



St Mary  
the Virgin



Third Sunday of Advent  
**The Eucharist**  
Sunday 15th December 2024  
10.45am

**We warmly welcome everyone  
to Saint Mary's Church  
in the Parish of Witney.**

We are an inclusive church embracing a hospitable Christianity. Everyone is welcome at this service. If you usually receive communion please join us – or please come forward to receive a blessing.

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (adventus) of Christ in his incarnation, and looks ahead to his final coming as judge at the end of time.

The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge us to place our lives in an eternal context. We are reminded that this present time is not all there is, and that we await Christ's return, the destruction of all that is evil, and the advent of true justice and lasting peace:

Every eye shall now behold him  
robed in dreadful majesty (Charles Wesley).

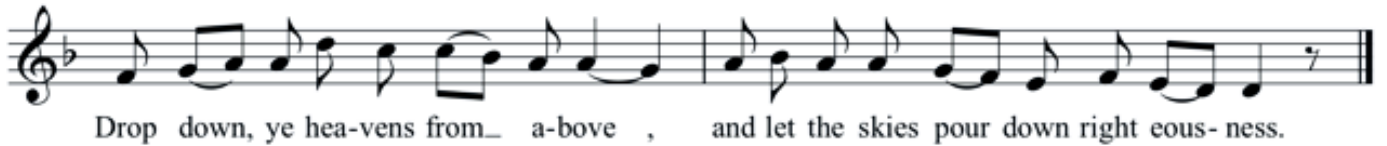
**If you are interested in becoming a part of what is happening through the church please speak to one of the welcomers afterwards.**

## The Gathering

*As the sacristy bell sounds all stand for the Advent Prose*

Choir      Drop down, ye heavens from above,  
                 and let the skies pour down righteousness.

All



*A cantor sings a verse and then all repeat the chorus above.*

## The Procession

*We stand to sing*

The great forerunner of the morn,  
The herald of the Word, is born;  
And faithful hearts shall never fail  
With thanks and praise his light to hail.

With heav'nly message Gabriel came,  
That John should be that herald's name,  
And with prophetic utt'rance told  
His actions great and manifold.

Though not yet born, John gave aright  
His witness to the coming Light;  
And Christ, the Sun of all the earth,  
Fulfilled that witness at his birth.

*...cont over*

John's mighty deeds exalt his fame  
To greater than a prophet's name;  
Of woman born shall never be  
A greater prophet than was he.

Words: The Venerable Bede, 673–735  
Music: EISENACH. Melody J.H. Schein, harm. J.S. Bach

### The Greeting

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

**All Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

*The service is introduced and we light the third candle on the Advent Wreath:*

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.

**All Amen.**

## Prayers of Penitence

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 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.**

## Kyrie Eleison

*We sing together:*

The musical score is written on three systems of a single staff each, in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system is for 'Choir/cantor' and 'All'. The second system is for 'Choir/cantor' and 'All'. The third system is for 'Choir/cantor' and 'All'. The lyrics are: Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son. Kv - ri - e e - le - i - son. Kv - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Choir/cantor | All  
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

3 Choir/cantor | All  
Chris - te e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son.

5 Choir/cantor | All  
Kv - ri - e e - le - i - son. Kv - ri - e e - le - i - son.

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**

Let us pray:

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.

**All Amen**

### **The Liturgy of the Word**

*We sit for the First Reading, Zephaniah 3.14-20.*

*At the end:*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## The Gradual

*Remain seated.*

*The choir sings this response, we repeat, also between verses:*



*We sit for the Second Reading, Philippians 4.4-7.*

*At the end:*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## The Gospel

*We stand as the choir sings the Gospel Alleluia, and we repeat:*



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

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

*Luke 3.7-18*

*At the end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**All Praise to you, O Christ.**

## The Creed

Let us declare before God the faith of the Church,  
in which we pray we may all find grace to grow:

**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.

## Intercessions

*The Intercessor may use the following responses:*

Lord in your mercy

**All Hear our prayer.**

Or

Lord, hear us

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

*After the prayer for the departed*

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord

**All and let light perpetual shine upon them.**

May they rest in peace

**All and rise in glory. Amen.**

Most Merciful God

**All Accept these prayers  
For the sake of your Son  
Our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

*All stand*

## The Peace

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## The Offertory Hymn

*We stand as the Offertory Hymn is sung and the gifts of bread and wine are placed upon the Altar.*

**You can give to the work of the Church by signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, or by using these bank details** - Witney PCC, Sort Code 20-97-48, Account Number 00971626.

There is also a card reader by the North Door,

The bread, wine and money are all gifts from God and our offering of them back to God is a sign of the offering of our lives in the Lord's service.

When Jesus came to Jordan  
to be baptised by John,  
he did not come for pardon,  
but as his Father's Son.  
He came to share repentance  
with all who mourn their sins,  
to speak the vital sentence  
with which good news begins.

He came to share temptation,  
our utmost woe and loss,  
for us and our salvation  
to die upon the cross.

So when the Dove descended  
on him, the Son of Man,  
the hidden years had ended,  
the age of grace began.

*Organ extemporization*

Come, Holy Spirit, aid us  
to keep the vows we make,  
this very day invade us,  
and every bondage break.  
Come, give our lives direction,  
the gift we covet most:  
to share the resurrection  
that leads to Pentecost.

Words: F. Pratt Green 1903–2000  
Music: OFFERTORIUM

**Preparation of the Table**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:  
through your goodness we have this bread to set before you,  
which earth has given and human hands have made.  
It will become for us the bread of life.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:  
through your goodness we have this wine to set before you,  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.  
It will become for us the cup of salvation

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

## Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

**All And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

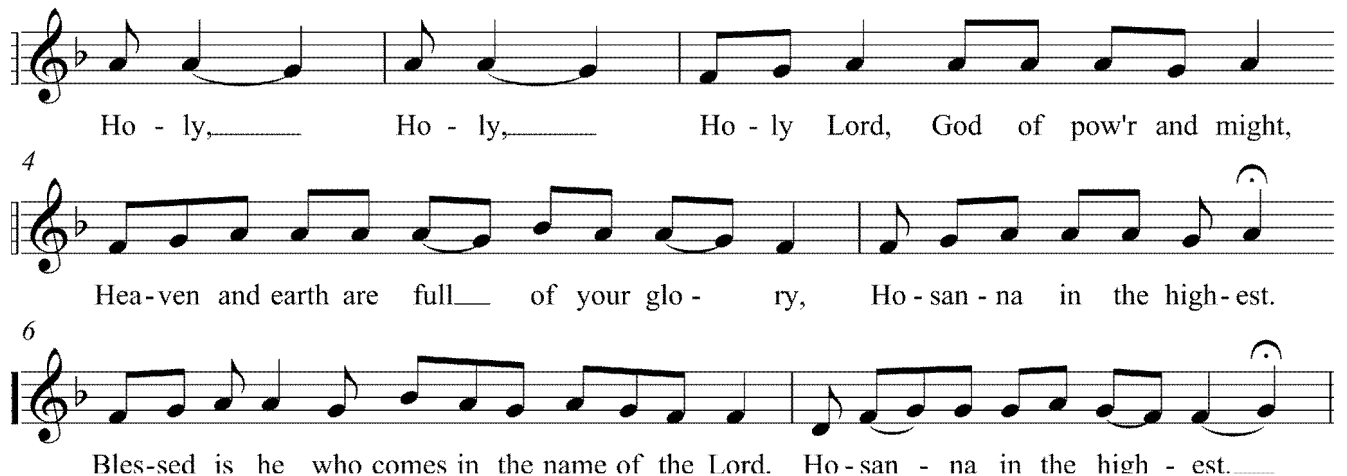
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

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:



Ho - ly, \_\_\_\_\_ Ho - ly, \_\_\_\_\_ Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

4  
Hea-ven and earth are full\_\_\_ of your glo - ry, Ho - san - na in the high-est.

6  
Bles-sed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.\_\_\_\_

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 Mary the Mother of God,  
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

**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.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

*The Priest breaks the consecrated host*

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.**

### Agnus Dei



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world, have mer - cy on us.

4  
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world, have mer - cy on us.

7  
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world. grant us peace.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world;  
happy 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.**

*We break the bread for the whole world. We invite all who seek God and are drawn to Christ, and all who walk the way of faith to come forward and receive the body and blood of Christ, as directed by the Sidesperson.*

*Or you are warmly invited to come forward for a blessing – please carry this booklet and bow your head. Gluten free wafers are available on request.*

## The Communion Hymn

May the mind of Christ, my Savior,  
live in me from day to day,  
by His love and pow'r controlling  
all I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly  
in my heart from hour to hour,  
so that all may see I triumph  
only through His pow'r.

May the peace of God my Father  
rule my life in everything,  
that I may be calm to comfort  
sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me  
as the waters fill the sea;  
Him exalting, self abasing:  
this is victory.

May I run the race before me,  
strong and brave to face the foe,  
looking only unto Jesus  
as I onward go.

Words: Kate Barclay Wilkinson, 1859–1928  
Music: ST LEONARD'S, AC Barham-Gould, 1891–1953



## Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray

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

**All Amen**

**All Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out  
in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.**

*We sit for the notices*

**The Notices**

## The Blessing

*Please stand for the Blessing*

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

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.**

## The Dismissal

**All** With love and compassion,  
**come, Lord Jesus.**

## The Recessional Hymn

Hills of the North, rejoice;  
River and mountain spring,  
Hark to the advent voice;  
Valley and lowland, sing;  
Though absent long, your Lord is nigh;  
He judgment brings and victory.

Isles of the Southern seas,  
Deep in your coral caves  
Pent be each warring breeze,  
Lulled be your restless waves:  
He comes to reign with boundless sway,  
And makes your wastes His great highway.

Lands of the East, awake,  
Soon shall your sons be free;  
The sleep of ages break,  
And rise to liberty.  
On your far hills, long cold and gray,  
Has dawned the everlasting day.

Shores of the utmost West,  
Ye that have waited long,  
Unvisited, unblest,  
Break forth to swelling song.  
High raise the note, that Jesus died,  
Yet lives and reigns, the Crucified.

Shout, while ye journey home;  
Songs be in every mouth;  
Lo, from the North we come,  
From East, and West, and South.  
City of God, the bond are free,  
We come to live and reign in thee!

Words: Charles E. Oakley, 1832–1865  
Music: LITTLE CORNARD, Martin Shaw, 1875-1958

Let us bless the Lord  
**All Thanks be to God**

***Everyone is welcome to stay for coffee after the Eucharist.***

# Join Us

Please support Saint Mary's Witney.

Your contributions make possible our ministry in liturgy and worship, community outreach, schools, learning, late night cafe, street pastors, visiting nursing homes and hospitals and other pastoral care. For more information please speak to one of the Ministry Team or Wardens.

Saint Mary's is profoundly grateful to the priests, lay leaders, volunteers, DCC members and friends whose unparalleled energy and determination make thousands of annual services, programmes and events possible. Please visit the parish website and twitter feed to stay in touch.



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