

SERVICE ORDER
Sunday, 4th December
Second Sunday of Advent

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

**Stir up our hearts, Lord,
to prepare the way for your only Son.
Help us by his coming to serve you with pure hearts and minds.
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCE: Matthew 3:3

*A messenger is calling out in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord.
Make straight paths for him.'*

**A messenger is calling out in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord.
Make straight paths for him.'**

INVOCATION

*In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

LHS 2 O COME, O COME EMMANUEL

**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 thee, O Israel.**

**O come, thou rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save, And give them victory o'er the grave:
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Thou dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight:
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, thou key of David, come And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the path that leads on high, And close the path to misery:
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

From the Great O Antihons, 12th – 13th Century Tr. John Mason Neale, 1851/1859

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

*The true light came to those who belonged to him,
and his own people did not accept him.*

**The true light, who enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world.**

CONFESSION

*Let us draw near to God our Father with a true heart to confess our sins,
and ask Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.*

**Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor helpless sinner, confess to You all
my sins, and repent of all the evil I have done. I have deeply displeased You
and deserve Your punishment in time and in eternity. But I am sorry for my
sins, and I ask You, for the sake of the holy innocent sufferings and death of
Your dear Son Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me. Amen.**

*Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given His
only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who
believe in His name He has given the right to become children of God, and has
given them His Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved.
Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.*

PSALM 72:1-7,18,19

¹ Endow the king with your justice, O God,
the royal son with your righteousness.

² May he judge your people in righteousness,
your afflicted ones with justice.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound.

³ May the mountains bring prosperity to the people,
the hills the fruit of righteousness.

⁴ May he defend the afflicted among the people
and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor.

⁵ May he endure^[a] as long as the sun,
as long as the moon, through all generations.

⁶ May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

⁷ In his days may the righteous flourish
and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound.

¹⁸ Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel,
who alone does marvelous deeds.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound.

¹⁹ Praise be to his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Amen and Amen.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound.

**Glory to the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever.**

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray that we are ready for Christ's coming.

[silence]

Merciful God,

*you sent your messengers to preach repentance
and prepare the way for our salvation.*

*Turn us away from our sins,
so that we greet our coming redeemer,
Jesus Christ, with joy.*

*For he lives with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

Amen.

BIBLE READING

FIRST READING: First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10 The longed-for Messiah (NIVUK)

¹¹ A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD – ³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash round his waist. ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling^[a] together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting-place will be glorious.

After the reading
This is the Word of the LORD.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13 Good news for the Gentiles (NIVUK)

⁴For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. ⁵May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews^[a] on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written: 'Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name.'^[b] ¹⁰Again, it says, 'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.'^[c] ¹¹And again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him.'^[d] ¹²And again, Isaiah says, 'The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.'^[e] ¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

After the reading
This is the Word of the LORD.
Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE

Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia!

A voice cries out in the desert:
'Prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight.'
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12 The kingdom of heaven is at hand! (NIVUK)

Before the reading

Glory be to You, O LORD.

³In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ²and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: ‘A voice of one calling in the wilderness, “Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.”’^[a] ⁴John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt round his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the River Jordan. ⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptising, he said to them: ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰The axe has been laid to the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹‘I baptise you with^[b] water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with^[c] the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’

After the reading

This is the gospel of the LORD.

Praise be to You, O Christ.

Lord Jesus, thank you for coming

and bringing the kingdom of heaven.

Lead us to repent, and fill us with your Spirit.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S CREED

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

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son,
our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty,
from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

LHS 800 MAY WE BE ONE

**May we be one Bound in love for ever
Growing close together day by day;
Growing as God fills us with his life;
We are joined in him, he makes us one.**

**May we be one As our Father planned it.
May the love of Jesus make us strong.
No one can harm us when he is near;
He has brought us peace, he makes us one**

**May we be one – Jesus' truth to bind us.
With his body he unites us all;
Dying our death, he restores our life;
Living with us now, he makes us one.**

**May we be one Sharing life together
With the Father and his only Son.
Now we have life in this world of death;
Heaven has begun, he makes us one.**

SERMON

At this point you may wish to Listen to Sermon,
or Read and Discuss the Sermon
For Church YouTube Channel ([click here](#))
The Sermon online may be different to the manuscript.
For LCA Worship Resources ([click here](#))

AT 359 HOLY SPIRIT LIVING WATER

**Holy Spirit, living water, flow in us and set us free.
Cleanse our unbelief and sorrow, wash our eyes and make us see.**

**Holy Spirit, come as wind and blow the dust of death away.
Breathe the gift of life into us, lighten hearts to laugh and play.**

**Holy Spirit, rushing fire, burn with truth and justice here.
Catch our minds alight with passion, perfect love that casts out fear.**

**Holy Spirit, come in silence, wordlessly to heal and bless.
Be the heart that prays within us, fill the void with tenderness.**

**Holy Spirit, blessed Wisdom, teach us all of God's delight.
Offer us the wine of grace and make us children of the Light.**

Elizabeth Smith St. Stephen's Press

OFFERING PRAYER

*Great and loving God,
we thank you for all your goodness.
Help us to prepare a road for you by the way we live.
Use us and our gifts in building up your kingdom.
Amen.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6)

Let us pray.

Father in Heaven, we thank and praise you that you have lavished grace upon grace to us through your Son Jesus Christ so that we could bring praise to you. Guide your church to show your grace and compassion to all who we meet, that all peoples may be drawn to glorify you.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for your Son's just and righteous rule. Let your Spirit guide the leaders of our land, that they may judge with righteousness for the poor, and decide with equity for all in need.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

You make the wolf lie down with the lamb. Fill the earth with such knowledge of you that weak and strong may live together in safety and peace.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for sending us messengers of repentance in every age. Help us to listen to your voice and produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father and eternal judge, your Son will come to judge all people and will reveal the secrets of all hearts. Make us trustworthy servants, so that we may praise you on the day when Jesus Christ returns, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 forever. Amen.**

BLESSING

Let us bless the LORD.
God be praised forevermore.
The LORD bless us and keep us.
The LORD make His face shine on us and be gracious to us.
The LORD look upon us with favour, and give us peace.
Amen!

GROWING FAITH AT HOME BLESSING

May God give you great joy and peace as you trust in him.
May God give you great joy and peace as you trust in him.

WORDS OF SENDING

Go in peace, as you trust in the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

AT 408 MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU

**May the Lord bless you today, and may He keep you in His care,
giving His peace to your soul even when times are hard.
May the Lord's love flow through you just like a never-ending stream –
knowing His hand will be there when you call on His name.
May He always smile on you**

Sharney Russell-Schlenker (1995)

HYMNS AND SONGS

First reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

LHS

- 2 O come, O come, Immanuel G7
- 8 Rise, children of the kingdom* (*alt tune* 107, G4)
- 16 Hail to the Lord's Anointed G6
- 147 O Morning Star so bright and fair* G3
- 156 Jesus our Saviour, of true joy the giver* G3
- 513 Peace to soothe all grief and woe G5
- 514 Saviour, again to Thy dear name we raise* G7
- 572 O God of love, O king of peace* G5
- 739 When the King shall come again G4

AT

- 220 There'll be peace
- 221 They were waiting
- 313 Christ, be our light
- 359 Holy Spirit, living water

Second reading: Romans 15:4-13

LHS

- 344 Our God is love, and all His saints* G6
- 355 May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfil* G3
- 587 O happy home, where Thou art loved the dearest G7
- 797 Blest be the tie that binds GS
- 798 Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round G6
- 799 In Christ there is no east or west G7

800 May we be one GS
802 One family, we're together GS
803 Peace with the Father G7
870 Lord of all hopefulness G6
892 Hear us now, our God and Father G3

AT

62 One family
172 May we be one
174 Bind us together
180 A time for building bridges
388 One body
405 Lord of all hopefulness
408 May the Lord bless you today
448 Loving Spirit

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

LHS

12 Comfort, comfort ye My people* G4
13 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry G4
192 Bowed low in supplication
305 Today Thy mercy calls us* G3
316 Smite me not in anger, Lord G4
737 Prepare the royal highway G4
850 O Father, my Father GS

AT

6 O Father, my Father
327 Sorry
331 Turn to me with all your heart
332 We are sorry
338 God in human shoes
398 A child of God
402 God has chosen me