

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The fourth candle we light today shines bright like Mary's willing heart. She thought herself weak, and yet she obeyed, was strong and brave to play her part.

Jesus, we welcome you into our lives,
ALL: O come, O come Emmanuel.
Make us brave to share your love,
O come, O come Emmanuel.

HYMN

What child is this, who, laid to rest
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds worship
and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him praise
the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate,
where ox and ass are feeding?
Come have no fear, God's son is here,
his love all loves exceeding.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you:
hail, hail the Saviour comes,
the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
all tongues and peoples own him,
the King of kings salvation brings,
let every heart enthrone him:
Raise, raise your song on high
while Mary sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born
the babe, the son of Mary.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.

Holy God, forgive our impatience with
everyday life. We rush around, irritated
at delays, frustrated with things and
people which do not move at the pace
we would like.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.

Holy God, forgive our impatience with
answers to prayer. Sometimes we treat
you like a vending machine, or assume
to know your will and your best for us.
Help us to trust your timing and your
kindness. Jesus, Prince of Peace,
teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.

Holy God, forgive our impatience with
your coming again. You are not slow,
you are patient, and you long for all to
come to you willingly. May we live in
holy anticipation of your return.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.

Thank you that you are gracious and
compassionate, slow to anger and rich
in love. You are patient with our
mistakes and forgive our sins. We
receive your peace afresh today.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of
grace. Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who
truly repent, have mercy upon us,
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,
confirm and strengthen us in all
goodness, and keep us in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

COLLECT

Almighty God, purify our hearts and
minds, that when your Son Jesus
Christ comes again as judge and
saviour we may be ready to receive
him, who is our Lord and our God.

AMEN

BIBLE READING: Luke 1.26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel
was sent by God to a town in Galilee
called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to
a man whose name was Joseph, of the
house of David. The virgin's name was
Mary. And he came to her and said,
"Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is
with you." But she was much
perplexed by his words and pondered
what sort of greeting this might be.
The angel said to her, "Do not be
afraid, Mary, for you have found
favour with God. And now, you will
conceive in your womb and bear a son,
and you will name him Jesus. He will
be great, and will be called the Son of
the Most High, and the Lord God will
give to him the throne of his ancestor
David. He will reign over the house of
Jacob forever, and of his kingdom
there will be no end." Mary said to the
angel, "How can this be, since I am a
virgin?" The angel said to her, "The
Holy Spirit will come upon you, and
the power of the Most High will
overshadow you; therefore the child
to be born will be holy; he will be
called Son of God. And now, your
relative Elizabeth in her old age has
also conceived a son; and this is the
sixth month for her who was said to
be barren. For nothing will be
impossible with God." Then Mary said,
"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let
it be with me according to your word."
Then the angel departed from her.

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

SERMON

PRAYERS

Our Father...

SENDING

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here!**

Emmanuel is about to be born.
So go out, into this Christmas season,
aware that God is with you.

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here!**

The King who has come, and who will
come again, sends you out to
demonstrate his Kingdom on earth.
The long expected King,
born to the sound of angels singing,
sends you out to worship him with
your lives. The King who was born
poor and humble, sends you to serve
those who are weak
and needy in the world.

**The wait is almost over,
Christmas is nearly here!**

THE BLESSING

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Let's pray together ...

- For this time of advent: for patience and for boldness in being signposts to Christ.
- For medical experts, politicians and public leaders – for wisdom, compassion and integrity.
- For those who are sick and those suffering from bereavement, especially the families of Helen Brooks and Harrison Cail.