



Advent

The Season of Hope and Expectation



Welcome to our worship for Advent at St Matthew's.

If you are new to our church, please do complete one of our welcome cards so that someone can contact you after the service, or speak to a member of the team at the end of the service.

Children are welcome and there is an area in the church for parents with very young children – do feel free to use it.

Please silence your mobile phones before the service begins and take a few moments to sit in quiet while the organ plays and start to focus your thoughts on God, preparing yourself for worship.

Words for the readings and hymns are available each Sunday and you are welcome to take those with you but do please leave this booklet behind for future use.

If you wear hearing aids, please switch them to 'T' to access our loop.

*We say together the words printed in **bold**.*

The Gathering

The President greets the people

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

One of these sentences may be used

Break forth together into singing, you waste places of
Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people.

Isaiah 52.9

Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O everlasting doors,
and the king of glory shall come in.

Psalms 24.7

Watch at all times, praying for the strength to stand with
confidence before the Son of Man.

Luke 21.36

Look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is
drawing near.

Luke 21.28

Our Lord says 'Surely I come quickly.' Even so; come, Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22.20

Hymn

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,**

**and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Advent Ring

The Advent Candle will be lit at this point in the service. Please turn to pages 12/13

Prayers of Penitence

*The prayers are introduced with these or other seasonal words:
Christ the Light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.*

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

The president declares God's forgiveness.

The Collect

*A period of silent prayer is held, then the President prays the Collect of the Day and we respond
Amen*

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

After the reading

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn/Song

Our children leave for Young Church after the first reading.

Second Reading

After the reading

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

The Gospel Acclamation is sung by the choir

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

and at the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Affirmation of Faith

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father, who created all things:
**for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:

**for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
**the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

This or another response is used

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom, saying:
Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

The prayers conclude with

Lord of the Church
**hear our prayer,
and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever.
Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

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.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Hymn

Preparation of the Table

Taking of the Bread and Wine

This or another prayer may be used

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

Blessed be God for ever.

The Eucharistic Prayer (from the First Sunday of Advent until 16 December)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

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*:

**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.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:
Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.

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 [*N 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.
Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer (from 17 December until Christmas Eve)

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling.

John the Baptist was his herald
and made him known when at last he came.

In his love Christ fills us with joy
as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
so that when he comes again he may find us watching in prayer,
our hearts filled with wonder and praise.

And so, with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your glory,
and join in their unending hymn of praise:

**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.]

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,

that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Christ is the bread of life:
**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,

gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with [*N and*] all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom
in the words our Saviour taught us.

**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

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

The Agnus Dei

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

**Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, give us your peace.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Giving of Communion

*The president invites the people to receive communion.
During communion, the choir may sing an anthem.*

Hymn

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

The President may say a Post Communion Prayer.

**Generous God,
you have fed us at your heavenly table.
Set us on fire with your Spirit
that when Christ comes again
we may shine like lights before his face;
who with you and the Spirit lives for ever.
Amen.**

Notices

Hymn

The Dismissal

Our Lord says, I am coming soon.

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting.

Amen.

The president may use this seasonal blessing

May God himself, the God of peace,

make you perfect and holy;

and keep you all safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body,
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the blessing ...

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Advent Sunday: the candle for the whole people of God, the candle of Hope

Prayer: God of Abraham and Sarah, and all the patriarchs of old, you are our Father too. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of David. Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit to make his home among us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Lord Jesus, light of the world, born in David's city of Bethlehem, born like him to be a King: Be born in our hearts this Christmas, be king of our lives today. Amen

Advent 2: the candle for the Prophets, the candle of Peace

Prayer: God our Father, you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace. You helped them to spread the

joyful message of his coming kingdom. Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, to share with those around us the good news of your power and love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Lord Jesus, light of the world, the prophets said you would bring peace and save your people in trouble. Give peace in our hearts at Christmas and show all the world God's love.

Advent 3: the candle for John the Baptist, the candle of Love.

Prayer: 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 baptised them in the Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us, who have been baptised 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.

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.

Advent 4: the candle for Mary, the candle of Joy.

Prayer: 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.

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.

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*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England (2000)
(including the Psalter
as published with Common Worship)*

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