

St. James' West End

Advent Carol Service

Welcome

Introit Advent Prose *sung by candlelight*

Bidding

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. *Romans 13.12*

Dear friends, today we enter the season of Advent and join with Christians around the world to prepare afresh for the coming of Christ. We are invited to watch, to wait, to pray, to look forward to God's coming among us as a Child of Bethlehem: a coming we experience in the gift of his Holy Spirit; in the bread and wine of the Eucharist; in the joy and sorrow of human lives that are shared; a coming that invites us to look forward to the future hope when God will one day gather up all things restored and redeemed in Christ. Let us use this season as an opportunity to reflect on Christ who has brought the light of God's love into the world. Let us leave behind the darkness of sin; repent and turn to Christ renewing ourselves in the light of his Spirit. And let us pray that the coming of Christ may bring hope and renewal to the church and salvation to the world for which Christ came, lived, died and rose again.

In the tender compassion of our God,
The dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in
darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

A moment of silence is kept

Advent Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

The lights are switched on

1st Lesson Isaiah 9:2-3,6-7

The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
 on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
 you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
 as with joy at the harvest,
 as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
 and the bar across their shoulders,
 the rod of their oppressor,
 you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
 and all the garments rolled in blood
 shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
 a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
 and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
 and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
 He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
 from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

At the end This is the Word of the Lord
All **Thanks be to God**

Hymn O come, O come, Emmanuel (45)

2nd Lesson Isaiah 11.1-9

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
 and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,

the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

At the end This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Hymn Longing for light (42)

3rd Lesson Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'

See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

At the end This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Hymn Lo, he comes with clouds descending (41)

4th Lesson Isaiah 60:1-5

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

At the end This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

The Prayers

All 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.

Please stand for the 5th Lesson

*An acclamation heralds the Gospel, to which all reply: **Alleluia.***

5th Lesson Luke 12:35-38

At the beginning Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Praise to you, O Christ.

35 'Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

At the end

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

Responsory

All In our watching and our waiting
Come, Lord Jesus.

All In our hopes and our fears
Come, Lord Jesus.

All In our homes and in our world
Come, Lord Jesus, our light and our salvation.

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**

The lights are extinguished.

Hymn Creator of the starry height (33) *At the end the choir extinguish their candles.*

Voluntary