

St John the Evangelist, Shirley



Advent

Introduction to the Season

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation.

During the season of Advent, we are called to seek the light of Christ, even in the midst of darkness. We are invited to face the darkness in our own lives and in the world around us. The prophets assure us that the darkness will not overcome us. They call us to watch for the light. We are called to wait, to hope, to trust in promises made.

As we make this Advent journey in faith, we invite God's light to dispel the darkness. We ask for the grace to set down all those burdens that darken our hearts as we search for the light. We ask for the gift of attentiveness that we may truly see God's loving presence within and among us. And we ask for renewed faith that we might be light for others.

Each Sunday has a theme:

Advent 1	The Patriarchs (Hope)
Advent 2	The Prophets (Peace)
Advent 3	John the Baptist (Joy)
Advent 4	The Virgin Mary (Love)
Christmas Day	The Christ

INTRODUCTORY SENTENCE

All the tribes of the earth will see the sun of man on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

INTROIT HYMN

EXHORTATION

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
as we gather at the Lord's table
we must recall the promises and warnings
given to us in the Scriptures. Let us therefore
examine ourselves and repent of our sins.
Let us give thanks to God
for his redemption of the world
through his Son Jesus Christ,
and as we remember Christ's death for us,
and receive this pledge of his love,
let us resolve to serve him in holiness and
righteousness all the days of our life.

THE PREPARATION AND GREETING

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

INTRODUCTION TO CONFESSION

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

CONFESSION

**Forgive us when we forget that our every breath
is your gift,
That your care sustains our every moment
that your grace can transform our very beings.
Set us free from the prison of our doubting hearts,
our mean desires and resentful spirits.
Give us courage to act with justice and
generosity,
and draw us into the light of your love that longs for
each of us and never counts the cost. Amen.**

ABSOLUTION

KYRIES

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

COLLECT

READINGS *(sit)*

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God

HYMN TO WELCOME THE GOSPEL

GOSPEL RESPONSES *(remain standing)*

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *N.*
Glory to you, O Lord. *(sung)*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ. *(sung)*

ADDRESS *(sit)*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known
in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

INTERCESSIONS *(sit or kneel)*

Response unless otherwise directed:

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

at the end

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

**for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

PEACE (*Stand*)

May the God of peace make you completely holy,
ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer each other a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN

PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

**All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you.**

Stir up your power, O God, and come among us; heal our
wounds, calm our fears and give us peace; through Jesus our
Redeemer. **Amen**

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

From the First Sunday of Advent until 16 December

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.
For when he humbled himself to come among us in human
flesh,
he fulfilled the plan you formed before the
foundation of the world
to open for us the way of salvation.
Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,
we now watch for the day
when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.
And so we join our voices with angels and
Archangels and with all the company of heaven
to proclaim your glory,
for ever praising you and singing:

From 17 December until Christmas Eve

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.
He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling.
John the Baptist was his herald
and made him known when at last he came.
In his love Christ fills us with joy
as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
so that when he comes again he may find us watching in
prayer, our hearts filled with wonder and praise.
And so, with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your glory,
and join in their unending hymn of praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. Therefore, heavenly Father, we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross; we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; we look for the coming of your kingdom, and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

**Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

A bell is rung and we kneel or sit.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

AGNUS DEI (*sung*)

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper:

**Lord I am not worthy to receive you,
But only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

If you are a visitor and receive communion in your home church, you are welcome to receive with us today. If you would like a blessing, come to the altar rail, and bow your head.

COMMUNION HYMN(S)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

**We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this sacrament,
united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly
banquet prepared for all peoples. Amen.**

NOTICES AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

ADVENT HYMN

**Christ is coming! Lift your eyes!
Sweep your hearts, prepare your lives.
Spread your welcome. He is near.
Soon Messiah will appear!
He is life and peace profound.
Trust His love and turn around!
Christ is coming! Don't delay!
He is Lord! Prepare His way.**



**Wash your hearts, confess your sin.
See your heaven now begin.
Look beyond your fear and pride.
See His Kingdom open wide.
Meet the Lord of sky and sea,
God in full reality!
Christ is coming! Don't delay!
He is Lord! Prepare His way**

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BLESSING (*Stand*)

May God himself, the God of peace, make you perfect and holy, and keep you safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the blessing ...

FINAL HYMN

DISMISSAL

As we await our coming Saviour, go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Please join us for tea, coffee, squash and biscuits after the service.

Prayers for lighting the candles on the Advent Wreath

Advent Sunday

God of Abraham and Sarah, and all the patriarchs of old, you are our Father too. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of David. Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit to make his home among us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

Advent 2

God our Father, you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace. You helped them to spread the joyful message of his coming kingdom. Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, to share with those around us the good news of your power and love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

Advent 3

God our Father, you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age a son called John. He grew up strong in spirit, prepared the people for the coming of the Lord, and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us, who have been baptized into Christ, to be ready to welcome him into our hearts, and to grow strong in faith by the power of the Spirit. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

Advent 4

God our Father, the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son. Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy. Help us, whom you call to serve you, to share like her in your great work of bringing to our world your love and healing. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.