



A welcoming, inclusive, Christian community

President's Copy

Advent Carol Service
3 December 2023

Welcome to Lancaster Priory.

Advent is a season of the liturgical year observed by Christians as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming.

The name was adopted from Latin *adventus* "coming; arrival", translating Greek *parousia*. In the New Testament, this is the term used for the Second Coming of Christ. Thus, the season of Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the "coming of Christ" from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the eschatological Second Coming. As part of our keeping of Advent, we celebrate this time with an Advent Carol Service, using hymns and carols that reflect on these Advent themes.

Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out
with lighted lamps and garlands round about
to meet Him in a rapture with a shout. *Advent Sunday, Christina Rossetti*

*This service is sung by the Priory Choir conducted by Dr Rebekah Okpoti,
Director of Music. The organ is played by Ian Pattinson, Priory Organist.*

*To mark the solemnity of the Advent Season, please respect the silence before the
service as we gather for worship*

The Priory rests in darkness and silence. We remain seated as the choir sings

Choir Introit *The Truth from Above* (Trad Arr. RV Williams)

Processional Hymn (NEH 11)

During which the congregation's candles are lit and the Priory lights are switched on. Please stand to sing

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Redeem thy captive Israel,
That into exile drear is gone
Far from the face of God's dear Son.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

2 O come, O come, Adonai,
Who in thy glorious majesty
From Sinai's mountain, clothed with awe,
Gavest thy folk the ancient law.

3 O come, thou Root of Jesse! draw
The quarry from the lion's claw;
From those dread caverns of the grave,
From nether hell, thy people save.

4 O come, O come, thou Dayspring
bright!
Pour on our souls thy healing light;
Dispel the long night's lingering gloom,
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.

5 O come, Desire of nations! show
Thy kingly reign on earth below;
Thou Corner-stone, uniting all,
Restore the ruin of our fall.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Cologne 1710
Based on Ancient Advent Antiphons
Tr T A Lacey 1853-1931

The Call to Keep the Spirit of Advent *The officiant says*

Beloved in Christ, the season of Advent bids us prepare ourselves both for the celebration of Christ's nativity as also for the day when he shall come to judge the hearts of us all. So, in sorrow and penitence, let us confess our failures and shortcomings, and renew in ourselves the vision of God's perfect kingdom, which is the end of all our strivings and the consummation of God's loving purposes for us. In word and music we will give voice to the hope set forth in the scriptures, that God's kingdom will come; and, with John the Baptist and the Blessed Virgin Mary, we will prepare for its coming, celebrating its dawning in the birth, life and death of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

But first let us pray for those who, by reason of their adversity, yearn especially for its coming: the hungry and the homeless, the sick and the sorrowful, the lonely and the unloved; those who sit in the darkness of despair or who walk in the shadow of death. Let us pray for the leaders of the nations and for all who strive for the

establishment of justice, righteousness and peace; and, that it may bear witness to this hope in a world divided by wrath and sorrow, let us pray for the well-being and unity of Christ's body, the Church. Let us then pray for the coming of God's kingdom, in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

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.

May the Lord when he comes find us watching and waiting. **Amen.**

We extinguish our candles.

Choir Anthem *King Jesus had a garden* (Trad. Arr Cleobury)

The message of Advent

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed: **And all flesh shall see it together.**

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.**

O Antiphons *A minister reads*

O SAPIENTIA 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.

O ADONAI O Adonai, Deliverer of the house of Israel, who in Sinai did'st give the law to Moses: Come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

First Lesson Isaiah 11:1-5

The prophet speaks of the righteous Judge who will come from the line of David

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.

Choir Anthem *The Call of wisdom* (Todd)

Second Lesson 1 Thessalonians 5: 1–11

The call to be vigilant in preparation for the coming of the Lord

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God

has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Hymn (T.320i) *Please stand*

1 Hark what a sound, and too divine for hearing,
stirs on the earth and trembles in the air!
is it the thunder of the Lord's appearing?
Is it the music of his people's prayer?

2 Surely he cometh, and a thousand voices
shout to the saints, and to the deaf are dumb;
surely he cometh, and the earth rejoices,
glad in his coming who hath sworn: I come!

3 This hath he done, and shall we not adore him?
This shall he do, and can we still despair?
come, let us quickly fling ourselves before him,
cast at his feet the burden of our care.

4 Yea through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
he shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

F W H Myers (1843-1901)

The Word of God

O people of Sion, behold the Lord is nigh at hand to redeem the nations, and in the gladness of your heart the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard.

Declare his honour unto the nations: **And his wonders unto all people.**

Collect

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

O Antiphons *A minster reads*

O RADIX JESSE 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.

O CLAVIS DAVID 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.

Third Lesson Isaiah 11:1-10

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse.

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.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Choir Anthem *O Radiant Dawn* (MacMillan)

Fourth Lesson Luke 4: 14–21

The words of the Prophet Isaiah are fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

The Prophetic Call

Behold, I will send my Messenger and he shall prepare the way before me.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord: **Make his paths straight.**

Collect

O Lord Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy Messenger to prepare thy way before thee: grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

O Antiphons *A minister reads*

O ORIENS O Day-Spring, Brightness of Light Everlasting, and Sun of Righteousness: Come and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

O REX GENTIUM O King of the Nations, and their desire; the Corner-Stone, who makest both one: Come and save mankind, whom thou hast formedst of clay.

Fifth Lesson Matthew 3: 1–11

The proclamation of John the Baptist.

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, ‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.” ’

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

‘I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Hymn (NEH 12) *Please stand*

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings.

2 Then cleansed be every Christian breast;
And furnished for so great a guest!
Yea, let us each our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without thy grace our souls must fade,
And wither like a flower decayed.

4 Stretch forth thine hand to heal our sore,
And make us rise, to fall no more;
Once more upon thy people shine,
And fill the world with love divine.

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

Words C Coffin 1678-1749
Tr J Chandler 1808-76

The Christ-Bearer

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, 'God with us.'

Unto us a Son is given. **Unto us a child is born.**

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, who didst stoop to raise our fallen race by the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen thy glory manifested in our flesh, and thy love perfected in our weakness, may daily be renewed in thine image, and conformed to the likeness of thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

O Antiphons *A minister reads*

O EMMANUEL O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the desire of all nations, and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Sixth Lesson Luke 1:39-56

Mary shares her joyful news with Elizabeth.

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.'

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

Choir Anthem *Gabriel's Message* (Rutter)

Seventh Lesson John 3: 1–8

Jesus speaks with Nicodemus of the 'birth from above'

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'

The officiant says

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open and bring forth a Saviour.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel:

For he hath visited and redeemed his people.

The Intercessions

During the intercessions the following response is used

Maranatha! **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

And at the end the whole congregation pray together

Come, O Lord, do not delay; give new courage to your people who trust in your love. By your coming, raise us to the joy of your kingdom, where you live and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

The Blessing

Silence is kept. The Officiant declares God's 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 with you now and always.

Amen.

Recessional Hymn (NEH 9)

Please stand. During this hymn, servers, choir and clergy depart.

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluya!
God appears, on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at nought 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!
Alleluya! Come, Lord, come!

C Wesley 1707-88

Organ Voluntary *Prelude on 'Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme'* (Bach)