

Christ Church, Ipswich
Sunday 8th December 2024
Parade and Gift Service on the Second Sunday of Advent

Hello, I hope you are well. This morning will be our Parade Service and we will be very pleased to welcome the Scouts and Guides as they join us for All-age Gift worship. We also look forward to welcoming Liz Marley who is coming to talk with us about Poppies Care Farm.

Let us worship God together:

A prayer of approach as we light our second Advent Candle

People went to deserted places
to hear what was most important.
Gathered here today, we light a second candle
as a symbol of our pilgrimage
towards the things that will last for ever:
righteousness, loving-kindness,
peace and an eternal home in you, O God,
who calls all things towards the fullness of life. **Amen.**

R&S 134 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
come then and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings from the King of kings.

2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
and in each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

4 To heal the sick stretch out thy hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

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

Charles Coffin (1676-1749)
tr. John Chandler (1806-76) altd.*

A prayer of adoration

Advent God,
 you prepared your people for your coming,
 you gave your Word to us through prophets and priests,
 through stories told and retold,
 through the history of time,
 through the written word,
 through the spoken word,
 but always your word.
 As Christmas lights begin to dazzle us,
 we know that your glory is way beyond their transfixing power.
 Advent God, we adore you,
 and we bring ourselves before you just as we are. **Amen.**

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

We thank you, God, for your richness.
 We thank you for the way your light lets us see the world and its people.
 We thank you for diversity and difference in people and places.
 We thank you for signs and symbols and glimpses of your kingdom.
 We thank you for bolts out of the blue that reveal you to us
 and for the tiny flame that offers us assurance.
 We thank you for your care through the hands of others,
 hands of family, hands of friends and hands of strangers.
 We thank you that in others we see you
 and that through seeing you we see them in different ways.
 We thank you that in wilderness experiences you come to us,
 that you come in word or deed, that you come in touch or gift,
 that you come in cacophony or whisper, but come you do.
 We are all your people, all your children, all your flock,
 and for us all you care – to you we give our thanks and praise. **Amen.**

R&S 141 Make way, make way, for Christ the King (Music Group)

1 Make way, make way, for Christ the King
 in splendour arrives.
 Fling wide the gates and welcome him
 into your lives.

*Make way! (Make way!)
 Make way! (Make way!)
 for the King of kings.
 (For the King of kings.)
 Make way! (Make way!)
 Make way! (Make way!)
 and let His kingdom in.*

2 He comes the broken hearts to heal,
 the prisoners to free;
 the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,
 the blind shall see.

3 And those who mourn with heavy hearts,
 who weep and sigh,
 with laughter, joy and royal crown
 he'll beautify.

4 We call you now to worship him
 as Lord of all,
 to have no other gods but him,
 their thrones must fall!

Graham Kendrick. (1950-)
 Copyright © 1986 Thankyou Music.

Gifts for families in need received and dedicated

Prayer of Dedication for all our giving this Christmastime

– Poppies Care Far, Home Start Suffolk, Christian Aid

R&S 151 See him lying on a bed of straw (Music Group)

1 See him lying on a bed of straw,
draughty stable with an open door;
Mary cradling the babe she bore;
the Prince of Glory is his name.

2 Star of silver, sweep across the skies,
show where Jesus in the manger lies;
shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise
to see the Saviour of the world.

3 Angels, sing again the song you sang,
God's great glory and redeeming plan;
sing that Bethlem's little baby can

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,
to see the Lord of love again,
just as poor as was the stable then,
the Prince of Glory when he came.
be the Saviour of us all.*

4 Mine are riches, from your poverty,
from your innocence, eternity;
mine, forgiveness by your death for me,
Child of sorrow for my joy.

Michael Perry. (1942-1996)
Copyright © Mrs B Perry/ Jubilate Hymns

Bible Reading John 1:1-9 (NT page 85)

(Read by a Girl Guider)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Christmas Video

- *The Shiny Bright Sparkling Light*

(The Bible Society)

A moment for reflection

as we listen to some music

Song Longing for light, we wait in darkness (Music Group)

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light...

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.
Christ, be our light...

4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.
Christ, be our light...

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.
Christ, be our light...

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Our prayers of intercession

Lord God, as we gather today to rejoice in your loving plan to send your Son to save the world, we pray for any who are struggling to see the way forward. Worries and difficult situations often seem worse at this time of year, when others are partying and making plans for Christmas and the new year ahead. We pray that your love will enfold them, and your light illuminate their way.

Lord of Light, **hear our prayer.**

Father, as we lovingly gather gifts for friends and family, we remember those to whom we can no longer give, because they have gone before us into your presence. We pray for all who feel the absence of loved ones keenly at this time of year. May your love be the bridge between heaven and earth, reminding us that we are apart only for a while.

Lord of Light, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, as Christmas cards land on our doormats, perhaps with letters telling of travel and adventure, or achievements and family pride, we pray for those who have little to tell this year; those who have suffered disappointments and defeats, whose hopes have faltered and come to nothing. Your love is both comfort and encouragement to keep going, to have faith; may your Holy Spirit inspire them to persevere.

Lord of Light, **hear our prayer.**

Father, for a war-torn world we pray, and for leaders who must make difficult decisions every day; and for your Church, often struggling to make its voice heard amongst the clamour of opposing views and strife. May we here, in our own community, be carriers of your love to those who are confused by life; bombarded by too much news, bewildered perhaps by choices to be made and their consequences for ourselves and others; let your love reign in our hearts, and bring peace.

Lord of Light, **hear our prayer. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

R&S 159 Hark! the herald angels sing

1 Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies,
with the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem :

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

2 Christ by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;

hail the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel:

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings:
mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give us second birth:

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Charles Wesley (1707-88) altd.*

A sending out prayer

Look forward in hope
to the coming of your Saviour,
prepare the way for Christ your Lord;
welcome him with love and faith
when he comes in glory.

The Blessing

And may the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be upon you and those you love,
this day and always. **Amen.**

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. Amen.**