

WORSHIP - 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

20 DECEMBER 2020

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

Hymn - The Holly and the Ivy - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7eHtDtZ7hs>

The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.
O, the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a blossom
As white as lily flow'r,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our dear Saviour.

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good.

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.



The first thing we do is to **Light the Advent Wreath** - thanks to the Lane family for lighting it. Today we remember The Blessed Virgin Mary. We pray together:

God our Father, the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son. Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy. Help us, whom you call to serve you, to share like her in your great work of bringing to our world your love and healing. 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

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. Amen.

Old Testament reading - 2 Samuel 7.1-11,16

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.' But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

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

New Testament reading - Luke 1.26-38 - The Annunciation

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

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

Music - we have to have The Magnificat - this is my favourite setting, John Wood in G for boys' voices, sung by St Edmundsbury Cathedral Choir - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU~6AGGAbg>

Address - Peter has written a sermon which is on the church website (it has pictures!)

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.

Prayers of Intercession

As we pray to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we say with Mary:
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

Your prophet of old foretold a day when a virgin would conceive and bear a son who would be called God-with-us. Help us to look forward to your deliverance and to seek the fulness of your kingdom. Help us to look forward, to have faith, and to believe.
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

Your angel declared to Mary that she was to be the mother of the Saviour. We pray for mothers - and fathers - in our world today. Those who are afraid, those for whom Covid means they must face so much alone, those for whom Christmas is such a difficult time. Help us Lord to love and support them, and help us to rejoice. Help every Christian person to be open to your word and obedient to your will.
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

Mary rejoiced with Elizabeth, and sang your praise. 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.' Even when this is such a different Christmas, help us to live joyful lives that sing your praise.
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

Mary bore a son of David's line, born a king whose reign would never end. Bless all the nations of the world with Christ's gift of peace. We pray for our leaders, for the leaders of Europe, for President-elect Biden and the American people. We pray for climate talks, for a working together to protect our world. We know that creation is groaning in pain - creation needs Christ's gift of peace.
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

The child Jesus grew in wisdom and stature in the home of Mary and Joseph. Strengthen our homes and families, and keep under your protection all whom we love. We pray for those we would love to see this Christmas, for friends who would love to be here worshipping with us, We pray for our young people and ask your blessing on them.
Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

At the foot of the cross of Christ stood his mother, and from the cross she received his lifeless body in her arms. Give comfort and healing to all who suffer and all who watch the suffering of those they love.

Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

The apostle John saw a vision of a woman in heaven, robed with the sun. Bring us with all those who have died in the faith of Christ to share the joy of heaven with Mary and all the saints.

Lord, have mercy on those who fear you: **Holy is your name.**

Almighty and everlasting God,
you have stooped to raise fallen humanity
by the child-bearing of blessed Mary;
grant that we who have seen your glory
revealed in our human nature,
and your love made perfect in our weakness,
may daily be renewed in your image,
and conformed to the pattern of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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 - O little town of Bethlehem - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAU5Xg-o-eM>

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 - *Two Christmas favourites played by our own David Redfern*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9g5Lh5GDtA>

Peter Barham, 18 December 2020