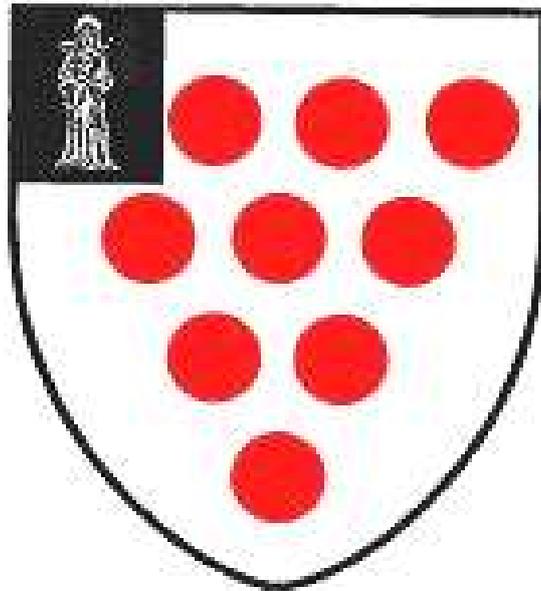


The Cathedral Church of Christ  
and the Blessed Mary the Virgin of Worcester



# Advent Carol Service

Advent Sunday  
29 November 2020

## Welcome

to all those gathering online for this service at Worcester Cathedral.

**Advent** is a season of waiting and preparation – both for the ‘first coming’ of Jesus at Christmas, and also his ‘second coming’ at the end of time. This service commences our preparation by attending to a series of readings, all from the Old Testament or the Apocrypha, which look forward to the coming of God’s Saviour. Each reading is accompanied by one of the Advent ‘antiphons’ – mediaeval texts which long for God’s chosen one to come, so that the world might be delivered of all that is evil, and become as God intended it to be.

The **music** at this service is sung by the Cathedral Choir, conducted by the director of music, Samuel Hudson, and accompanied on the organ by the assistant director of music, Nicholas Freestone.

Just as you might donate to **a collection** if physically present at a service in the building, please kindly make a donation to the work of the cathedral via the cathedral website. Your gift will support the cathedral’s ministry and mission, and help to keep the building in good repair and open to all without charge.

## Order of Service

### Hymn

*Choir*

O heavenly Word of God on high,  
whose love has brought salvation nigh,  
and from the Father’s heart didst come  
to save a race by sin undone.

Our minds enlighten from above,  
and kindle with the fire of love;  
that as we hear thy gospel read,  
all sinful thoughts may flee in dread.

So, when thou comest at the last  
and earth's long history is past,  
may we be set at thy right hand,  
and with thine own in glory stand.

Grant thou thy gifts of grace below,  
in heaven an endless joy bestow;  
who art our sole and sovereign Lord,  
the saving judge and saints' reward.

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

*Words: 10th-century  
Music: Plainsong*

## **Bidding**

*The dean of Worcester, the Very Reverend Dr Peter Atkinson, introduces the service*

My brothers and sisters, today we enter the solemn season of Advent in which the church bids us prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ; a coming that we recall in the Child of Bethlehem; a coming that we experience in the gift of his Spirit, in the bread of the eucharist, in the joy of human lives that are shared; a coming we await when God gathers up all things in Christ. Let us in this holy season reflect on the coming of Christ who brings light to the world. Let us leave behind the darkness of sin, walk in the light that shines on our path, and renew within ourselves the hope of glory to which he beckons us. And as we turn towards the light, let us have on our hearts all those who see no light, for whom all is darkness and despair. Let us pray that they too may be illumined by Christ who is our light.

## The Collect

*Silence is kept.*

*Dean* Almighty God,  
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness  
and 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.

*All* **Amen.**

## Anthem

*Choir* I look from afar:  
and lo, I see the power of God coming,  
and a cloud covering the whole earth.  
Go ye out to meet him and say:  
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?  
High and low, rich and poor, one with another,  
go ye out to meet him and say:  
Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep.  
Tell us, art thou he that should come?  
Stir up thy strength, O Lord,  
and come to reign over thy people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
I look from afar:  
and lo, I see the power of God coming,  
and a cloud covering the whole earth.  
Go ye out to meet him and say:  
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

*Words: Advent responsory  
Music: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525–1594)*

## First Reading

*The first reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir*      O Wisdom, which camest out of the mouth of the Most High,  
and reachest from one end to another, mightily,  
and sweetly ordering all things:  
come and teach us the way of prudence.

*Reader*      A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.

Wisdom praises herself,  
and tells of her glory in the midst of her people.  
In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth,  
and in the presence of his hosts she tells of her glory:  
'I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
and covered the earth like a mist.  
I dwelt in the highest heavens,  
and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.  
Alone I compassed the vault of heaven  
and traversed the depths of the abyss.  
Over waves of the sea, over all the earth,  
and over every people and nation I have held sway.  
Among all these I sought a resting-place;  
in whose territory should I abide?

Then the Creator of all things gave me a command,  
and my Creator chose the place for my tent.  
He said, "Make your dwelling in Jacob,  
and in Israel receive your inheritance."  
Before the ages, in the beginning, he created me,  
and for all the ages I shall not cease to be.'

*Ecclesiasticus 24.1-9*

*All*      For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

# Anthem

*Choir* This is the truth sent from above,  
the truth of God, the God of love;  
therefore don't turn me from the door,  
but hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will relate,  
that God at first did man create.  
The next thing which to you I tell,  
woman was made with him to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,  
till God the Lord did interpose;  
and so a promise soon did run  
that he'd redeem us by his Son.

And at this season of the year  
our blest Redeemer did appear,  
and here did live, and here did preach,  
and many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,  
to show us how we must be saved;  
and if you want to know the way,  
be pleased to hear what he did say.

*Words: traditional English*

*Music: arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*

## Second Reading

*The second reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir* O Adonai, and Leader of the house of Israel,  
who appearedst in the bush to Moses in a flame of fire,  
and gavest him the law in Sinai:  
come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

*Reader* A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

*Exodus 3.1-6*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

## **Hymn**

*Choir* Come, living God, when least expected,  
when minds are dull and hearts are cold,  
through sharpening word and warm affection  
revealing truths as yet untold.

Break from the tomb in which we hide you  
to speak again in startling ways;  
break through the words in which we bind you  
to resurrect our lifeless praise.

Come now, as once you came to Moses  
within the bush alive with flame;  
or to Elijah on the mountain,  
by silence pressing home your claim.

Then, through our gloom, your Son will meet us  
as vivid truth and living Lord,  
exploding doubt and disillusion  
to scatter hope and joy abroad.

Then we will share his radiant brightness  
and, blazing through the dread of night,  
illuminate by love and reason,  
for those in darkness, faith's delight.

Words: Alan Gaunt (b. 1935)

Tune: *Spiritus Vitæ*: Mary Jane Hammond (1878–1964)

## Third Reading

*The third reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir*      O Root of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people,  
at whom kings shall shut their mouths,  
to whom the Gentiles shall seek:  
come and deliver us, and tarry not.

*Reader*      A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

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.

*Isaiah 11.1-9*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

## **Anthem**

*Choir*                    *There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,  
the root thereof is called Jesse,  
a flow'r of price  
there is none such in paradise.*

This flow'r is fair and fresh of hue,  
it fadeth ne'er, but e'er is new;  
the blessèd branch this flow'r on grew  
was Mary mild that bare Jesu;  
a flow'r of grace;  
against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed hereof was Goddès sand,  
that God himself sowed with his hand,  
in Nazareth that holy land,  
amidst her arbour a maiden found;  
this blessed flow'r  
sprang ne'er but in Mary's bow'r.

When Gabriel this maid did meet,  
with 'Ave Maria' he did her greet;  
between them two this flow'r was set  
and safe was kept, no man should wit,  
till on a day  
in Bethlehem it could spread and spray.

*Words: John Audelay (d. c. 1426)*  
*Music: Stanley Vann (1910–2010)*

## Fourth Reading

*The fourth reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir* O Key of David, and Sceptre of the house of Israel;  
that openest and no man shutteth;  
and shuttest and no man openeth:  
come, and bring the prisoner out of the prison house,  
and him that sitteth in darkness,  
and the shadow of death.

*Reader* A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

I will clothe my servant with your robe and bind your sash on him. I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open. I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honour to his ancestral house.

*Isaiah 22.21-23*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

# Anthem

*Choir* How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace,  
and bring glad tidings of good things.

*Words: Romans 10.15*

*Music: George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)*

## Fifth Reading

*The fifth reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir* O Dayspring, Brightness of Light everlasting,  
and Sun of righteousness:  
come and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness  
and the shadow of death.

*Reader* A reading from the prophecy of Malachi.

See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.

*Malachi 4*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

## Anthem

*Choir*      *Vigilate, nescitis enim quando dominus domus veniat,  
sero, an media nocte, an gallicantu, an mane.  
Vigilate ergo, ne cum venerit repente, inveniat vos dormientes.  
Quod autem dico vobis, omnibus dico: vigilate.*

Watch ye therefore, for you know not when the lord of the house cometh  
– at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning:  
watch therefore, lest coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping.  
And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch.

*Words: Mark 13.35-37  
Music: William Byrd (1543–1623)*

## Sixth Reading

*The sixth reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir*      O King of the nations, and their Desire;  
the Cornerstone, who makest both one:  
come, and save mankind, whom thou formedst of clay.

*Reader*      A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers  
who rule this people in Jerusalem.  
Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death,  
and with Sheol we have an agreement;  
when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
it will not come to us;  
for we have made lies our refuge,  
and in falsehood we have taken shelter’;  
therefore thus says the Lord GOD,

See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone,  
a tested stone,  
a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation:  
‘One who trusts will not panic.’

And I will make justice the line,  
and righteousness the plummet;  
hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,  
and waters will overwhelm the shelter.  
Then your covenant with death will be annulled,  
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;  
when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
you will be beaten down by it.  
As often as it passes through, it will take you;  
for morning by morning it will pass through,  
by day and by night;  
and it will be sheer terror to understand the message.  
For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on it,  
and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself in it.  
For the LORD will rise up as on Mount Perazim,  
he will rage as in the valley of Gibeon  
to do his deed - strange is his deed! -  
and to work his work - alien is his work!

*Isaiah 28.14-21*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

## **Anthem**

*Choir* Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,  
never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,  
than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:  
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high paradise,  
cold age deafs not there our ears, nor vapour dims our eyes:  
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the blessed only see:  
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to thee!

*Words: Thomas Campion (1567–1620)*  
*Music: Richard Shephard (b. 1949)*

## Seventh Reading

*The seventh reading is preceded by this antiphon*

*Choir* O Emmanuel, our King and Law-giver,  
the Desire of all nations and their Salvation:  
come and save us, O Lord our God.

*Reader* A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.'

*Isaiah 7.10-15*

*All* For the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

## Anthem

*Choir* Rejoice, virgin mother of God,  
Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb,  
for you have borne the Saviour of our souls.

*Words: from the Orthodox vigil  
Music: Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)*

## Sermon

*The Venerable Robert Jones, archdeacon of Worcester, preaches a short sermon.*

*The dean leads the people in prayers of intercession.*

*This response is used*

*All* Let us pray to the Lord:  
**come, Lord Jesus.**

Awaiting his coming in glory,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

*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.**

## Hymn

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

Every 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,  
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  
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,  
Alleluia! come, Lord, come!

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788) and John Cennick (1718–1755)  
Tune: Helmsley: from John Wesley's Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed (1765)*

## The Blessing

*Bishop* 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.**

## Organ Voluntary

*'Allegro' from Symphony no. 6 (op. 42 no. 2) Charles-Marie Widor (1844–1937)*