

# Holy Communion in Advent

## Introduction

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (*adventus*) of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement:

Every eye shall now behold him  
robed in dreadful majesty.      (*Charles Wesley*)

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation. The characteristic note of Advent is therefore expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent.

The anticipation of Christmas under commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness, but the fundamental Advent prayer remains 'Maranatha' – 'Our Lord, come' (*1 Corinthians 16.22*). Church decorations are simple and spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour.

In the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath was imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century, and is now a common practice.



The Third Sunday of Advent was observed in medieval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (*Gaudete* or 'Rose Sunday'), and the last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great 'O' Antiphons, which continue to inspire modern Advent hymns and meditations.

*Common Worship, Times and Seasons, p33*

# The Gathering

## Welcome

A *Hymn* may be sung



*Please remain standing*

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

The Lord be with you  
**All   and also with you.**

## The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Now it is time to awake out of sleep,  
**All   for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**  
Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed,  
**All   for the night is far spent.**  
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness  
and put on the armour of light,  
**All   for the day is at hand.**



## Advent I

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.**



## Confession and Absolution

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

*Silence for reflection on the past*

Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.



**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought, in what we have said and  
done, through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.**

**We have wounded your love and marred your image  
in us. We are sorry and ashamed, and repent of all our  
sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died  
for us, forgive us all that is past; and lead us out from  
darkness to walk as children of light. Amen.**

*We say or sing the **Kyries***



	Kyrie, eleison	Lord have mercy
All	<b>Kyrie, eleison</b>	<b>Lord have mercy</b>
	Christe, eleison	Christ have mercy
All	<b>Christe, eleison</b>	<b>Christ have mercy</b>
	Kyrie, eleison	Lord have mercy
All	<b>Kyrie, eleison</b>	<b>Lord have mercy</b>

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

## **The Collect** (*Special Prayer for this service*)

*This can be found on the white notices sheet*

Let us pray (*remain standing*)



*At the end we all say **Amen***

*Please be seated. At 8.30am service the Sunday School gathers at the chancel step for prayer prior to moving to the vestry. A chant may be sung.*



## The Liturgy of the Word

### **Bible Reading(s)**

*These can be found on the white notices sheet*

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God**



**A Chant or Hymn may be sung**



### **Gospel Reading**

*Please stand if you are able*

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

**All Alleluia.**

*cf Revelation 1.17,18*

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

*The Gospel reading can be found on the white notices sheet*



This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

*Please be seated. At the 10am service the Sunday School gathers at the chancel step for prayer prior to moving to the vestry. We normally repeat the previous chant*



## **Sermon**

*The sermon will be followed by a short time of silence*

## **Apostles' Creed** *Please stand*

Let us profess our faith together

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen**



## The Peace

In the tender mercy of our God, the dayspring 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.

*cf Luke 1.78,79*

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*We exchange a sign of peace with those around us.*



## The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### The Preparation of the Table

during which a **Hymn** may be sung



*The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.*

*The gifts of the people are gathered and presented.*



*If you are a UK tax payer please place your gift in a yellow envelope **and** complete the details on the front. This enables your offering to be increased by 25%*

### Taking of the Bread and Wine

*Please remain standing if able*



As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside are now reunited on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your kingdom. **Amen.**

*Or*

God our sustainer, receive the gifts we bring before you, and feed us continually with that bread which satisfies all hunger, your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

# The Eucharistic Prayer

*(Eucharist means Thanksgiving)*

*(Prayer B)*

The Lord is here

All **His Spirit is with us**

Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**



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 *saying/singing*

Or

Living God, Father of light, Hope of nations, Friend of sinners, Builder of the city that is to come:

your love is made visible in Jesus Christ, you bring home the lost, restore the sinner and give dignity to the despised.

In the face of Jesus Christ your light shines out, flooding lives with goodness and truth, gathering into one a divided and broken humanity.

With people from every race and nation, with the Church of all the ages, with apostles, evangelists and martyrs we join the angels of heaven in their unending song:

All

**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.**



Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;



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.



Jesus Christ is Lord:

**Lord, by your cross and  
resurrection  
you have set us free.  
You are the Saviour  
of the world.**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

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



And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole  
world;

rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.



As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.



Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of Laurence and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;



by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.



**All** **Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

*We sit or kneel to say or sing the Agnus Dei*



**All** **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace.**

*This prayer may be said*



**Most merciful Lord,  
your love compels us to come in.  
Our hands were unclean,  
our hearts were unprepared;  
we were not fit  
even to eat the crumbs from under your table.  
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,  
and share your bread with sinners.  
So cleanse and feed us  
with the precious body and blood of your Son,  
that he may live in us and we in him;  
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,  
may sit and eat in your kingdom.  
Amen.**

## Giving of Holy Communion

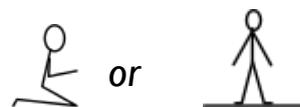
Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink



in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*The president and people receive communion.*



*If you receive communion in any Christian Church you are welcome to receive communion. You may kneel or stand.*

*Alternatively, please come to the altar to receive a blessing (please bring this booklet with you).*

*Gluten-free wafers are available. Please ask the person administering bread.*

*If you would like communion brought to you in your pew, please let a steward know.*

*During the administration of communion, hymns may be sung. Please join in. The hymn numbers are on the white notices sheet.*



### Prayers for personal use during the administration of Holy Communion

This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord.

It has been made ready for those who love Him  
and who want to love Him more.

So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,  
You who have been here often

and you who have not been for a long time,

You who have tried to follow and you who have failed.

Come, not because I invite you:

it is our Lord.

It is His will that those who want Him should meet Him here.

## The Advent Antiphons

These ancient antiphons, or refrains, all beginning 'O ... ', were sung before and after the Magnificat at Vespers on the seven days preceding Christmas Eve. They are addressed to God, calling for him to come as teacher and deliverer, with a tapestry of scriptural titles and pictures that describe his saving work in Christ. The hymn 'O come, O come, Emmanuel' is based on them.

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
reaching from one end to the other mightily, and sweetly ordering  
all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

*cf Ecclesiasticus 24.3; Wisdom 8.1*

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses  
in the fire of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai:  
Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

*cf Exodus 3.2, 24.12*

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples; before you  
kings will shut their mouths, to you the nations will make their  
prayer: Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

*cf Isaiah 11.10, 45.14, 52.15; Romans 15.12*

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel; you open and no  
one can shut; you shut and no one can open: Come and lead the  
prisoners from the prison house, those who dwell in darkness and  
the shadow of death.

*cf Isaiah 22.22, 42.7*

O Morning Star, splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness:  
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow  
of death.

*cf Malachi 4.2*

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both  
one: Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.

*cf Isaiah 28.16; Ephesians 2.14*

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver, the hope of the nations and  
their Saviour: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

~

*cf Isaiah 7.14*

## Post Communion Prayers

Let us pray: -

*The priest says the post-communion prayer followed by*

*All*      **Almighty God,**  
**we thank you for feeding us with the body and**  
**blood of your Son Jesus Christ.**  
**Through him we offer you our souls and bodies**  
**to be a living sacrifice.**  
**Send us out in the power of your Spirit**  
**to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**



## The Dismissal

### The Notices and Banns of Marriage

*Please stand for*

### The Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,  
scatter the darkness from before your path,  
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All*      **Amen.**



A **Hymn** may be sung



*Please turn to face the centre of the church as the clergy recess*

Our Lord says, 'I am coming soon.'

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

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

**Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve  
the Lord.

**In the name of Christ.**

**Amen.**



*An organ voluntary is usually played*

Refreshments are served after the 10am service on most Sundays.



All welcome.

*There is no charge but smiles and donations are welcome!*

If you have any questions about the service or the  
Christian faith please speak to one of the ministers or  
one of the church wardens or welcomers.