

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

22nd December 2024

The Eucharist with Baptism 11.00 a.m.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

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.

Opening Hymn TIS 282. tune Woodlands 411

- 1. The voice of God goes out to all the world;
his glory speaks across the universe.
The great King's herald cries from star to star:
'With power, with justice, he will walk his way.'**
- 2. The Lord has said, 'Receive my messenger,
my promise to the world, my pledge made flesh,
a lamp to every nation, light from light':
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.**
- 3. The broken reed he will not trample down,
nor set his heel upon the dying flame.
He binds the wounds, and health is in his hand:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.**
- 4. Anointed with the Spirit and with power,
he comes to crown with comfort all the weak,
to show the face of justice to the poor:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.**
- 5. His touch will bless the eyes that darkness held,
the lame shall run, the halting tongue shall sing,
and prisoners laugh in light and liberty:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.**

Luke Connaughton 1917-79

Words by permission McCrimmon Publishing, UK

The Advent Wreath — Advent 4 – Love

Fourth Candle is lit

The poet, George Herbert, wrote:

“Love bade me welcome,
but my soul drew back.”

It's hard to take in the enormity of God's love made flesh in Jesus Christ.

The psalmist knew it long before Jesus:

“For with The Lord, there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.”

God became one of us, out of love for all of us, then and now and forever.

When we light the candle of Love,
we stop in awe of God's unending love.

**Whatever we face in life,
God's steadfast love surrounds us.**

The priest says

Let us affirm our trust in God's mercy, and confess that we need forgiveness.

A pause for reflection

Let us pray.

**Lord God,
you created this world, and made us in your own image.
Forgive us when we turn away from you.**

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy

**Lord God, through your Son you overcame evil and death.
Rescue us from slavery to sin.**

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy

**Lord God, by your Spirit, you restore us to fellowship
with you and with one another.**

Breathe your love and freedom into our lives.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

The priest says

Almighty God have mercy on you,
forgive you your sins,
and keep you in life eternal. **Amen.**

The Collect is said

Who are we, Lord God, that you should come to us?
Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son.

As we prepare to celebrate his birth,
make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your Word,
and move us by your Spirit
to bless your wonderful works.

We ask 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 Micah [5. 2-5a]

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labour has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

Hear the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Song of Mary (*Magnificat*)

**My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
Who has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
from this day all generations will call me blessed;**

**The Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his name.**

**God has mercy on those who fear him,
from generation to generation.**

**The Lord has shown strength with his arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.**

**God has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.**

**He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our forebear,
to Abraham and his children for ever.**

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews [10. 5-10]

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;
in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God"
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).'

When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken
pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-
offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he
added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first
in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we
have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus
Christ once for all.

**Hear the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn: TiS 283. tune, Theodoric

1. **Long ago, prophets knew Christ would come, born a Jew,
come to make all things new, bear his people's burden,
freely love and pardon.**

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes, when he comes.
who will make him welcome?*

2. **God in time, God in man, this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man, born himself of woman,
God divinely human.**

Refrain

3. **Mary, hail! Though afraid, she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb God is laid: till the time expected,
nurtured and protected.**

Refrain

4. **Journey ends: where afar Beth'lem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary, Saviour, do not tarry.**

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
Jesus comes, Jesus comes:
we will make him welcome.*

Frederick Pratt Green 1903-
Words by permission Stainer & Bell, London

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke [1. 39-45].
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry,

'Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy.

And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

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

The Sermon

THE PRESENTATION

The priest invites the sponsors to stand in view of the congregation.

Children are baptised in response to God's all-embracing love. Parents and godparents who have responded to that love come now to bring their child for baptism. Before this congregation they must express their own trust and commitment to the promises of God, and their intention to bring up this child in the faith and practice of the Church. In due time this child should make his own response to God, and be prepared for confirmation.

The priest says to the sponsors

Will you accept the responsibilities placed upon you in bringing this child for baptism?

I will.

Are you willing to answer on behalf of this child?

I am.

By your own prayers and example, by your friendship and love, will you encourage this child in the life and faith of the Christian community?

I will, with God's help.

THE DECISION

Before God and this congregation, you must affirm that you turn to Christ and reject all that is evil:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living, and all that is false and unjust?

I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil?

I renounce all that is evil.

The priest prayers for the child

Almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
and lead you in the light of Christ
to his everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The priest says to the sponsors

Do you affirm this faith as yours?

I do.

Will you each, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of
Christ, loving God with your whole heart, and your neighbour as
yourself, until your life's end?

I will, with God's help.

The priest says to the congregation

You have heard these our brothers and sisters respond to Christ.
Will you support them in this calling?

We will.

THE BAPTISM

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

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

Father, we give you thanks and praise
for your gift of water in creation;
for your Spirit, sweeping over the waters,
bringing light and life;
for your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
baptized in the river Jordan.

We bless you for your new creation,
brought to birth by water and the Spirit,
and for your grace bestowed upon us your children,
washing away our sins.

May your holy and life-giving Spirit
move upon these waters.
Restore through them the beauty of your creation,
and bring those who are baptized
to new birth in the family of your Church.

Drown sin in the waters of judgement,
anoint your children with power from on high,
and make them one with Christ
in the freedom of your kingdom.
For all might, majesty, dominion and power are yours,
now and for ever.

Alleluia. Amen.

The minister baptises by dipping the candidates in the water, or pouring water over them, saying

Remy, I baptise you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

AFTER BAPTISM

the priest makes a cross on the forehead of each person, saying

Remy,

I sign you with the sign of the cross
to show that you are marked as Christ's own for ever.

The priest addresses all the newly baptised

Live as a disciple of Christ:
fight the good fight,
finish the race,
keep the faith.

and the congregation responds, saying

**Confess Christ crucified,
proclaim his resurrection,
look for his coming in glory.**

The minister says

God has brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

and the congregation joins the minister in saying

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

The minister continues

God has called you into his Church.

The congregation joins the minister in saying

We therefore receive and welcome you
as a member with us of the body of Christ,
as a child of the one heavenly Father,
and as an inheritor of the kingdom of God.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray.

For all who are baptised into Christ

Gracious God,
we who have been brought from death to life,
dedicate ourselves to you.
Produce in us the fruit of your Spirit.
Equip us to serve your people
and advance your gospel in the world.
Enable us to live in holiness and righteousness
and to please you in all that we do;
in the name of Jesus our Saviour. **Amen.**

At the baptism of a child

Merciful God,
in your infinite love you have made a new covenant
with us in your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
promising to be our God and the God of our children.
Enable all who are baptised in your name
to live as a covenant people.
Fulfil your promises for Remy, we pray,
and grant that he may grow in your faith and service
until his life's end;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A prayer for parents

Heavenly Father, we pray for Remy's parents,
Simon and Arpatsara,
give them the spirit of wisdom and love.
May their children grow up to love and reverence you
and their home share in the joy of your eternal kingdom. **Amen.**

For godparents

God of truth and love,
we pray for Alistair and Brooke, Remy's godparents.
Enable them to share with their godchild
what you have revealed to us in your holy gospel.
We ask this in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to 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.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

In baptism, God has made us one in Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

All may exchange a sign of peace

Offertory Hymn TiS 265

- 1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
*Rejoice! rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***
- 2. O come, O come, great Lord of might
who to the tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
*Rejoice! rejoice! ...***
- 3. O come, O key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high
and close the path to misery.
*Rejoice! rejoice! ...***

4. **O come, O branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! rejoice!
*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***
5. **O come, O dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
*Rejoice! rejoice! ...***

Anon., Latin, 18th cent. or earlier
based on Antiphons from 9th cent. or earlier
tr. John Mason Neale 1818–66 alt.

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.

In baptism you have united us to him
and brought us out of darkness into light.

You pour your Spirit upon us, filling us with your gifts,
and calling us to serve you as a royal priesthood.

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

**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 said during the breaking of the Bread

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

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

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

The priest gives the Invitation.

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

Gracious God,
in baptism you make us one family in Christ your Son,
one in the sharing of his body and his blood,
one in the communion of his Spirit.
Help us to grow in love for one another
and come to the full maturity of the body of Christ.

**Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit. Amen.**

Notices

Concluding Hymn TiS 275. tune, Cruger

- Hail to the Lord's anointed,
great David's greater Son;
hail, in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to let the captive free,
and take away transgression,
and rule in equity.**

2. He comes with help and mercy
to those who suffer wrong,
to raise the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong,
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls condemned and dying
were precious in his sight.
3. He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth,
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth;
before him on the mountains
shall peace the herald go,
and righteousness in fountains
from hill to valley flow.
4. Kings shall fall down before him,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore him,
his praise all people sing;
to him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.
5. O'er every foe victorious,
he on his throne shall rest,
from age to age more glorious,
all blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand for ever,
that name to us is love.

James Montgomery 1771–1854 alt.

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.

