

## **Holy Communion Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023; Third Sunday of Advent**

### ***Welcome and gathering worship***

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

The Lord is here; **His Spirit is with us**

### ***Lighting the third Advent candle***

*The leader, with the help of volunteers, lights the first, second and third of the four Advent candles*

**God of joy, keep us from seeking happiness in things that will not last. Teach us instead to find joy in the gift of Jesus, who came into this world and gave us everything. May his joy bubble up in our hearts and overflow to all we meet. Amen.**

***Flames*** – *We pray for our children and their leaders as they go out.*

***Song:*** Open the eyes of my heart

### ***We say sorry to God and one another***

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.

*We keep a short time of silence before we pray together.*

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

### ***Prayer of forgiveness***

For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness”, who has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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.**

**Song:** O come, O come Immanuel

**Collect prayer for today:**

**God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**Old Testament Reading**

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-end

This is the word of the Lord; **Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Reading**

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

John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

**Sermon**

**Song:** Breathe on me breath of God

**Our belief**

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! Amen.**

### ***Prayers of intercession***

*(at the end)* **Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

### ***The Peace***

God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us, and as a pledge of what is to come has given us the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. The peace of the Lord be always with you; **and also with you.**

***Offertory Hymn:*** I will offer up my life

### ***The Communion***

Wise and gracious God, you spread a table before us; nourish your people with the word of life and the bread of heaven. **Amen.**

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.**

...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:

**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.**

...Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory:

**Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.**

...Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, forever and ever. **Amen.**

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ; **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, Eat in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

### ***We share bread and wine together***

*During the sharing of communion there will be an opportunity for prayer for healing. If you would like prayer or a simple blessing then please move to the 'prayer place' to the left where people are ready to pray with you.*

### ***Prayer after communion***

**We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever. Amen.**

### ***Notices and sharing in Flames***

***Closing hymn:*** Love Divine

### ***The Blessing***

Father of lights, from whom comes every good and perfect gift: keep us in the light of Christ, to shine in our world, that all may believe in you; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

**In the name of Christ, Amen**