

The Parish Church of St Faith, Great Crosby

Churches Together in Waterloo

The **Coming**
of
Christ the Light



A Service for Advent Sunday

INTRODUCTION AND BIDDING PRAYERS

In the name of God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and made a place for us in the kingdom of his beloved Son, we welcome you: grace to you and peace.

As we meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's Kingdom, we hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us -- how that when we were far off, he met us in his Son and brought us home; how he humbled himself to take our human nature, that we might share his divine glory.

Let us then so celebrate this coming with our carols and hymns of praise, that our lives may be charged with his life; that we may bear witness to his glory and so bring light to those who sit in darkness.

So first we pray for those among whom the Christ was born: the poor and helpless, the aged and young children; the cold, the hungry, and the homeless; the victims of poverty, injustice and oppression, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; those in despair or in the shadow of death.

Then, as we hear again the message of peace on earth and goodwill among all his people, we pray for the leaders of the nations, that all may be inspired to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace the world over. And that we may bear true witness to this hope in a divided world, we pray for the peace and unity of Christ's body, the Church universal, that the whole earth may live to praise his name, and particularly for the witness of Churches Together in Waterloo.

Finally, as we rejoice with the saints in heaven and on earth, we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we offer up our prayers for the coming of his Kingdom, in the words he himself has taught us, saying:

**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.**

There is a time of silent prayer, after which the Collect for Advent Sunday is said:

Almighty God, give us grace
to cast away the works of darkness
and 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;
so that, at 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,
world without end. **Amen.**

First Reading:

Genesis 1.1-5: Let there be light

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

HYMN: 180: Thou whose almighty word

Second Reading: Isaiah 45.2-8: I form light and darkness

I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.
I am the Lord, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;

I am the Lord, and there is no other.
I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the Lord do all these things.

Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation may spring up,
and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also;
I the Lord have created it.

HYMN: 28: Lo, he comes with clouds descending

Third Reading: Baruch 4.36-5.9: Look to the East

Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,
and see the joy that is coming to you from God.
Look, your children are coming, whom you sent away;
they are coming, gathered from east and west,
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing in the glory of God.
Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction,
O Jerusalem,
and put on for ever the beauty of the glory from God.
Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God;
put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting;
for God will show your splendour everywhere under heaven.
For God will give you evermore the name,
'Righteous Peace, Godly Glory'.

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height;
look towards the east,
and see your children gathered from west and east

at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered them.
For they went out from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;
but God will bring them back to you,
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.
For God has ordered that every high mountain and the
everlasting hills be made low
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
The woods and every fragrant tree
have shaded Israel at God's command.
For God will lead Israel with joy,
in the light of his glory,
with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

HYMN: 24: Hark a thrilling voice is sounding

Fourth Reading: Isaiah 9.2,3,6,7:
The people that walked in darkness
The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

HYMN: 33: Of the Father's love begotten

Fifth Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11, 23, 34

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: 32: Sleepers wake

Gospel: John 3. 16-21: I am the light of the world

Alleuia, alleluia

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight;

And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to JOHN

Glory to you O Lord

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered.

HYMN: 26: O come, O come Emmanuel

CONCLUSION

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

Come, O Lord, comfort the soul of your servant
Even so, Lord, come.

The light of life send upon us;
The joy of peace send upon us;
The gladness of goodwill send upon us.
**In judgement and justice draw near,
in your merciful loving kindness draw near
with the blessing of peace draw near.**

O wisdom of God, sweetly ordering all things,
flowing from the glory of the Almighty,
making all things new, kind to all,
making them friends of God.
**Come and comfort the soul of your servant
for to you do I lift up my soul.**

O Lord Jesus Christ, come
at evening time, with light
And in the morning, with your glory
to guide our feet into the way of peace.

BLESSING

May God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you grace to prepare for eternal life.

Amen.

May God the Son, who comes to us as Redeemer and Judge, reveal to you the path from darkness to light. **Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit, by whose working the Virgin Mary conceived the Christ, help you bear the fruits of holiness.

Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

He who receives our prayers says:

Surely I come quickly

I am the root and offspring of David

I am the bright and morning star.

Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus.

