



Service of Holy Communion



For the Season of Advent

Sunday 14th December 2025
3rd Sunday of Advent

Mass Setting:
St. Thomas (D. Thorne)

Deacon Rachael
Presiding Canon Simon
Preacher Captain Paul McDonough

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

(Please remain seated)

In this season of Advent,
we prepare our hearts
for the coming of Emmanuel God with us

In our watching and in our waiting

Come Christ Jesus

In our hopes and in our fears

Come Christ Jesus

Into our hearts, our homes, and into the world

Come Christ Jesus

Choir Introit: Advent Wreath Prayer 3 (Archer)

HYMN 609 - Christ is the world's light.

***1 Christ is the world's light, he and none other:
born in our darkness, he became our brother;
if we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high.***

***2 Christ is the world's peace, he and none other:
no one can serve him and despise a brother;
who else unites us, one in God the Father?
Glory to God on high.***

***3 Christ is the world's life, he and none other;
sold once for silver, murdered here, our brother.
He who redeems us, reigns with God the Father:
Glory to God on high.***

***4 Give God the glory, God and none other;
give God the glory, Spirit, Son and Father;
give God the glory, God in man my brother;
Glory to God on high.***

FRED PRATT GREEN (1903–2000)

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LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES Advent 3

People of God: return!
You are called to be God's own.
From the mountains announce the good news.

The advent candle is lit

God comes in justice and peace,
to all who follow his ways.
You are God's children.
**Lord, make us one in the peace of Christ
today and for ever. Amen.**

The young people go to their Faith Seekers Group

INTRODUCTION TO CONFESSION

Let us make our confession to the coming Lord

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

Confession

Please sit or kneel for a moment of quiet & reflection

O promised Christ, our peace depends on your coming. We are a sinful people; our pardon depends on your coming. We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises. Our only hope of doing God's will is that you should come and help us do it. We and the world wait for your peace, for your pardon, and for your grace. Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Kyrie Eleison

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

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

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

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon *us*, pardon and deliver *us* from all *our* sins, confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness, and keep *us* in life eternal.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE COLLECT (Prayer of the week – found on the pew sheet)

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare
the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

(please sit)

BIBLE READING

New Testament: James 5: 7-10 Read by Gill

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN 37 - Hark what a sound.

***1 Hark what a sound, and too divine for hearing,
stirs on the earth and trembles in the air!
Is it the thunder of the Lord's appearing?
Is it the music of his people's prayer?***

***2 Surely he cometh, and a thousand voices
shout to the saints, and to the deaf are dumb;
surely he cometh, and the earth rejoices,
glad in his coming who hath sworn: I come!***

***3 This hath he done, and shall we not adore him?
This shall he do, and can we still despair?
Come, let us quickly fling ourselves before him,
cast at his feet the burden of our care.***

***4 Through life and death, through sorrow
and through sinning,
he shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.***

FREDERIC WILLIAM HENRY MYERS (1843–1901)*

GOSPEL READING Matthew 11: 2-11

(Please remain standing)

Alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia.

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to St Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Captain Paul McDonough

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We stand to affirm our Faith using the words of 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, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who 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 INTERCESSION Led by Jennifer D

(Please sit or kneel)

These responses may be used:

Christ within us and Christ around us

Bring Light to our world

at the end

Light of the world

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour

Jesus Christ. Amen

FAITH SEEKERS RETURN

NOTICES AND TIME OF SHARING

THE PEACE

(If you would like to, please stand)

In the tender mercy of our God, the dayspring from on high shall break upon us to give light to those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you

Deacon: Let us offer one another a sign of peace

OFFERTORY HYMN 47 - People, look east.

(During the hymn the bread & wine are brought forward and the altar is prepared)

***1 People, look east to see at last
hopes fulfilled from ages past:
now in the promise of the morning,
see, a brighter day is dawning,
rich with the visions long foretold,
prophets' dreams from days of old.***

***2 God reaffirms the gracious call:
words of welcome meant for all;
comfort enough for all our sorrows;
justice shaping new tomorrows.
Mercy bears fruit in lives restored,
freed to praise and serve the Lord.***

***3 Now, with the coming of the light,
darkest fears are put to flight;
see how the clouds of gloom are clearing,
blown aside by hope's appearing.
Jesus, the Light of all our days,
comes and sets our hearts ablaze.***

***4 Born of our race, a child so small
hail the promised Lord of all!
Nailed to a cross for our salvation,
he shall rule God's new
creation.***

Lift up your eyes, and look again:
see, he comes in power to reign!

MARTIN LECKEBUSCH (b. 1962)

As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside are now reunited on this table in bread and wine.

Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your kingdom.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER (please sit or kneel)

The Choir may remain standing

The Lord be with you
and also with you

Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give thanks and praise

It is indeed right and good
to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.
For when he humbled himself
to come among us in human flesh,
he fulfilled the plan you formed
before the foundation of the world
to open for us the way of salvation.
Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,
we now watch for the day
when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.
And so we join our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven to proclaim your glory,
for ever praising you and *singing*:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna, in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.***

Lord, you are holy indeed,
the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine may be to us
the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.



In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
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.



Christ is the bread of life:

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Awaiting his coming in glory,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body
because we all share in one bread.**

The Agnus Dei is sung:

***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.***

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may,
not because you are strong, but because you are weak.
Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to
come, but because you need mercy and help.

Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him
more.

Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you.
Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

All are welcome to come forward to receive the bread and the wine or
a blessing. It is helpful for us if you say your name when you come to
the front. The choir will receive Holy Communion first at the High Altar,
followed by the rest of the congregation who will receive Holy
Communion at the Chancel step.

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance
that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

Anthem Be still for the presence of the Lord (Evans)

HYMN 247 - Holy Spirit, gift bestower

***1 Holy Spirit, gift bestower,
breathe into our hearts today.
Flowing water, dove that hovers,
Holy Spirit, guide our way.
Love inspirer, joy releaser,
Spirit, take our fears away.
Reconciler, peace restorer,
move among us while we pray.***

***2 Holy Spirit, Christ proclaimer,
wisdom bringer, light our way.
Fire that dances, wind that whispers,
Holy Spirit, come today.
Ease disturber, comfort bearer,
move among us while we pray.
Truth revealer, faith confirmer,
rest within our hearts today.***

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Said by a minister and found on the weekly pew sheet.

We give you thanks,
O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

God of new beginnings,
you have fed us at your table
with the bread of renewed hope,
now kindle within us the fire of your love
to be ready to greet Emmanuel,
God with us. Amen

HYMN 39 - Hills of the north

*1 Hills of the North, rejoice,
River and mountain spring,
Hark to the advent voice
Valley and lowland, sing:
Christ comes in righteousness and love,
He brings salvation from above.*

*2 Isles of the Southern seas,
Sing to the listening earth,
Carry on every breeze
Hope of a world's new birth:
In Christ shall all be made anew,
His word is sure, his promise true.*

*3 Lands of the East, arise,
He is your brightest morn,
Greet him with joyous eyes,
Praise shall his path adorn:
Your seers have longed to know their Lord
To you he comes, the final word.*

*4 Shores of the utmost West,
Lands of the setting sun,
Welcome the heavenly guest
In whom the dawn has come:
He brings a never-ending light
Who triumphed o'er our darkest night.*

***5 Shout, as you journey home,
Songs be in every mouth,
Lo, from the North they come,
From East and West and South:
In Jesus all shall find their rest,
In him the universe be blest.***

Editors of English Praise 1975

Based on CHARLES ERNEST OAKLEY (1832 – 1865)

Emmanuel God with us,
the Prophets spoke of your coming,
as a child born to Mary.
In the sadness and joy of your children,
in the work and fellowship of our homes,
Your Kingdom come

Lord Jesus, the Prophets spoke of your
coming to bring justice,
compassion and freedom
Your Kingdom come

Lord Jesus, be born within us,
that we may live in your world with
love and gentleness
Your Kingdom come

THE BLESSING

Christ the Sun of righteousness shine upon *us*,
scatter the darkness from before *our* path,
and make *us* ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among *us* and remain with *us* always.
Amen.

THE DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ, to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

