

Holy Communion
for the season of Advent

The organist will play as we gather for worship.

Love Divine, all loves excelling

Love Divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!

(Charles Wesley, 1747)

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

Grace and peace to you
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Blessed are those who will come
from east and west, from north and south,
to feast in the Kingdom of God.

Words of welcome

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As we light a second candle,
we remember the light brought by the prophets,
whose words showed God's despair
at the actions of the people,
yet gave hope to those who listened.

The second candle is lit

**God, as we wait for your promise,
give light, give hope.**

Prayers of Penitence

Let us confess our sins to God,
trusting in God's mercy and forgiveness.

**Holy and forgiving God,
we have sinned against you and each other,
in thought and word and deed.
We have turned from your life-giving word,
and ignored the message of those you sent.**

**We are unprepared for the coming of your Son.
Have mercy on us and forgive us,
that strengthened by your love
we may serve you more faithfully,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw us to himself and cleanse us from all our sins,
that we may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Collect

Almighty God,
as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you,
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The First Reading

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah (40:1-11)

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

A voice says, 'Cry out!'

And I said, 'What shall I cry?'

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'

See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Reading

The Lord be with you.
and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark (1:1-8).
Glory to you, O Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight" ',

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

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

Sermon

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

ending with

Merciful Father,

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Peace

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.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

We share the peace with British Sign Language (please refrain from shaking hands).

The Eucharistic Prayer

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

Amen.

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 truly 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 saying:

**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:

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, St Philip 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.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Confident in the Lord's never-failing mercy, let us pray with confidence
in the words that Jesus taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
forever and 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.**

Agnus Dei

**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 peace.**

Giving of Communion

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The body and the blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The president will receive the consecrated elements first having sanitised hands, and then sanitise hands after receiving and before putting on a face covering. This will be worn throughout the distribution.

Communion will be administered in one kind only. Each communicant should sanitise their hands and then extend their hands to receive holy communion with their face covering in place, which should be un-looped in order to consume the consecrated bread, and then immediately replaced.

Care will be taken during the distribution not to touch hands – should this happen both the president and the communicant should sanitise their hands immediately.

If preferred, it is perfectly acceptable to remain seated to receive. Those who wish to receive a blessing should indicate by crossing their hands over their chest. A blessing will be given without the use of touch.

A prayer for those who remain at home to say during communion:

Lord Jesus,
together we have remembered your saving acts.
Be present with us now,
though we cannot be present with one another:
come to us through bread and wine,
though we cannot taste or share them,
and remain in our hearts, we pray.
Amen.

Prayer after Communion

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

The notices may be given.

The Blessing and Dismissal

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before your path,
and make you ready to meet with 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.

May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting.
Thanks be to God.

Please remain seated for a few moments while the organist plays the hymn. You will be invited to leave, household by household, to ensure that we maintain safe social distancing and avoid congestion at the door as people leave church. Thank you for your patience and understanding in these difficult times.

Come, thou long-expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fear and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
born salvation to impart;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us forever
now thy gracious kingdom bring

By thine own eternal spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine own sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Charles Wesley, 1774

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