

WORSHIP - 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

13 DECEMBER 2020

Today we should have Morning Prayer at St Matthew's and Holy Communion at St Edmund's, both at 10, plus worship on Zoom at 11.30 am. If you want to join click on this link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81615285380?pwd=SUh1N09KQW5CSGdaZ0g1ZW0rS3BLQT09>

We plan to put the whole thing on youtube afterwards, so you can watch it later - the link will be on the website.

This is the Order of Service that we will use for Zoom though I've added some extra hymns and music.

The first thing we do is to **Light the Advent Wreath** - thanks to the Garratt family for lighting it. Today we remember John the Baptist. We pray together:

God our Father, you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age a son called John. He grew up strong in spirit, prepared the people for the coming of the Lord, and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us, who have been baptized into Christ, to be ready to welcome him into our hearts, and to grow strong in faith by the power of the Spirit. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought and word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. **Amen.**

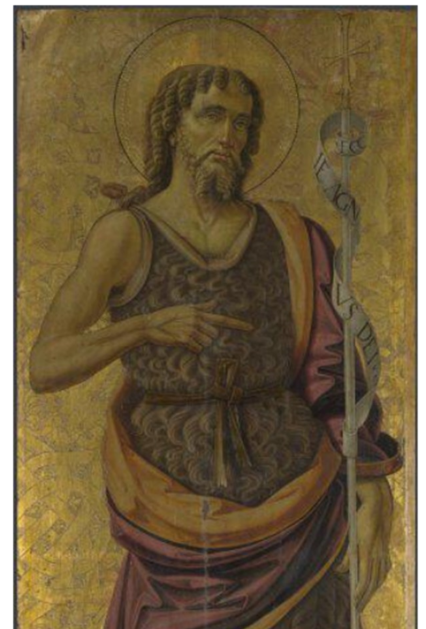
Lord, have mercy upon us, **Lord, have mercy upon us.**
Christ, have mercy upon us, **Christ, have mercy upon us.**
Lord, have mercy upon us, **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

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. **Amen.**

The Collect

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.**

*John the Baptist, figure on altarpiece
Probably by Bartolomeo Caporali
National Gallery of London*



Old Testament reading - Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11

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.**



The Baptism of Christ
Giovanni di Paolo
National Gallery of London

Hymn - On Jordan's Bank - sung by the (socially distanced) choir of Norwich Cathedral
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-n_iUv9NII

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake, and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be ev'ry breast from sin;
Make straight the way for God within;
Prepare we in our hearts a home,
Where such a mighty guest may come.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without thy grace we waste away,
Like flowers that wither and decay.

To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
And bid the fallen sinner stand;
Shine forth and let thy light restore
Earth's own true loveliness once more.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee
Whose advent doth thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Spirit blest, for evermore.

*Words: Charles Coffin, translated John Chandler
Music: Winchester New, 1690 - HON 527*

New Testament reading - John 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 baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize 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 baptizing.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Address - Peter has written a sermon which is on the church website.

The Nicene Creed - *we affirm our faith, and the faith of the whole church (hence 'we' not 'I')*

**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.**

Music - This is the record of John, Orlando Gibbons

Rockbridge Chamber Singers Concert - 3 February 2013 Nate Pence, Alto, Joshua T. Harvey, Organ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gP2mQp0EmmE>

Prayers of Intercession, *written by Louise*

We thank you today Lord for the gift of your son Jesus Christ as a true sign of your love for us. Lord Jesus you came to us as the light of the world, a light that combats all darkness. As we wait and prepare for your coming this Advent, help us we pray to walk in your love, to be your witnesses and to testify to your light. Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Lord in this current time of great darkness, anxiety and uncertainty, we pray for leaders throughout the world and all those in roles of authority. Give them grace and wisdom to promote the wellbeing of their people and to protect the most vulnerable in society. With good decisions from leaders we can have hope for a better life and a better future where your light and glory can shine through and overcome the darkness.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for teachers and for pupils, for social workers, for shop assistants and for owners of small businesses. For the police and our emergency services, for clergy and for all who play vital roles in our daily lives. As we hear that many hospital beds remain full and many people are continuing to die from corona virus - along with other diseases and afflictions - our thoughts also go out to the NHS, the paramedics, the doctors, nurses and surgeons who are working all hours and in adversity to save lives. For the managers who juggle bed availability and resources, for those organise and administering the vaccine. Bless all people who are carrying on your healing, nurturing and giving work Lord and all those for whom they are providing a service.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Thank you Lord for the opportunities that come with each new day. As we start to slowly move beyond these dark days of the Covid-19 virus, hopefully and ultimately into a brighter place, we pray for our communities. Pour your blessings Lord on our families, friends and neighbours, and on our local businesses and tradespeople. Let us remember all the good that has come from these dark days and know in the days to come that the elderly may still need help with shopping and the lonely may still value a thoughtful phone call, and businesses will doubtless more than ever need our support if they are to survive. Therefore, now and in days to come, we pray that we can be good stewards of our communities. Help us to put on your armour of light and do our best to help and support those in need.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Finally we bring before you Lord all who are sick or in pain. We ask that you bring calm to troubled minds and bodies and inner strength to the fearful so that they may also know your love and your peace in their hearts. We give our thanks for the lives of those who have died, and for those loved ones who survive them we ask that they may feel the warmth and care of your loving arms to strengthen their faith and bring them the courage and support to go forward in their lives.

We bring our prayers together as we pray the prayer 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. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn - On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry

recorded in Covid days by the Grosse Pointe Memorial Church (Michigan) Virtual Choir with James Biery, organist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRd-g6i8pmE>

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. **Amen.**

Advent God, we journey with you,
to Bethlehem's stable and a new-born King,
ears attuned to the song of angels,
eyes alert for Bethlehem's star.
Forgive us if on our journey
we are distracted by the things of this world.
Keep our hearts aflame with the hope of Christmas, and the promise of our Saviour. **Amen.**

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

Final music - Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (Sleepers awake) - Philipp Nicolai / Martin Gaskell
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKvzRhVXu3U>

Peter Barham, 11 December 2020