



CHESTER
CATHEDRAL

Cathedral Eucharist

3rd Sunday of Advent
13th December, 2020 at 10.00am

President: Canon Sarah Fenby
Preacher: The Very Revd Dr Tim Stratford
Deacon: Canon Jane Brooke

WELCOME

We welcome you to this beautiful church in the heart of the city for a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This cathedral is the seat of the Bishop of Chester and the core of a Christian community that has worshipped here and worked together for over 1100 years. It is a place where the mission of the church is to proclaim God's love is central, and your welcome presence here for worship helps to strengthen this vital act of witness.

SEASON OF ADVENT

The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means coming, and for centuries Christians have used these weeks before Christmas to prepare themselves for the great feast of our Lord's Holy Nativity, when God emptied himself and became a human being in Jesus of Nazareth.

In the twenty-first century we cannot prepare literally for the birth of Christ, which took place over two thousand years ago; but we can prepare our hearts and minds so that he may be born in us on Christmas Day. This is important because, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, we are called to be God-bearers to our own generation: and we do this by proclaiming Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour to those among whom we live and work. The first coming of Christ brought a new Light to the world that has never been extinguished. The Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Testament were the heralds of this new dawn.

Through these weeks leading up to Christmas, as we read of their hope and expectation of a Messiah, we light an additional candle on our Advent Wreath each Sunday at the Cathedral Eucharist, to symbolise the retreat of darkness as the first rays of sunlight advance towards the break of day. Our wreath has five candles: four around its circumference, which are gradually lit through Advent; and a white one at its centre, which is lit on Christmas Day. The four coloured candles have traditionally represented the Patriarchs, the Prophets, Saint John the Baptist, and the Blessed Virgin Mary – those faithful believers who prepared the way for the Advent of Christ – and they remind us of our calling to reveal the presence of Christ in the world today.

Making our pilgrimage through Advent we are taken on a spiritual journey from darkness to light as we realise the full implications of our acceptance of Christ and of our walking with him in daily life. We also begin to look forward to Christ's second coming at the end of time, when the kingdom of God will finally be established.

THE GATHERING

HYMN

- 1 **Of the Father's heart begotten,
ere the world from chaos rose,
he is Alpha: from that Fountain
all that is and hath been flows;
he is Omega, of all things
yet to come the mystic Close,
evermore and evermore.**

- 2 **This is he, whom seer and sibyl
sang in ages long gone by;
this is he of old revealèd
in the page of prophecy;
lo! He comes, the promised Saviour;
let the world his praises cry!
Evermore and evermore.**

- 3 **Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
let your joyous anthems ring,
every tongue his name confessing,
countless voices answering,
evermore and evermore.**

*'Corde natus ex Parentis' Prudentius (348–c 413)
translated by Roby Furley Davis (1866–1937)*

*Divinum mysterium 58 100CC
from Piae Cantiones 1582*

GREETING

The President says

In the name of the God who has delivered us from the dominion
of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

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

OPENING RESPONSES

We wait for your loving kindness, O Lord;

in our world today.

Your glory shall be revealed

and we shall celebrate it!

Show us your grace and mercy

as we acknowledge our faults and seek forgiveness.

Lord Jesus come with light

and guide our feet into the way of peace.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Lord Jesus, Light of the world, you are our joy and salvation.

Make us ready this Advent to welcome you

into our hearts and lives. Amen.

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

The Deacon introduces the Confession

When the Lord comes,

he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,

and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

After a short silence, all say

Lord God, we have sinned against you;

we have done evil in your sight.

We are sorry and repent.

Have mercy on us according to your love.

Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.

Renew a right spirit within us

and restore us to the joy of your salvation,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

The President says

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from your sins,

and restore you in his image to the praise and glory of his name,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

KYRIE

The choir sings

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy on us. Christ have mercy on us. Lord have mercy on us.

COLLECT

The President says

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you:

grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries

may likewise so prepare and make ready your way

by turning the hearts of the disobedient

to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world

we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;

for you are alive and reign with the Father

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE OLD TESTAMENT

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

61. 1-4, 8-end

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN

**I Wild and lone the prophet's voice
echoes through the desert still,
calling us to make a choice,
bidding us to do God's will:
'turn from sin and be baptised;
cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Quitting all the sins you prized,
yield your life to God's control.'**

- 2 **'Bear the fruit repentance shows:
lives of justice, truth, and love.
Trust no other claim than those;
set your heart on things above.
Soon the Lord will come in power,
burning clean the threshing floor:
then will flames the chaff devour;
wheat alone shall fill God's store.'**
- 3 **With such preaching stark and bold
John proclaimed salvation near,
and his timeless warnings hold
words of hope to all who hear.
So we dare to journey on,
led by faith through ways untrod,
till we come at last like John
to behold the Lamb of God.**

*Carl P Daw, Jr (born 1944)
from the author's collection A Year of Grace*

ABERYSTWYTH
Joseph Parry (1841-1903)

HOLY GOSPEL

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

1.6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"', as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptising if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptise with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptising.

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

SERMON

After the sermon, a short silence is observed

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

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,
let us pray to the Father.

After each petition the following response may be used

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

At the end

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

PEACE

The President says

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.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

The President says

Hasten, Lord, the day when people will come from east and west,
from north and south, and sit at table in your kingdom
and we shall see your Son in his glory.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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:

The choir sings

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine. Osanna in excelsis.

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.

The President continues

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.

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.**

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. **Amen.**

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 BREAD

We break the bread of life, and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us, light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

GIVING OF COMMUNION

The President says

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
**Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

AGNUS DEI

The choir sings

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

*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.*

COMMUNION MOTET

Oculi mei,

Estêvão Lopes Morago

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

The President says

Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

BLESSING

The President says

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before 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 Deacon says

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

HYMN

- 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 W H Myers (1843-1901)

HIGHWOOD
Richard Runciman Terry (1865-1938)

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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