



Leicester Cathedral
A beating heart for City and County

SUNDAY WORSHIP

from the Community
of Leicester Cathedral

Comfort
and Joy



Sunday 29 November 2020
The First Sunday of Advent

The Revd Canon Alison Adams, Canon Pastor and Sub-Dean, leads the service.

David Cowen, Associate Organist, plays on the Organ

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV645

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Welcome and Greeting

We meet in the presence of God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand:
let us therefore cast off the works of darkness
and let us put on the armour of light.

Romans 13.12

Canon Alison continues with words of welcome.

We gather today on Advent Sunday, the commencement of that great season of expectation and anticipation. These four weeks provide the opportunity to look forward and back, from the Patriarchs and Prophets, through John the Baptist and Mary, to what Christ's incarnational coming into this world means for us today.

As we prepare for a very different Christmas from previous years, and light our Advent candles, may we reflect on what the great divine themes of hope, peace, love and joy mean today, in a world which is ravaged with injustice and pain, and how Christ's light may shine in its darkest places.

Penitence Asking for God's forgiveness and healing

Jesus said, 'Keep awake, for you do not know
on what day your Lord is coming.'

cf Matthew 25.13

Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!

Jesus is the light of the world.

A light no darkness can ever put out.

Silence is kept.

Heavenly Father,
you have created a universe of light:
forgive us when we return to darkness.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,
you are the light of the world:
cleansing and heal our blinded sight.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Holy Spirit,
you give us light in our hearts:
renew us in faith and love.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Absolution God's forgiveness for us

Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has given us
a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgive you your sins,
open your eyes to God's truth,
strengthen you to do God's will
and give you the joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Collect for the First Sunday of Advent

Let us pray.

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,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

All sing

The Advent Hymn

Advent 1: **Advent candles tell their story
as we watch and pray;
longing for the Day of Glory,
'Come, Lord, soon,' we say.
Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness
changed for gladness on that Day.**

ANGEL VOICES (AM26)
Edwin George Monk (1819–1900)

Mark Earey (b.1965)

People of God: awake!
The day is coming soon
when you shall see God face to face.
Remember the ways and the works of God.
God calls you out of darkness
to walk in the light of his coming.
You are God's children.
**Lord, make us one as we walk with Christ
today and for ever.
Amen.**

The First Reading

Isaiah 64.1–9

Read by Ruth Osmond

A reading from the Book of Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity for ever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Second Reading

Mark 13.24–37

Read by Millie Burgess

A reading from the Gospel of Mark.

But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

The Revd Canon Emma Davies, Acting Canon Precentor

David Cowen plays

Trio super Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV660

J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Neill Addison leads

Prayers of Intercession

The following response is used

Within our darkest night
Let your light shine.

and this response may be used at the end:

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

The prayers conclude with The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.**

The Hymn

**Hills of the North, rejoice,
river and mountain-spring,
hark to the advent voice;
valley and lowland, sing.
Christ comes in righteousness and love,
he brings salvation from above.**

**Isles of the Southern seas,
sing to the listening earth,
carry on every breeze
hope of a world's new birth:
In Christ shall all be made anew,
his word is sure, his promise true.**

**Lands of the East, arise,
he is your brightest morn,
greet him with joyous eyes,
praise shall his path adorn:
your seers have longed to know their Lord;
to you he comes, the final word.**

**Shores of the utmost West,
lands of the setting sun,
welcome the heavenly guest
in whom the dawn has come:
he brings a never-ending light
who triumphed o'er our darkest night.**

**Shout, as you journey home,
songs be in every mouth,
lo, from the North they come,
from East and West and South:
in Jesus all shall find their rest,
in him the universe be blest.**

*LITTLE CORNARD (AM39)
Martin Shaw (1875–1958)*

*Editors of English Praise, 1975
based on Charles Ernest Oakley (1832–1865)*

The Blessing and Dismissal

The Church of England's theme for this season is 'Comfort and Joy' – words taken from the refrain of a well-known Christmas carol. May you, this coming week and throughout the season of Advent experience God's comfort and experience the joy of Christ's presence.

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.
Amen.

There are various Advent activities you may wish to join in, not least today an Advent meditation with David Cowen, our Assistant Organist at 3.00pm online, and an Advent Carol Service at 5.00pm. All details may be found on the website and on Facebook.

As we await our coming Saviour,
And until we meet again,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ.
Amen.

David Cowen plays

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV661

J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Leicester Cathedral needs your help

We understand that not everyone will be able to help in this uncertain climate. But if you are able to continue your giving, or to make a donation now, it will be enormously helpful.

We have limited reserves, our earned income has come to a standstill, and giving by collection plate and envelope has ceased. As a result, we are experiencing very real financial pressures.

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