

St. Christopher's Church, Hinchley Wood

Sunday 24th December 2023 – 4th Sunday of Advent

Welcome to our "Hybrid" Sunday Service.

In the midst of the bustle of Christmas preparations, we take time to praise, pray and reflect, listening out for God's call, trying to hear, nurture and respond to the heartbeat of Christ in our lives.

Please join in with the words in **bold** print.

Gathering

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

All **and also with you.**

Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath

Lord Jesus, light of the world,
blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news;
blessed is Mary, your mother and ours.
Bless your Church preparing for Christmas;
and bless us your children, who long for your coming.

Amen.

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 **Lord God, we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Absolution

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.**

Collect

Eternal God,
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,
so we wait for his coming in glory;
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age
to see, with her, our great salvation
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Reading: (2 Samuel 7:1-16)

A reading from the Second Book of Samuel

King David was settled in his palace, and the Lord kept him safe from all his enemies. Then the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Here I am living in a house built of cedar, but God's Covenant Box is kept in a tent!"

Nathan answered, "Do whatever you have in mind, because the Lord is with you." But that night the Lord said to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David that I say to him, 'You are not the one to build a temple for me to live in. From the time I rescued the people of Israel from Egypt until now, I have never lived in a temple; I have travelled around living in a tent. In all my traveling with the people of Israel I never asked any of the leaders that I appointed why they had not built me a temple made of cedar.'

"So tell my servant David that I, the Lord Almighty, say to him, 'I took you from looking after sheep in the fields and made you the ruler of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have defeated all your enemies as you advanced. I will make you as famous as the greatest leaders in the world. I have chosen a place for my people Israel and have settled them there, where they will live without being oppressed any more. Ever since they entered this land, they have been attacked by violent people, but this will not happen again. I promise to keep you safe from all your enemies and to give you descendants. When you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will make one of your sons king and will keep his kingdom strong. He will be the one to build a temple for me, and I will make sure that his dynasty continues forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him as a father punishes his son. But I will not withdraw my support from him as I did from Saul, whom I removed so that you could be king. You will always have descendants, and I will make your kingdom last forever. Your dynasty will never end.'"

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

Psalm 89

O Lord, I will always sing of your constant love;
I will proclaim your faithfulness forever.
I know that your love will last for all time,
that your faithfulness is as permanent as the sky.

**You said, “I have made a covenant with the man I chose;
I have promised my servant David,
‘A descendant of yours will always be king;
I will preserve your dynasty forever.’”**

In a vision long ago you said to your faithful servants,
“I have given help to a famous soldier;
I have given the throne to one I chose from the people.

**I have made my servant David king by anointing him with holy oil.
My strength will always be with him, my power will make him strong.**

I will love him and be loyal to him; I will make him always victorious.
I will extend his kingdom from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates River.

**He will say to me, ‘You are my father and my God;
you are my protector and saviour.’**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia!

I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

Gospel: (Luke 1:26-38)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glory to you, O Lord.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, “Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!”

Mary said to the angel, “I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do.”

“I am the Lord's servant,” said Mary; “may it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

Talk



Affirmation of Faith

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

All **Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God, but made himself nothing. Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness. He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has raised him on high, and has given him the name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Intercessions

Between the prayers we say

Lord, in your mercy

All **hear our prayer.**

At the end of the prayers we say

Merciful God, accept our prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen**

The Peace

The Almighty promises aid to all who call upon the name of the Lord. In the coming of Christ that peace is made manifest from generation to generation.

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

We share a sign of peace

Eucharistic Prayer

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.**

Father, we give you thanks and praise through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, your living Word, through whom you have created all things; who was sent by you in your great goodness to be our Saviour.

And now we give you thanks because when he humbled himself to come among us in human flesh, he fulfilled the plan you formed long ago and opened for us the way of salvation.

So now we watch for the day, knowing that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
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.**

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.**

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 St. Christopher 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

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**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.

Distribution of Communion

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.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

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

Holy Communion is distributed to those in the Church.

Prayer of Spiritual Communion (for private prayer)

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now
receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O
most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

Closing Prayer

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 **Amen**

Notices

Blessing and Dismissal

May God, who dwelt among the nation of David, travel with you all your days.
May Christ, conceived in the womb of Mary, enter into your heart and life.
May the Spirit, whose breath brought vitality to Mary's child, inspire you to live as
agents of God's holy Gospel.

All **Amen.**

And may 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 peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Refreshments will be served after the service

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