

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The First Sunday of Advent

Year C



All Age Mass for the Parish Family

Sunday 1st December 2024

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding *St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.*

Live streaming *Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.*

GDPR *Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.*

Toilet and baby changing facilities *may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.*

For younger children *In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-related Christian resources is provided. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.*



Advent The purpose of Advent is to help us prepare for Christmas. One can't understand the message of Christmas unless we are familiar with at least the broad outlines of the history of salvation.

The Advent liturgy relives the long history of Israel, viewing it through the eyes of Christian faith. It shows that all of that history was pointing and leading towards Jesus. He was the one who fulfilled the words of the prophets.

Advent takes us back in time so that we may appreciate the greatness of what we are heirs to. We are the heirs to the promises God made to the prophets. Advent helps us to appreciate the great blessings God has given us in Christ.

Today's First Reading points to the first coming of Christ. It says that the Messiah will be descended from King David, and his reign will be marked by wisdom, justice and integrity. The Gospel speaks of the second coming of Christ. The early Christians believed that the Second Coming was near, and would be preceded by obvious signs. The disciples are urged to await the Lord's coming with confidence, vigilance and prayer.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following prayer, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Prayer

The hill flowers fade, but will bloom again next year.
But we never get back our youth.
Life is a fragile gift which we enjoy only briefly;
our life is like the warming of oneself in the sun.
We live in a flash of light; before we know it, evening comes and night falls.
But the very fleetingness of life makes it all the more precious.

Lord, may your gentle and sure light guide us on the unfolding road,
so that we may walk with confidence towards the light that never fades
and the life that never ends.

Setting

Mass of St Thomas

David Thorne

Collection - 'Building a Generous Church'



Our response to God's generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of The Church of England is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

* * * * *

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew's Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

Contactless giving - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

Giving on your smart phone - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

Giving online - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



St Matthew's Church

Order of Service

¶ Gathering to Worship God

All stand at the sound of the bell

The choir are in their stalls

The Advent Prose

1. *Choir*
2. *All*



Drop down, ye hea-vens from a - bove, and let the skies pour down right - eous - ness.

Choir Be not wroth very sore, O Lord,
neither remember iniquity for ever:
thy holy cities are a wilderness,
Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation:
our holy and our beautiful house,
where our fathers praised thee.

Hymn

The procession enters from the west end

The flags are presented

All **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.

Prophet voices loudly crying,
Making pathways clear,
Glimpsing glory, self-denying,
Calling all to hear.
Through their message - challenged, shaken-
Hearts awaken: God is near!

John the Baptist, by his preaching
And by water poured,
Brought to those who heard his teaching
News of hope restored:
'Keep your vision strong and steady,
And be ready for the Lord.'

Mary's gift, beyond all telling,
Was to give Christ room.
She gave God a human dwelling
In a mother's womb.
Who could guess the final story?
- Cross and glory; empty tomb!

Words Mark Earey (born 1965)

Music Angel Voices
Edwin Monk (1819-1900)

† In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
All **Amen.**

The Greeting

All May the light and peace of Jesus Christ our Lord be with you.
and also with you.

The service is introduced

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

A child lights the first purple candle

All **Lord Jesus, light of the world,
born like him to be a king:
be born in our hearts at Christmas,
be King of our lives today. Amen.**

Saying Sorry to God

When the Lord comes, he will shine his light on the darkness
of the world, and show us the truth.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

All **Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

God's Forgiveness

May God in his mercy pardon t and cleanse us,
Keep us faithful in his service,
and make us ready to stand before him
and hear his say 'Well done',
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

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.

All **Amen.**

Please be seated

¶ Hearing and Responding to the Word of God

First Reading

Reader A reading from the prophesy of Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Jeremiah 33.14-16

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

Gospel Reading

All stand

Acclamation

1. Choir
2. Choir and Congregation

Fintan O'Carroll

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Choir Truly, God salvation is near to those who fear him:
that his glory may dwell in our land.

All **Alleluia, alleluia ...**

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

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

All Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

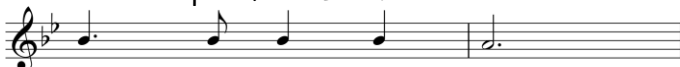
Jesus said to his disciples, 'There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.'

Then he told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'

'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

Luke 21.25-36

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



All

Praise to you, O Christ.

Hymn

The choir come and sit in the Nave

All

COLOURS of day dawn into the mind,
The sun has come up, the night is behind.
Go down in the city, into the street,
And let's give the message to the people we meet.
*So light up the fire and let the flame burn,
Open the door, let Jesus return.
Take seeds of His Spirit, let the fruit grow,
Tell the people of Jesus, let His love show.*

Go through the park, on into the town;
The sun still shines on, it never goes down.
The light of the world is risen again;
The people of darkness are needing a friend.

Open your eyes, look into the sky,
The darkness has come, the sun came to die.
The evening draws on, the sun disappears,
But Jesus is living, His Spirit is near.

Words Sue McClellan (born 1951),
John Paculabo (born 1946),
Keith Rycroft (born 1949)

Music Light Up The Fire

Talk - Presentation

All sit

We believe

All stand

As God's family, let us declare the faith of the Church.

All **We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

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

All sit

Our Prayers to God

Priest In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid
let us pray to Jesus:

Intercessor Lord of light,
alert us to the hope of banishing darkness
so that we may be open to the coming of your Son.
May we also have our eyes opened to the end of time,
ready and expectant, always prepared.

Let the energy of your mighty power dazzle and refresh us,
as you bring us your love and peace,
mercy and grace, expectation and anticipation.
God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

We pray for your Church in its long journey in the light of Christ.
Shine your love into any dark corners,
prepare us for the glories to come,
and help us to sustain our worship and wonder.
As we look forward to the birth of your Son,
let us look back in penitence and humility,
committing ourselves anew to do your will
and to deepen our faith through worship and prayer.
God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

As we put on the armour of light, this Advent,
broaden our vision
so that we can see the gifts and needs of others.
In serving you, may we serve the needs we see,
giving as much as we receive, of our time, our talents,
and ourselves.

And in your world today we pray especially for ...
Equip those who are on the ground with purpose and authority,
as we ask them to make a difference for your sake.
And may we provide what we can in resources and prayer.
God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

In our own community we pray for ...
God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

Let the sick and the suffering know your presence.
May those who care patiently, and listen actively,
feel your strength, as we prayer for the acutely ill ...
God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

We remember the names and lives of those who have died ...
We pray that those who mourn are comforted
and that friends and neighbours support families
who grieve at this time.

God, our love and our light,

All **come to us and lighten our darkness.**

Priest Merciful Father,

All **accept these prayers**

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

Amen.

All stand

¶ Preparing to meet Jesus in Bread and Wine

Hymn

A monetary collection is taken. Please give as you are able using any of the ways indicated at the front of this booklet. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.

The children are invited to stand either side of the altar

All

WAKE, O wake! With tidings thrilling
The watchmen all the air are filling,
Arise, Jerusalem, arise!
Midnight strikes! No more delaying,
'The hour has come!' we hear them saying:
Where are ye all, ye virgins wise?
The Bridegroom comes in sight,
Raise high your torches bright!
Alleluya!
The wedding song swells loud and strong:
Go forth and join the festal throng!

Sion hears the watchmen shouting,
Her heart leaps up with joy undoubting,
She stands and waits with eager eyes;
See her friend from heaven descending,
Adorned with truth and grace unending!
Her light burns clear, her star doth rise.
Now come, thou precious crown,
Lord Jesu, God's own Son!
Hosanna!
Let us prepare to follow there,
Where in thy supper we may share.

Every soul in thee rejoices;
From man and from angelic voices
Be glory given to thee alone!
Now the gates of pearl receive us,
Thy presence never more shall leave us,
We stand with angels round thy throne.
Earth cannot give below
The bliss thou dost bestow.
Alleluya!
Grant us to raise to length of days,
The triumph-chorus of thy praise.

Words & melody Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608)
trans Francis Crawford Burkitt (1864-1935)

Music Wachet Auf
harmony J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Offering the Gifts of Bread and Wine

Holy Father,
as the saints offer their lives for the sake of the kingdom,
receive the bread and wine we offer you;
help us to serve you better,
that our journey in faith may lead us to heaven.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Prayer over the Bread and Wine

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

All Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

Children Why is it right to give thanks and praise?
Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Lord of all life, you created the universe,
where all living things reflect your glory.
You give us this great and beautiful earth
to discover and to cherish.

You give us sun and moon and star-lit sky,
everything that gives us light,
light for our eyes, our hearts, our minds.

You give us the example of prophets
and the preaching of John the Baptist
as we waiting for the day when Jesus comes again in glory.

You made us all,
each wonderfully different,
to join with the angels and sing your praise:

All sing

**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.**

We thank you, loving Father,
because, when we turned away,
you sent Jesus, your Son.
He gave his life for us on the cross
and shows us the way to live.
Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

*Children
Adults*

Why do we share this bread and wine?
Listen, and we will hear.

On the night before he died,
when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread.
He gave thanks, broke it
and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.
As you feed us with these gifts,
send your Holy Spirit,
and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Children How do we follow Jesus Christ?

Adults **Listen, and we will hear.**

Help us, Father, to love one another,
as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended,
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.
And now with Mary and all your saints
we give you glory,
through Jesus Christ,
in the strength of the Spirit,
today and for ever.

All **Amen.**

If you are able, please remain standing

The Lord's Prayer

Awaiting Jesus' coming in glory,
let us pray together as our Saviour has taught us:

All **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.**

Sign of Peace

All stand

Priest God will speak peace to his people,
to those who turn to him in their hearts,
and are ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

The children return to their seats

Please sit or kneel

Breaking of the Bread

Creator of all, we have gathered many grains
and made them into this one bread.

All **We look for your Church to be gathered
from the ends of the earth into the kingdom.**

Invitation to Communion

All God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
**Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The clergy receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

The Lord will give all that is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

Baptized persons who are communicant members of other Churches are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion.

Alternatively, if you wish to receive a blessing, please bring this booklet with you to the communion rail.

Spiritual Communion - for those watching at home

Act of Reception

All In union, blessed Jesus,
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,
for creation and all the blessings of this life,
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,
and resurrection,
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,
I pray you to come into my heart.

I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind.
Let nothing separate me from you;
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.
Amen.

The choir sing Lamb of God

Motet

Choir Thou shalt know him when he comes *Mark Sirett (b.1952)*

S *All sit for a period of silent reflection and thanksgiving*

Prayer after Communion

Priest Let us pray. *All stand*

All **Merciful God,**
you have called us to your table
and fed us with the bread of life.
Draw us, following the example of your saints,
to serve your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Hymn

The flags are returned to their bearers

All **LONGING** for light, we wait in darkness.
 Longing for truth, we turn to you.
 Make us your own, your holy people,
 Light for the word to see.

Refrain **Christ, be our light!**
 Shine in our hearts; shine through the darkness.
 Christ, be our light!
 Shine in your Church gathered today.

 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
 Longing for hope, many despair.
 Your word alone has power to save us.
 Make us your living voice.

 Longing for food, many are hungry.
 Longing for water, many still thirst.
 Make us your bread, broken for others,
 Shared until all are fed.

 Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
 Longing for warmth, many are cold.
 Make us your building, sheltering others,
 Walls made of living stones.

 Many the gifts, many the people,
 Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
 Let us be servants to one another,
 Making your kingdom come.

Words & music Bernadette Farrell (b.1957)

Notices for the Community

All sit

¶ Going out to serve God

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

All stand

God's Blessing

May 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 of God almighty,
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

A Trumpet Gavotte

Christopher Tambling (b 1964)

Please remain standing until the procession has departed

Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary

Do please join us for refreshments in the parish centre.

This afternoon at 4.00 pm

The Advent Procession

*A candlelit service with seasonal carols
followed by refreshments*

Christmas Eve at 4.00 pm

Crib Service with Christingle

Our next all age service

The Baptism of Jesus

Sunday 12 January at 10.15 am

Our thanks are due to Mavis James
who has generously financed the production of this week's
service booklet in memory of Donald James.

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

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