



Chet Valley Churches



Holy Communion for Advent Sunday

29th November 2020

The Greeting

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Advent Ring

We have this Advent ring to remind us of the coming of Jesus, the light of the world.

Lord, let your light scatter the darkness

And fill the world with your glory.

We light this first candle to remind us of God's people who, in every age, watch for his coming.

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors:
to you be praise and glory for ever!

You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith

and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment.

May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful

to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;
for you are our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

♪ Hymn: *Praise my Soul the King of Heaven*

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,

To his feet thy tribute bring;

Ransomed healed, restored, forgiven,

Who like me his praise should sing?

Alleluia, alleluia,

Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour

To our fathers in distress;

Praise him still the same for ever,

Slow to chide and swift to bless:

Alleluia, alleluia,

Glorious in his faithfulness.



**Father-like, he tends and spares us,
Well our feeble frame he knows;
In his hands he gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia, alleluia,
Widely as his mercy flows.**

**Angels, help us to adore him;
Ye behold him face to face;
Sun and moon bow down before him,
Dwellers all in time and space:
Alleluia, alleluia,
Praise with us the God of grace.**

Prayer of Preparation

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Christ the Light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

**Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

May almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring us his pardon and peace, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Collect

Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns,
turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness,
that we may be ready to meet you
in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: I Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

For the word of the Lord, **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I have called to you, Lord.
Let your ears be open to hear my voice.

My hope is in God's word.

If you recorded all our sins
who could come before you?

My hope is in God's word.

There is forgiveness with you:
therefore you shall be feared.

My hope is in God's word.

My soul is longing for the Lord,
more than those who watch for daybreak.

My hope is in God's word.



O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy.

My hope is in God's word.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

My hope is in God's word.

♪ **Chant:** *Wait for the Lord*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord, keep watch, take heart.

📖 **Gospel Reading:** *Mark 13:24-27*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, '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.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

Talk [Rev David]

Today is Advent Sunday. The beginning of the new church year. In the introduction to her book of reflections: “Companions on the Bethlehem Road”, Rachel Boulding, reminds us that these three or four weeks before Christmas are more than just a preparation for the festive season. They are a distinct time in the Church’s year with its own features, blending together different aspects. Like Lent it is a time of penitence, a time to prepare ourselves inwardly for a great festival, whilst recognising the need to review our lives and to probe our motives. In a way the probing we need to do will focus our minds on areas which we often shy away from.

Aspects such as death, judgement, heaven and hell. All of these can be considered within the over-arching theme of Advent as being “Watching and Waiting”.

Growing up in Chester I used to take the city for granted - I suppose most of us do when we are so accustomed to something or other. It was only many years later when circumnavigating the city by walking on the city walls did I fully appreciate what a beautiful place it was. As in many cities the walls were built to protect the inhabitants and to keep marauders out. Much of the walls still show their Roman origins but over the centuries many others have built or rebuilt them. Not far away—heading west along the north Wales coast one comes to a whole string of castles. These were built by Edward I (or rather by his masons and workers as I can’t imagine the king getting his hands dirty handling stone and mortar!) These coastal castles—Flint, Rhuddlan, Conwy, Caernarfon, Beaumaris and Harlech were his means of keeping the Welsh under control following the rebellions of the north Wales prince, Llywelyn ap Gruffydd. Each of these castles were masterpieces of engineering built with strong walls and with towers which were there to keep watch over the surrounding land and sea. Soldiers would be posted on them to ensure that that the castle garrison would not be taken by surprise. Before RADAR and other technological advances it was up to these watchmen to undertake this vital role. To go to sleep on your watch was a dangerous and unforgivable act.

I often wondered why the timepiece many, if not most of us, have on our wrist is called a “watch”. Searching the pages of the internet one can discover probable answers. One that rang true for me was this one: “When the noun ‘watch’ showed up in Anglo-Saxon times, it referred to wakefulness, especially keeping awake for guarding or observing. That

sense of wakefulness probably led to the use of “watch” for a timepiece.” And in a “Dictionary of Word Origins”, “The sort of watch that tells the time is probably so called not because you look at it to see what time it is, but because originally it woke you up.” The article goes on to give many other references as to the use of the word watch for keeping awake or rousing from slumber.

So how do we achieve a state of wakefulness? If you have a little child, or babe in arms then being kept awake is definitely different to being in a state of wakefulness. For us strong coffee might be called upon to achieve such a state. Yet true wakefulness surely requires attentiveness.

Wakefulness is a state of activity, not one of passivity. One needs to be consciously doing it. But what are we watching and waiting for?

Surely we are waiting for the coming—the *adventus*—of Jesus as a babe - most youngsters would relate to that. But also for the coming of God’s Kingdom here on earth. A kingdom which Jesus told us was both already here and not yet and also for the coming of the end times for which we need to be aware and awake since we do not know the day or the hour. In Rowan Williams’ poem, “Advent Calendar” the unexpectedness of Jesus’s first coming may well require us to be alert for his second coming in the power of the Spirit.

*He will come like last leaf’s fall.
One night when the November wind
has flayed the trees to bone, and earth
wakes choking on the mould, the soft shroud’s folding.*

*He will come like the frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net of alien, sword-set beauty.*

*He will come like dark.
One evening when the bursting red
December sun draws up the sheet
and penny-masks its eye to yield the star-snowed fields of sky.*

*He will come, will come,
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, like breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free. He will come like a child.*

Will we be awake and recognise Him? Now that's the challenge.

Affirmation of Faith

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father, who created all things:
for by his will they were created and have their being.

We believe in God the Son, who was slain:
**for with his blood, he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language, from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Prayers of Intercession

This response is used

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom, saying:
Father, by your Spirit
bring in your kingdom.

The prayers conclude

Lord of the Church
**hear our prayer, and make us one in heart and mind
to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

In the tender mercy of our God,
the day-spring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

♪ Hymn: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.**

Preparation of the Table

Blessed be God,
who feeds the hungry, who raises the poor, who fills our praise.
Blessed be God for ever.

The Eucharistic 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.



It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places to give you thanks and praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

And now we give you thanks because you sent him to redeem us from sin and death and to make us inheritors of everlasting life; that when he shall

come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may with joy behold his appearing, and in confidence may stand before him.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**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.**

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom
in the words our Saviour taught us.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for 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.

The Communion

Prayer after Communion

Loving Father, your Son Jesus Christ has come to us in word and Spirit, in
bread and cup.

Make us holy and bring us to perfection, when we stand before him as he
comes to judge the living and the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

♪ Hymn: Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,

Once for favoured sinners slain;

Thousand thousand saints attending

Swell the triumph of his train:

Alleluia!

God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught 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:
Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

The Dismissal

Our Lord says, I am coming soon.
Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

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

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

And the blessing of God Almighty Father,
Son and Holy Spirit be with you
and those whom you love
now and always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.



Advent begins