, and we
look for the coming of the eternal kingdom. As children of God,
we look through this passing age for the signs of the dawn of
everlasting glory.

Gloria in Excelsis

We sing together:

**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

O God, you ever delight to reveal yourself
to the childlike and lowly of heart:
grant that, following the example of the blessed Francis,
we may count the wisdom of this world as foolishness
and know only Jesus Christ and him crucified,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen

The Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (4.32-35)

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold

them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121

We remain seated as the choir sings

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills:
from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord:
who hath made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:
And he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel:
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord himself is thy keeper:
The Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand;
So that the sun shall not burn thee by day:
Neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in:
From this time forth for evermore.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
And to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.

Music: Henry Walford Davies.

The Gospel

We stand and face the reader as the book of the Gospel as is carried amongst us. The organ plays through and then we sing twice:



The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
All Glory to you, O Lord.

Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

Luke 12.13-21

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you, O Christ.

We sit

The Sermon

Presentation of the Candidates

The altar party moves to the font, and is joined by the baptism candidates, parents, and godparents.

Faith is the gift of God to his people. In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling. People of God, will you welcome these children and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All With the help of God, we will.

Parents and godparents, the Church receives these children with joy.

Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith.

Will you pray for them,

draw them by your example into the community of faith and walk with them in the way of Christ?

With the help of God, we will.

In baptism these children begin their journey in faith.

You speak for them today.

Will you care for them,

and help them to take their place

within the life and worship of Christ's Church?

With the help of God, we will.

The Decision

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you renounce evil?
I renounce evil.

Signing with the Cross

The priest makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate with the Oil of Baptism, saying:

Christ claims you for his own.
Receive the sign of his cross.

When all the candidates have been signed, the priest says

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
 against sin, the world and the devil,
 and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

Prayer over the Water

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
All who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water
to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.
Through water you led the children of Israel
from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.
In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John

and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,
to lead us from the death of sin to newness of life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.

In it we are buried with Christ in his death.

By it we share in his resurrection.

Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son,

we baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in faith.

Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
they may be cleansed from sin and born again.

Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith

and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord;

to whom with you and the Holy Spirit

be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Profession of Faith

Let us affirm,

together with these who are being baptized,
our common faith in Jesus Christ.

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

All 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?

All 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?

All I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Baptism

The priest pours water on each candidate, saying each time:

N, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

Then the priest anoints each candidate with the Oil of Chrism, saying:

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All Amen.

Giving of a Lighted Candle

The priest gives each candidate a candle lit from the Paschal (Easter) candle

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.
Phoebe, you have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

Intercessions

Heavenly Father,
receive into the arms of your mercy
all who have been baptized
and make them your own for ever;
that, having tasted of your goodness,
they may ever hunger for your continuing presence
in their walk of faith.
Your kingdom come.

All Your will be done.

Stir up within your Church the zeal that inspires
your saints in every generation.
Give us a due sense of your grace,
and the strength to do your will.
You measure us by our needs;
may we never measure you by our impatience.
Your kingdom come.

All Your will be done.

Surrounded by so great a company of witnesses,
may we honour your blessings
in all the ages that have gone before,
and live in joyful expectation
of your promises in the ages yet to come.
Your kingdom come.

All Your will be done.

The Welcome and Peace

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.
**All We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

We are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God through Christ our Lord, who came and preached peace to those who were far off and those who were near.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,
All and also with you.
Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Offertory Hymn

We stand as the Offertory Hymn is sung and the gifts of bread and wine are placed upon the Altar.

You can give to the work of the Church by signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, or by using these bank details - Witney PCC, Sort Code 20-97-48, Account Number 00971626. There is also a card reader by the North Door,
All that we bring to the altar is a gift from God, and our offering back to God is a sign of the offering of our lives in the Lord's service.

When out of poverty is born
a dream that will not die
a landless, weary folk find strength
to stand with heads held high,
it's then we learn from those who wait
to greet the promised day:
'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart
Be blest: prepare the way!'

When people wander far from God,
forget to share their bread,
they find their wealth an empty thing,
their spirits are not fed.
For only just and tender love
the hungry soul will stay.
And so God's prophets echo still:
'Be blest: prepare the way!'

When God took flesh and came to earth,
the world turned upside down,
and in the strength of women's faith
the Word of Life was born.
She knew that God would raise the low,
it pleased her to obey.
Rejoice with Mary in the call:
'Be blest: prepare the way!

Words: Kathryn Galloway
Tune: KINGSFOLD
Commissioned by Christian Aid

Prayer over the Gifts

As we offer you these gifts, O Lord,
may we be given grace
to celebrate the mystery of the Cross,
to which St Francis dedicated his life.
Through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

All And also with you

Lift up your hearts

All We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All It is right to give thanks and praise

All Powerful, Most High, Supreme Good Lord,
we praise and thank you for bringing light
to the darkness of our lives.
By your Word at creation you brought forth
our brother sun and sister moon,
and your loving gaze looked upon all that you had made
to find it very good.

But by sin the world was blinded, by sin we lost our way.
Then through your Son you revealed the light of your love.
As one of us, you walked among us.
Unite us this day to your son,
that we may shine with your glory to the world;
by your light help us to see and become the light.

Rejoicing in the splendour of your radiance,
countless throngs of angels and archangels
give you unceasing praise.
Joining with them
and giving voice to every creature under heaven,
we break forth in song to sing your joyful praise:

**All 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.**

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:

**All 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 the Blessed Virgin Mary and 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.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**All 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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

The Priest breaks the consecrated host

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

**All Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
Grant us peace.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word
and I shall be healed.**

*All who are used to receiving Communion are welcome to do so here
– please make your way to the altar as directed by the Sidesperson.
If you do not wish to receive Communion, you are warmly invited to
come forward for a blessing – please approach the president carrying
this booklet. Gluten free wafers are available on request.*

The Communion Hymn

Make me a channel of your peace:
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your healing power,
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace:
where there's despair in life let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, only light,
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

O, Spirit, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace:
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Words: Sebastian Temple
(after a C19th prayer attributed to St. Francis)

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray:

Merciful God,
who gave such grace to your servant Francis
that he served you with singleness of heart
and loved you above all things:
help us, whose communion with you
has been renewed in this sacrament,
to forsake all that holds us back from following Christ
and to grow into his likeness from glory to glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

**All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

We sit for the notices

The Notices

The Blessing

Please stand for the Blessing

The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you
and give you peace.

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

All Amen.

The Dismissal

Tend the earth,
care for God's good creation,
and bring forth the fruits of righteousness.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ, Amen.

The Recessional Hymn

Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth, we turn to You
Make us Your own holy people
Light for the world to see
Christ, be our light
Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light
Shine in Your church gathered today

Longing for peace, our world is troubled
Longing for hope, many despair
Your Word alone has power to save us
Make us Your living voice. *R.*

Longing for food, many are hungry
Longing for water, many still thirst
Make us Your bread, broken for others
Shared until all are fed. *R.*

Longing for shelter, many are homeless
Longing for warmth, many are cold
Make us Your building sheltering others
Walls made of living stone. *R.*

Many the gifts, many the people
Many the hearts that yearn to be long
Let us be servants to one another
Making Your kingdom come. *R.*

WORDS: Bernadette Farrell
MUSIC: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

Let us bless the Lord
All Thanks be to God.

Everyone is welcome to stay for coffee after the Eucharist.



Copyright material is included from *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* © The Archbishops' Council 2000. *Times and Seasons* © The Archbishops' Council 2000. *Common Worship: Christian Initiation and Festivals* © The Archbishops' Council 2008. *Hymns and music reproduced under CCLI Number: 174801* Calamus Licence: 2274