



**MORNING WORSHIP:  
A LIVESTREAMED SERVICE OF THE WORD  
The Third Sunday of Advent  
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020**



Today we welcome Canon Mark Taylor as our preacher,  
and the parish family of Whitehead & Islandmagee.

In order to guarantee a physical service on Christmas Day  
we have decided to continue with streamed services until then.

Today's Service will be Livestreamed on Facebook between 11am and 12 noon.

For technical reasons the service cannot be viewed after this time.

## Music before the service:

Creator alme siderum, from 'Le Tombeau de Titelouze' Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

*The Dean welcomes the online congregation*

## THE GREETING

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

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together. *Isaiah 40:5*

## THE LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

People of God: return! You are called to be God's own. From the mountains announce the good news. God comes in justice and peace, to all who follow his ways. You are God's children.  
**Lord, make us one in the peace of Christ today and for ever. Amen.**

## PENITENCE

'The axe is laid at the root of the trees; every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down.' But confident in God's mercy we confess our sins.

*cf Matthew 3.10*

God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven:  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

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 eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PROCLAIMING AND RECEIVING THE WORD

O Lord, open our lips  
**and our mouth will proclaim your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us.  
**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;  
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Praise the Lord.  
**The Lord's name be praised.**

## PSALM: 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, ♦  
**then were we like those who dream.**

Then was our mouth filled with laughter ♦  
**and our tongue with songs of joy.**

Then said they among the nations, ♦  
**‘The Lord has done great things for them.’**

The Lord has indeed done great things for us, ♦  
**and therefore we rejoiced.**

Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, ♦  
**as the river beds of the desert.**

Those who sow in tears ♦  
**shall reap with songs of joy.**

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed, ♦  
**will come back with shouts of joy, bearing their sheaves with them.**

Glory to the Father:  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
**As it was in the beginning:**  
**is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.  
They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.

For I the LORD love justice,  
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,  
and their offspring among the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge  
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.  
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,

so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please remain seated as the choir sings the **FIRST ANTHEM:** This is the record of John Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)*

This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not, and said plainly, I am not the Christ.

And they asked him, What art thou then? Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No.

Then said they unto him, What art thou? that we may give an answer unto them that sent us. What say'st thou of thyself? And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.

**SECOND READING:** John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said,

'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

"Make straight the way of the Lord" ',

as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** by the Reverend Canon Mark Taylor

*Please remain seated as the choir sings the **SECOND ANTHEM:** How beautiful upon the mountains Sir John Stainer (1840-1901)*

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,  
that publisheth peace; that publisheth salvation;  
that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

**THE APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, **the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy.

**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.**

Show us your mercy, O Lord,  
**and grant us your salvation.**

O Lord, save the Queen  
**and grant her government wisdom.**

Let your ministers be clothed with righteousness  
**and let your servants shout for joy.**

O Lord, save your people  
**and bless those whom you have chosen.**

Give peace in our time, O Lord,  
**and let your glory be over all the earth.**

O God, make clean our hearts within us  
**and renew us by your Holy Spirit.**

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

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 and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

## THE 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 and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## COLLECTS AT MORNING PRAYER

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life, and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us in all assaults of our enemies, that we, surely trusting in your protection, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everliving God, we give you thanks for bringing us safely to this day: Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger, and in all things guide us to know and do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INTERCESSIONS

United in the company of all the faithful and looking for the coming of the kingdom, let us offer our prayers to God, the source of all life and holiness.

Merciful Lord, strengthen all Christian people by your Holy Spirit that we may live as a royal priesthood and a holy nation to the praise of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless George, bishop of Connor, David, bishop of Down and Dromore, the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland and all ministers of your Church, that by faithful proclamation of your word we may be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets into a holy temple in the Lord.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Empower us by the gift of your holy and life-giving Spirit, that we may be transformed into the likeness of Christ from glory to glory, and give to the world and its peoples the peace that comes from above, that they may find Christ's way of freedom and life.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hold in your embrace all who witness to your love in the service of the poor and needy; all who minister to the sick and dying; and all who bring light to those in darkness. We pray for all NHS workers across the spectrum of services and departments in this time of stress and anxiety. Bless all frontline carers and workers and their families.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Touch and heal all those whose lives are scarred by sin or disfigured by pain that, raised from death to life in Christ, their sorrow may be turned to eternal joy. We pray for those receiving hospital treatment at present, with all the worry that entails. Grant them peace of mind, serenity of spirit and healing of soul, mind and body.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give our humble thanks for all those gone before us who have been well-pleasing to you from eternity; preserve in your faith us, your servants on earth, guide us to your kingdom and grant us your peace at all times. Hasten the day when many will come from east and west, from north and south, and sit at table in your kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks for the whole company of your saints in glory, with whom in fellowship we join our prayers and praises; by your grace may we, like them, be made perfect in your love.

Merciful Father, **accept these our prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## A PRAYER DURING THIS TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

O Heavenly Father, who by your Son Jesus Christ has taught us the glory of self-sacrifice and service: bless all who care for the sick, and those suffering from or recovering from Coronavirus. Give your strength to all who work in nursing homes, and all who give care in the community. Continue to protect our communities in this new wave of infection we pray, and give wisdom to all who have responsibility in church and society for leading us forward. This we ask in the name of the one who spent himself in service of others with no thought for himself, even our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**HYMN (ICH 126):**

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding,  
'Christ is nigh', it seems to say;  
'Cast away the dreams of darkness,  
O ye children of the day!'

Wakened by the solemn warning,  
let the earth-bound soul arise;  
Christ, her Sun, and ill dispelling,  
shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,  
comes with pardon down from heaven:  
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,  
one and all to be forgiven;

That when next he comes in glory,  
and the world is wrapped in fear,  
with his mercy he may shield us,  
and with words of love draw near.

Honour, glory, might and blessing  
to the Father and the Son,  
with the everlasting Spirit  
while eternal ages run.

*Words: 6<sup>th</sup> Century Latin tr. Edward Caswall (1814-78)*

*Tune: MERTON William Henry Monk (1823-89)*

**THE BLESSING**

Christ the sun of righteousness shine upon you, gladden your hearts and scatter the darkness from before you: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**THE DISMISSAL**

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

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

**Organ Voluntary:**

Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottes-Sohn, BWV 601 J.S. Bach (1685-1750)



**NOTICES**



**Services Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December: The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

11.00am Morning Prayer: A Service of the Word

*Preacher: Gillian McGaughey*

A Service of Evening Prayer for use at home can be downloaded from the cathedral website

**Flowers**

The flowers today were donated by Mrs Valerie Prosser in memory of parents

**FWO Envelopes**

If you have not yet received your FWO envelopes there will be an opportunity to collect them this morning, following the service. They can be found set at the tables at the West End. Please do not touch anyone else's envelopes in order to control the risk of cross-contamination.

Please also collect your Cathedral Digest and letter from the Dean.

*Please sanitise your hands before lifting your envelopes.*



## NOTICES



Belfast Cathedral will be closed to the public until Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

However, the cathedral is open for private prayer  
Monday to Friday between 1.00pm and 2.00pm  
in the area set aside for those who wish to view the  
**Lives Reflected** screen.

This gives opportunity  
to remember a loved one or pray for those in current need.  
Sanitising arrangements and social distancing will be observed.

**From Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December to 24<sup>th</sup> December, Black Santa, assisted by the Canons of the Cathedral will be on the steps of Belfast Cathedral, collecting in person for this year's Black Santa Appeal.**

**We hope many people will be as generous as possible in this year of extreme hardship and need.**

### **Christmas Eve Carol Service**

In order to guarantee a Choral Eucharist on Christmas Day the Christmas Eve Carol Service of Lesson and Carols with the Cathedral Choir will be Livestreamed at 7.30pm.

We regret not being able to hold a live public service, but in the circumstances of ongoing Covid risk, this is judged to be the responsible course of action.

Please continue to watch the Cathedral Website and Facebook pages for up to date news.

This year, due to Covid restrictions,  
there will be **no** Christmas Eve Service of Midnight Holy Communion.

However, there will be a

### **Festival Eucharist at 11.00am for Christmas Morning.**

The Preacher will be the Bishop of Connor, The Right Reverend George Davison.

***All Seating for this service must be pre-booked. Please e-mail [admin@belfastcathedral.org](mailto:admin@belfastcathedral.org) or phone the Cathedral Office (Weekdays 9.30am – 4.30pm) to reserve your seat. Only those who will be in Family Bubbles for Christmas Day will be able to sit together at this Service.***