

**OPENING RESPONSES:**

○ Lord, open thou our lips.  
**And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.**

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

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

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

**PSALM: 104**

Praise the Lord, ○ my soul \*  
**○ Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious; thou art clothed with majesty and honour.**

Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment \*  
**and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.**

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters \*  
**and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.**

He maketh his angels spirits \*  
**and his ministers a flaming fire.**

He laid the foundations of the earth \*  
**that it never should move at any time.**

Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment \*  
**the waters stand in the hills.**

At thy rebuke they flee \*  
**at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.**

They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath \*  
**even unto the place which thou hast appointed for them.**

Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass \*  
**neither turn again to cover the earth.**

He sendeth the springs into the rivers \*  
**which run among the hills.**

All beasts of the field drink thereof \*  
**and the wild asses quench their thirst.**

Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation \*  
**and sing among the branches.**

He watereth the hills from above \*  
**the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.**

He bringeth forth grass for the cattle \*  
**and green herb for the service of men;**

That he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man \*  
**and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.**

The trees of the Lord also are full of sap \*  
**even the cedars of Libanus which he hath planted;**

Wherein the birds make their nests \*  
**and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork.**

The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats \*  
**and so are the stony rocks for the conies.**  
He appointed the moon for certain seasons \*  
**and the sun knoweth his going down.**  
Thou makest darkness that it may be night \*  
**wherein all the beasts of the forest do move.**  
The lions roaring after their prey \*  
**do seek their meat from God.**  
The sun ariseth, and they get them away together \*  
**and lay them down in their dens.**  
Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour \*  
**until the evening.**  
O Lord, how manifold are thy works \*  
**in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.**  
So is the great and wide sea also \*  
**wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.**  
There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan \*  
**whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein.**  
These wait all upon thee \*  
**that thou mayest give them meat in due season.**  
When thou givest it them they gather it \*  
**and when thou openest thy hand they are filled with good.**  
When thou hidest thy face they are troubled \*  
**when thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned again to their dust.**  
When thou lettest thy breath go forth they shall be made \*  
**and thou shalt renew the face of the earth.**  
The glorious Majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever \*  
**the Lord shall rejoice in his works.**  
The earth shall tremble at the look of him \*  
**if he do but touch the hills, they shall smoke.**  
I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live \*  
**I will praise my God while I have my being.**  
And so shall my words please him \*  
**my joy shall be in the Lord.**  
As for sinners, they shall be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly shall come to an end \*  
**praise thou the Lord, O my soul, praise the Lord.**

Glory be to the Father:  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.**

**FIRST LESSON:** Zechariah 2:10-13

Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the LORD. Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be silent, all people, before the LORD; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

**MAGNIFICAT:**

**My soul doth magnify the Lord:  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.**

**For he hath regarded:  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold, from henceforth:  
all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me:  
and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him:  
throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm:  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat:  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things:  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:  
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.**

**Glory be to the Father:  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.**

**SECOND LESSON: Luke 1:39-55**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said,  
'My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,  
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

**NUNC DIMITTIS:**

**Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:**

**according to thy word.**

**For mine eyes have seen:**

**thy salvation.**

**Which thou hast prepared:**

**before the face of all people.**

**To be a light to lighten the Gentiles:**

**and to be the glory of thy people Israel.**

**Glory be to the Father:**

**and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:**

**world without end. Amen.**

**THE APOSTLES' CREED:**

**I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick 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 Lord be with you.

**And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven,**

**Hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come.**

**Thy will be done,**

**In earth, as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**As we forgive them that trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;**

**But deliver us from evil. Amen.**

○ Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

**And grant us thy salvation.**

○ Lord, save the Queen.

**And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.**

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

**And make thy chosen people joyful.**

○ Lord, save thy people.

**And bless thine inheritance.**

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

**Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.**

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

**And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.**

### **THE COLLECT OF THE DAY**

Lord, we beseech thee, give ear to our prayers, and by thy gracious visitation lighten the darkness of our hearts by our Lord Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **THE ADVENT COLLECT**

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT FOR PEACE**

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both, our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT FOR AID AGAINST ALL PERILS**

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord: and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **PRAYERS**

Most gracious Lord, by whose direction this time is appointed for renewing the memory of thy infinite mercy to man in the incarnation of thy only Son; grant that we may live, this holy time, in the spirit of thanksgiving, and every day raise up our hearts to thee in the grateful acknowledgement of what thou hast done for us. Besides this, we ask thy grace, O God, that we may make a due use of this holy time, for preparing our souls to receive Christ our Lord coming into the world at the approaching solemnity of Christmas. Christ came into the world to do good to all. Grant, O God, we may thus prepare to meet him. Grant that we may be watchful at this time above all others, in avoiding every thing that can be injurious to our neighbour, whether in afflicting him, or giving him scandal, or drawing him into sin, or casting any blemish on his reputation; but in all things, O God, may we follow the spirit of charity, being forward in bringing comfort and relief to all, as far as their circumstances shall require, and ours permit. Grant, O Lord, that we may prepare to meet our redeemer.

*John Guter, 17<sup>th</sup> century*

Pause for **SILENT REFLECTION**

### **A PRAYER OF ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM**

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

### **THE GRACE**

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

## Hymns suitable for use at home:

### ICH 135

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou Wisdom from above  
who order'st all things through thy love;  
to us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times didst give the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free  
thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell thy people save,  
and give them vict'ry over the grave.

*Words: 18<sup>th</sup> century Latin, based on The Advent Antiphons from 9<sup>th</sup> century, tr. John M. Neale (1818-66)*

*Tune: VENI EMMANUEL Melody from a 15<sup>th</sup> century French Franciscan processional pub. By Thomas Helmore (1811-90) in Hymnal Noted (1856)*

O come, thou Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, Desire of Nations, bring  
all peoples to their Saviour King;  
thou Cornerstone, who makest one,  
complete in us thy work begun.

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

### ICH 121

Creator of the starry height,  
thy people's everlasting light,  
Jesu, redeemer of us all,  
hear thou thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving at the helpless cry  
of all creation doomed to die,  
didst come to save our fallen race  
by healing gifts of heav'nly grace.

When earth was near its evening hour,  
thou didst, in love's redeeming pow'r,  
like bridegroom from his chamber, come  
forth from a virgin-mother's womb.

At thy great name, exalted now,  
all knees in lowly homage bow;  
all things in heav'n and earth adore,  
and own thee King for evermore.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,  
our judge in that tremendous day,  
ward off, while yet we dwell below,  
the weapons of our crafty foe.

To God the Father, God the Son  
and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
praise, honour, might and glory be  
from age to age eternally.

*Words: 7<sup>th</sup> century Latin tr. John Mason Neale (1818-66)*

*Tune: CONDITOR ALME Plainsong melody, mode iv*

*Bible passages in this service are from the New Revised Standard Version.*

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## NOTICES



In order to reduce the risk of Coronavirus infection  
There will be no Services of Evensong in December held in the cathedral.  
However you may download today's Evensong Service from the Cathedral  
Website for use at home.

### **SERVICES IN THE WEEK OF CHRISTMAS, 2020**

#### **Christmas Eve – 24<sup>th</sup> December, 2020**

Again to reduce community transmission,  
this year's Festival of Lessons and Carols for Christmas Eve  
featuring the Choir of Belfast Cathedral  
will be streamed Live on [www.facebook.com/BelfastCathedral/](https://www.facebook.com/BelfastCathedral/)  
from 7.30-8.30pm.

The service can also be accessed via the Cathedral Website  
[www.belfastcathedral.org](http://www.belfastcathedral.org)

*On-line donations to the Black Santa Appeal*

To protect the wider community  
**There will be no First Communion of Christmas this year.**

#### **Christmas Day – 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2020**

**Festival Eucharist for Christmas Day**  
**Will be held in the Cathedral at 11.00am.**

**Preacher for the first time as bishop:**  
**the Right Reverend George Davison, Bishop of Connor.**

**Music by the Belfast Cathedral Choir.**

***Please Note: Seats for this service must be pre-booked before 24<sup>th</sup> Dec.***

***Phone 028 9032 8332 (9.30am – 4.30pm)***

***E-mail: [admin@belfastcathedral.org](mailto:admin@belfastcathedral.org)***

#### **Services Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December: The First Sunday of Christmas**

11.00am Morning Prayer: A Service of the Word Preacher: *The Dean*  
*There will be no Evening Service.*

From Monday to Christmas Eve

The Dean, assisted by the canons will be on the steps of the Cathedral  
collecting for this year's Black Santa Appeal.

In a year of unprecedented need, please give as generously as you can.