

Eucharist
4th Sunday of Advent

Welcome and notices



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

All

Opening Hymn

Stand

- 1 In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter,
Long ago.
- 2 Our God, heaven cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.
- 3 Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air -
But only his mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the beloved
With a kiss.
- 4 What can I give him
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him –
Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)
(Public Domain)

The president greets the people

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

All

The Advent Candles

The lighting of the Advent Candles symbolises our preparation for Christmas. Each week we focus on a particular Advent figure, or group of people, in the following prayers.

Advent 4

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, whose humility and openness to God made possible the incarnation.

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle: to you be praise and glory for ever. Your light has shone in our darkened world through the child-bearing of blessed Mary; grant that we who have seen your glory may daily be renewed in your image and prepared like her for the coming of your Son, who is the Lord and Saviour of all.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

Prayer of Preparation

All **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.**

Prayers of Penitence

Sit

Invitation to 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.

All **Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
in what we have thought,
in what we have said and done,
through ignorance, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We have wounded your love,
and marred your image in us.
We are sorry and ashamed,
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past;
and lead us out from darkness
to walk as children of light. Amen.**

The President says

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy *upon you*, pardon and deliver *you* from *all your sins*, confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness, and keep *you* in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words 'Let us pray'

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Isaiah 7.10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Romans 1.1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gradual Hymn

Stand

- 1 God rest you merry, gentlemen
let nothing you dismay
remember, Christ, our Saviour
was born on Christmas day
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were gone astray
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.*
- 2 From God our heavenly Father,
a blessed angel came;
and unto certain shepherds
brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born
the Son of God by name,
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.*
- 3 And when they came to Bethlehem
where our dear Saviour lay,
they found him in a manger
where oxen feed on hay;
his mother Mary kneeling,
unto the Lord did pray:
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.*
- 4 Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true love and charity
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
all others doth deface:
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*Traditional English 18th Century
(Public Domain)*

Gospel Reading Gospel Acclamation

Remain standing

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

All Alleluia

All Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *Matthew*
Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 1.18-end

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',
which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

At the end

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

Sermon

Sit

The Creed

Stand

All Let us declare our faith in God.
**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

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

Prayers of Intercession

All Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

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

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Stand

The president may introduce the Peace with one of these or another sentence

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.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

A sign of peace - not a handshake but a smile, may be shared with your neighbour.

Offertory Hymn

- 1 Like a candle flame,
flick'ring small in our darkness.
Uncreated light
shines through infant eyes.
(lower voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(upper voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(lower voices) come to save us, alleluia,
(upper voices) come to save us,
alleluia!
- 2 Stars and angels sing,
yet the earth sleeps in shadows;
can this tiny spark
set a world on fire?
(lower voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(upper voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(lower voices) come to save us, alleluia,
(upper voices) come to save us,
alleluia!
- 3 Yet His light shall shine
from our lives, Spirit blazing,
as we touch the flame
of His holy fire.
(lower voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(upper voices) God is with us, alleluia,
(lower voices) come to save us, alleluia,
(upper voices) come to save us,
alleluia!

*Graham Kendrick (born 1950)
(CCLI 30392)*

Preparation of the Table

The gifts of the people are presented.

The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.

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.

All **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord is here

All **His Spirit is with us**

Lift up your hearts

All **We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All **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. He is the one foretold by all the prophets, whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling. John the Baptist was his herald and made him known when at last he came. In his love Christ fills us with joy as we prepare to celebrate his birth, so that when he comes again he may find us watching in prayer, our hearts filled with wonder and praise. And so, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your glory, and join in their unending hymn of praise:

All **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.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and blood; 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.

Therefore, Heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.**

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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:

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

A short period of silence is kept.

The Lord's Prayer

Sit

As our Saviour has taught us, so we pray:

All **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

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

The Agnus Dei may be used as the bread is broken

All **Jesus, Lamb of God,
Have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,
Have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
Grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

The president invites the congregation to receive communion

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.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The following prayer may be said:

All **Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean,
our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit even to eat the crumbs from under your table.
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation
and share your bread with sinners.
So cleanse and feed us with the precious
body and blood of your Son,
that He may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,
may sit and eat in your kingdom. Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept. The Post Communion prayer is said.

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer
you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in
the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

Final Hymn

Stand

- 1 Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!*

- 2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!*

- 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth:
*Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the new-born King!"*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
(CCLI 5386491, OL 08975)

The Dismissal and The Blessing

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.

All Amen.

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

