

# Church at Home

## The Third Sunday of Advent



**DIOCESE** *of*  
**OXFORD**

# ***Before the Service***

Welcome to this service of Church at Home on the third Sunday of Advent. We are delighted that The Revd Serena Tajima from St Mary's Banbury will be presiding for us, and that our preacher is The Revd David Tyler, who is Associate Archdeacon of Dorchester. It is wonderful to once again be led in our worship by churches, chaplaincies and colleges from across the Diocese of Oxford and we are hugely grateful to all of our contributors who have read, played, sung and prayed this service into being.

The third Sunday of Advent is known as 'Gaudete Sunday' after the introit that traditionally precedes the Eucharist on this day: "Gaudete in Domino semper". Gaudete means 'rejoice', and marks a lift in the more solemn nature of the rest of the Advent preparations. It is symbolised liturgically by the use of rose-pink colour (a subtle lightening of the Advent purple) on vestments and on the third candle on the Advent wreath.

It is also the week we hear of John the Baptist preparing the way for the coming of Christ, and our reading from Isaiah reflects the promise that the Messiah will bring the 'oil of gladness' and so the prophet exults us to 'rejoice in the Lord.'

It may have seemed as strange to those hearing John's words along the banks of the Jordan in the first century, as it seems to us now, to rejoice in midst of a turbulent time, marked with such grief. But we rejoice precisely because it is into a troubled and broken world, that God chose to come and comfort his people; not only with words and promises, but with his very presence walking among them.

As we travel this Advent journey, we do so together as companions on the road with Christ: who was; who is; and who is to come.

## **Video before the service**

'Comfort and Joy!'

*Written by: Sam Brewster, Tom Brewster*

*Arranged by: Tom Brewster, Ruthie Brewster  
from Trinity 4 Henley Congregation, Henley-on-Thames*

## **Greeting**

*President* In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

*President* The Lord be with you.

*All* **and also with you.**

*The President welcomes the congregation gathered online and introduces the service.*

## **Lighting of the Advent Candle**

*Lit by Sebastian Elias (St Giles' Church, Horspath)*

*We pray together*

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,  
John told the people to prepare,  
for you were very near.  
As Christmas grows closer day by day,  
help us to be ready to welcome you now.  
Amen.**

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
come then and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings from the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be every Christian breast,  
and furnished for so great a guest.  
Yea, let us each our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.**

**For thou art our salvation, Lord,  
our refuge, and our great reward;  
without thy grace our souls must fade  
and wither like a flower decayed.**

**Stretch forth thine hand, to heal our sore,  
and make us rise to fall no more;  
once more upon thy people shine,  
and fill the world with love divine.**

**All praise, eternal Son, to thee  
whose advent sets thy people free,  
whom, with the Father, we adore,  
and Spirit bless, for evermore.  
Amen.**

*Jordanis oras praevia, Charles Coffin (1676-1749)  
Translated by John Chandler (1806-1876)  
Recorded by Nick Gallant (St Francis, Terriers) and Liam Cartwright*

## Confession

*President* A voice cries out in the wilderness,  
'Make straight the way of the Lord.'  
So let us listen, and turn to the Lord in penitence and faith.

*All* **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry 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 grant that we may serve you  
in newness of life to the glory of your name.  
Amen.**

## Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie Eleison	<i>Lord, have mercy</i>
Christe Eleison	<i>Christ, have mercy</i>
Kyrie Eleison	<i>Lord have mercy</i>

*Missa De Angelis, plainchant  
Recorded by The Lay Clerks (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford)*

## Absolution

*President* 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

*President* Let us pray.

*Silence is kept.*

*President* God for whom we watch and wait,  
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:  
give us courage to speak the truth,  
to hunger for justice,  
and to suffer for the cause of right,  
with Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*We listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.*

## **First Reading**

Isaiah 61.1-4,8-end (NRSV)

*Read by Jack Belloli (Ripon College Cuddesdon)*

*Reader* A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah

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.

*Reader* This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

**Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,  
the Saviour promised long;  
let every heart prepare a throne,  
and every voice a song.**

**He comes, the prisoners to release,  
in Satan's bondage held;  
the gates of brass before him burst,  
the iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,  
the bleeding soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of his grace  
to enrich the humble poor.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,  
thy welcome shall proclaim,  
and Heaven's eternal arches ring  
with thy belovèd Name.**

*Music: Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1588 – 1635)*

*Words: Philip Doddridge (1702-1751)*

*Recorded by Adrian Boynton (Christ The Cornerstone, Milton Keynes)*



## Gospel Reading

John 1.6-8, 19-28 (NRSV)

Read by Fr Benji Tyler (Wantage Parish)

*Deacon* The Lord be with you

*All* **And also with you.**

*Deacon* Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

*All* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

*Deacon* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Reflection

The Revd David Tyler  
Associate Archdeacon of Dorchester

*President* Let us affirm our faith in God.

*All* **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

Led by Tim Hill (Oxford Brookes University)

*The response to the prayers is:*

*Intercessor* Lord, in your mercy,  
*All* **receive our prayer.**

## The Peace

*President* 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.

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

*Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church.  
Although we are separated by distance, we are one Body of Christ; the Spirit moves  
among us as we share Christ's peace.*

## Offertory Song

In this time of waiting, longing souls call out,  
light and dark together, hope a whispered doubt.  
Shine in our lives, a love we daren't ignore:  
Come again Lord Jesus, dwell with us once more.

Hearts that once were filled with joy and Christmas cheer,  
now are holding back through anxiousness and fear.  
Hear our wounded cries, the loss you will restore:  
Come again Lord Jesus, dwell with us once more.

Wintry nights draw in, and wicks are burning low,  
reach us through the darkness, let your Christ light show.  
Rebirth our hope, on land and sea and shore:  
Come again Lord Jesus, dwell with us once more.

Help us sing your song in tunes as yet unfound,  
advent hope springs up, in us, your hallowed ground.  
Love is born anew, upon the stable floor:  
Come again Lord Jesus, dwell with us once more.

*Music: Nowell Nouvelet*

*Words: Revd Cara Smart (St Pauls, Wokingham)*

*Recorded by Revd Emma Hopegood-Jones (Hanborough Parish)  
and Revd Callum Zuckert*

## Preparation of the Table

*President*      Blessed be God,  
                         who feeds the hungry,  
                         who raises the poor,  
                         who fills our praise.

*All*                **Blessed be God forever.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

*President* The Lord be with you  
*All* **and also with you.**

*President* Lift up your hearts.  
*All* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*President* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*All* **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*President* 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:

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*  
*Dominus Deus Sabaoth:*  
*pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.*  
*Hosanna in excelsis.*  
*Benedictus qui venit in nomine*  
*Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.*

*Holy, holy, holy*  
*Lord God of hosts:*  
*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.*

*Missa De Angelis, plainchant*  
*Recorded by The Lay Clerks (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford)*

*President* Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

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.

Great is the mystery of faith.

*All*

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*President*

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of The blessed Virgin Mary,  
St John the Baptist, and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,  
for ever and ever.

*All*

**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

*President* As our Saviour 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.*

*President* Every time we eat this bread  
and drink this cup,  
*All* **we proclaim the Lord's death  
until he comes.**

## Agnus Dei

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 sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.*

*Missa De Angelis, plainchant  
Recorded by The Lay Clerks (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford)*

## Invitation to Communion

President God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

All **Jesus Christ is holy,  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
in the glory of God the Father.**

*The President receives the Bread & Wine on behalf of the community as we make our 'spiritual communion'; taking time to notice God's presence with us and trust that, as we desire communion with God, God will meet us in our hearts by faith. There are no special words or actions required for this; only true desire, lively faith and genuine love. If you find it helpful you may wish to use the following prayer, or simply listen to the music and meditate upon God's love for you.*

Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock. You wait for me and only I can let you in. I believe and trust in you and ask you now to fill me with your presence. Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood, that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

## Music During Communion

Drop down, ye heavens, from above,  
and let the skies pour down righteousness.  
Be not wroth very sore, O Lord,  
neither remember iniquity forever:  
thy holy cities are a wilderness,  
Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation:  
our holy and our beautiful house,  
where our fathers praised thee.

We have sinned, and are as an unclean thing,  
and we all do fade as a leaf:  
and our iniquities, like the wind,  
have taken us away:  
thou hast hid thy face from us:  
and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

*From 'The Advent Prose'*

*Recorded by Revd Philippa White and Benjamin Sheen (Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford)*



## Prayer after Communion

*President* Let us pray.

We give you thanks O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;  
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit  
that when Christ comes again  
we may shine as lights before his face;  
who is alive and reigns now and forever. Amen.

## Song

**Like a sea without a shore  
love divine is boundless.  
Time is now and evermore  
and His love surrounds us.**

**Maranatha! Maranatha!  
Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

**So that we could all be free  
He appeared among us,  
blest are those who have not seen,  
yet believe His promise.**

**Maranatha! Maranatha!...**

**All our visions, all our dreams,  
are but ghostly shadows  
of the radiant clarity  
waiting at life's close.**

**Maranatha! Maranatha!...**

**Death where is your victory?  
Death where is your sting?  
Closer than the air we breathe  
is our risen King.**

**Maranatha! Maranatha!...**

*Words and Music: Estelle White  
Recorded by Nick Gallant (St Francis, Terriers) and Liam Cartwright*

## Blessing and Dismissal

*President* 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.**

Go in the peace of Christ.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## Music after the service

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,  
once for favoured sinners slain;  
thousand thousand saints attending  
swell the triumph of his train:  
alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!  
God appears on earth to reign.

Ev'ry eye shall now behold him,  
robed in dreadful majesty;  
those who set at naught and sold him,  
pierced and nailed him to the tree,  
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,  
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion  
still his dazzling body bears;  
cause of endless exultation  
to his ransomed worshippers:  
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture,  
gaze we on those glorious scars.

Yea, amen, let all adore thee,  
high on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own:  
O come quickly, O come quickly, O come quickly,  
alleluia! come, Lord, come!

*Music: 'Helmsley' Thomas Olivers (1725–1799) arr. David Willcocks (1919–2015)*

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788) and John Cennick (1718–1755)*

*Recorded by The Choir of Christ The Cornerstone (Milton Keynes)*