

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

15th December 2024

The Eucharist 9.30 a.m.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Opening Hymn TIS 284. tune Merle's Tune or Morning Light (592)

- 1. O bless the God of Israel who comes to set us free;
who visits and redeems us, with love for all to see.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of rescue and release:
God shall fulfil his promise and bring our people peace.**
- 2. He comes! The Child of David,
the Son whom God has given;
he comes to live among us and raise us up to heaven:
before him goes his servant - forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation, the herald of the Day.**
- 3. Where once were fear and darkness
the sun begins to rise — the dawning of forgiveness
upon the sinner's eyes. He guides the feet of pilgrims
along the paths of peace:
O bless our God and Saviour with songs that never cease.**

Benedictus, Luke 1:68-79 . Michael Arnold Perry 1942-96
Words from Hymns for Today's Church by permission Jubilate Hymns Ltd, Southampton, UK
CCLI No 637628

Welcome & Greeting

Grace and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
and also with you.

Blessed are those who will come
from east and west, from north and south,
to feast in the kingdom of God.

Prayer of Preparation

Let us pray.

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires
known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
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.**

The Advent Wreath Advent 3 – Joy

Third Candle is lit

The poet, Mary Oliver, wrote:

“If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy,
don’t hesitate.

Give in to it...life has some possibility left...
Joy is not made to be a crumb.”



It seemed impossible, but the Israelites returned
to their home from exile in Babylon.

The prophet Isaiah offered a song of celebration.

Come and rejoice! Eat and drink! Get your priorities in order!

Can’t you see that God is close by?

The people rejoiced, amazed to have a second chance.

The end of the story has yet to be written.

When we light the candle of Joy,
we celebrate the One who has come,
is coming and will come again.

**Whatever we face in life,
God will make joy possible.**

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The Collect is said or sung

Almighty God,
you sent your Son into a world
where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff
and evil clings even to what is good.

Let the fire of your Spirit purge us of greed and deceit,
so that, purified, we may find our peace in you
and you may delight in us.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,
whose day draws near:
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A Reading from the prophet Zephaniah [3. 14-20]

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.
And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

A Song of Isaiah (12. 2-6)

**‘Behold, God is my salvation:
I will trust and will not be afraid;
‘For the Lord God is my strength and my song:
and has become my salvation.’**

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

On that day you will say:

**‘Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name;
‘Make known his deeds among the nations:
proclaim that his name is exalted.**

**‘Sing God’s praises, who has triumphed gloriously:
let this be known in all the world.**

**‘Shout and sing for joy, you that dwell in Zion:
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.’**

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians [4. 4-7]

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.
Do not worry about anything,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
let your requests be made known to God.
And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn: TiS 787. Tune, Christ be our Light.

- 1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your 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.

- 2. 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.**

Christ, be our light

- 3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.**

Christ, be our light

- 4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.**

Christ, be our light

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke [3. 7-18]

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

***Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.***

5. **Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.
*Christ, be our light . . .***

The Sermon will be followed by a time of silence for reflection

Affirmation of Faith (APBA p. 37)

**We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was born, lived, died and rose again,
and is coming to call all to account.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who calls, equips and sends out God's people,
and brings all things to their true end.**

This is our faith, the faith of the Church:

**We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Bishop says

Rejoice, for our God is near.

Be glad, for the Holy One of Israel will come among us.

Holy God, we bring to you our prayers for the world and for the church.

The minister leads the prayers

We pray for the peoples of the world,
for all who know persecution, starvation or war.

Come to us and bring freedom and peace to your people;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for the leaders of nations,
for those who make and administer law.

Come to us and give wisdom to all who govern;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for this nation,
for the diversity of people for whom Australia is home.

Come to us and bring reconciliation and justice to all who live here;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for your church,
for all who would repent and prepare for your coming.
Come to us and do not hold our misdoings against us;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all from whom we are separated by bitterness, jealousy or
resentment.

Come to us and renew us with your love;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all who suffer, for the sick and the dying and all who
mourn. Remembering those for whom we have asked to pray,
Warren, Rob, Mark, Shirley, Bp Garry, Josef, Wayne, Michael, Kaye.
Come to us and comfort the sick and sorrowing;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all who are lonely and friendless,
for the unnoticed and unwanted.

Come to us and gather to yourself the lost and outcast;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all who dwell with you in heaven, remembering this week:
Charles Norton-Wood. Stella Kershaw. Ella Sessions. Dorrie Elliot.
Arthur Lucas. Lil Lucas. Russell Kneebone.

Come to us and bring us home to your eternal presence;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for all who wait in hope for your coming.

Come to us in weakness and humility
and reveal to us your power and glory;
come, Holy God, and, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to
pray for the coming of the kingdom,

**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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

A voice cries out in the wilderness,
'Make straight the way of the Lord.'
So let us listen, and turn to the Lord in penitence and faith.

cf John 1.23

Silence may be kept

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The Absolution. Standing, the bishop says

May the God of love and power
forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

May the God of peace make you completely holy,
ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

All may exchange a sign of peace

Offertory Hymn TiS 273. tune, Helmsley

- 1. Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the sound of this refrain:
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign.**

2. Every eye shall now behold him
robed in awesome majesty;
those who have betrayed and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the tree,
deeply shamed before him,
deeply shamed before him,
deeply shamed before him
shall the true Messiah see.
3. Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture, with what rapture,
with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!
4. Sing amen! let all adore you,
high on your eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for your own;
O come quickly, O come quickly, O come quickly;
hallelujah! Come, Lord, come.

Charles Wesley 1707–88 alt.
Reproduced with permission

Offertory prayers may be said

Response: **Blessed be God for ever.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God,
through your beloved servant Jesus Christ,
through whom you have created all things.

By the power of the Holy Spirit Christ was born of Mary,
and shared our human nature.

With loving arms outstretched upon the cross for us,
Jesus broke the chains of evil and destruction.

By the resurrection your will was fulfilled
and you gathered a holy people to offer you praise.

Now with all creation we raise our voices
to proclaim your glory, as we sing:

**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.**

To you indeed be glory, almighty God, because on the night before he
died, your Son, Jesus Christ, took bread; when he had given you
thanks, he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said:

Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;
do this to remember me. ✠

After supper he took the cup;

when he had given you thanks, he gave it to them and said:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood poured out for you;
do this as often as you drink it to remember me. ✠

God of hope and joy, we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in
your presence and serve you. With this bread and this cup we
proclaim the mystery of our faith.

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

Therefore, loving God, recalling now Christ's death and resurrection,
we ask you to accept this our sacrifice of praise.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and our celebration,
that we may be fed with the body and blood of your Son
and be filled with your life and goodness. ✠

Strengthen us to do your work, and to be your body in the world.
Unite us in Christ and give us your peace.

May we praise you and give you glory through your First-born,
Jesus Christ.

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church,
we worship you, O God, in songs of everlasting praise.

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

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The cup we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

Happy are those who share the banquet.

The Agnus Dei is sung during the breaking of the Bread

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us your peace.**

The Invitation to Communion is given

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

**Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

AFTER COMMUNION

A quiet moment or two

God of new beginnings,
you draw near to us in word and sacrament
to strengthen and renew us;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit,
may your light so shine through us
that all may welcome your Son at his coming.

**Generous God,
you have fed us at your heavenly table.
Set us on fire with your Spirit
that when Christ comes again
we may shine like lights before his face,
who with you and the Spirit lives for ever. Amen.**

Notices

Concluding Hymn TiS 274. tune, Crediton

1. **The people that in darkness walked
have seen a glorious light;
the light has shined on them who dwelt
in death's surrounding night.**
2. **To hail you, Sun of righteousness,
the gathering nations come:
rejoicing as when reapers bear
their harvest treasures home.**
3. **To us a child of hope is born,
to us a Son is given;
him shall the tribes of earth obey,
him all the hosts of heaven.**
4. **His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
for evermore adored,
the Wonderful, the Counsellor,
the great and mighty Lord.**
5. **His power increasing still shall spread,
his reign no end shall know:
justice shall guard his throne above
and peace abound below.**

John Morison 1750-98 vv. 3-5
and compilers vv. 1-2

The Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from your path,
and make you 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 you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.