

## **Holy Communion 14 December 2025**

### **Joy of the Redeemed**

#### **Welcome and Notices**

#### **Gathering Prayer**

Faithful one, whose word is life:  
come with saving power to free our praise,  
inspire our prayer and shape our lives,  
for the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

#### **Lighting of the Third Candle of the Advent Wreath:**

We wait for the coming of Christ, giving life in abundance.  
**Come Giver of Life.**

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

Christ, be our light!  
Shine in our hearts.  
Shine in the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in your church  
Gathered today.

*The third candle is lit and this response is used.*

The bread of life given for all people, a sharing in the body of Christ  
**Come Giver of Life**

The desert shall rejoice and blossom abundantly  
Rejoice and be glad in it  
**Christ, shine in our world today.**

#### **Opening Hymn Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending**

Lo he comes with clouds descending,  
Once for mortal sinner slain;  
Thousand, thousand saints attending  
Swell the triumph of his train.

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Christ 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 grieving, deeply grieving, deeply grieving,**  
**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, with what rapture, 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, alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Thou shalt reign and thou alone!**

Charles Wesley (1707-88)

**Collect for Purity:**

**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:**

*(Time of Silence)*

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations  
into the peace of your kingdom:

Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

You come in word and sacrament  
to strengthen us in holiness:  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

You will come in glory  
with salvation for your people:  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

### **Absolution:**

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**

### **Gloria. (sung )**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,**

**with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

**Collect for the Third Sunday of Advent**

**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**

**First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10** *(Leigh)*

**35** <sup>1</sup>The desert and the parched land will be glad;  
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.  
Like the crocus, <sup>2</sup> it will burst into bloom;  
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.  
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,  
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;  
they will see the glory of the Lord,  
the splendour of our God.  
<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the feeble hands,  
steady the knees that give way;  
<sup>4</sup> say to those with fearful hearts,  
“Be strong, do not fear;  
your God will come,  
he will come with vengeance;  
with divine retribution  
he will come to save you.”  
<sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.  
<sup>6</sup> Then will the lame leap like a deer,  
and the mute tongue shout for joy.  
Water will gush forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert.  
<sup>7</sup> The burning sand will become a pool,  
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,  
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway will be there;  
it will be called the Way of Holiness;  
it will be for those who walk on that Way.

The unclean will not journey on it;  
wicked fools will not go about on it.

<sup>9</sup> No lion will be there,  
nor any ravenous beast;  
they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,  
<sup>10</sup> and those the Lord has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

### **Gradual Hymn: Love Divine All Loves Excelling**

**Love divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heaven to earth come down;  
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;  
All thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
Pure unbounded love thou art;  
Visit us with thy salvation;  
Enter every trembling heart.**

**Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit,  
Into every troubled breast!  
Let us all in thee inherit;  
Let us find thy promised rest.  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty.**

**Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all thy grace receive;**

**Suddenly return and never,  
Never more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve thee as thy hosts above,  
Pray and praise thee without ceasing,  
Glory in thy perfect love.**

**Finish, then, thy new creation;  
Pure and spotless let us be.  
Let us see thy great salvation  
Perfectly restored in thee;  
Changed from glory into glory,  
'Til in heaven we take our place,  
'Til we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) alt.

### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:2-11 (Cathy)**

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

<sup>2</sup> When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup> to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. <sup>6</sup> Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

<sup>7</sup> As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? <sup>8</sup> If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. <sup>9</sup> Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

“‘I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’”

<sup>11</sup> Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ**

**Sermon:** Cathy

**Creed:**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

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

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**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.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

**Prayers of Intercession:** *(Marion)*

**Responses**

Lord, in your mercy:

**Hear our Prayer**

Merciful Father:

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. 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.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

**And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## **Offertory Hymn:        Make Way, Make May for Christ the King**

**Make way, make way, for Christ the King**

**In splendour arrives.**

**Fling wide the gates and welcome him**

**Into your lives.**

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) For the King of kings!***

***(Women) For the King of kings!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***And let his kingdom in!***

**He comes the broken hearts to heal,**

**The prisoners to free.**

**The deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,**

**The blind shall see.**

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) For the King of kings!***

***(Women) For the King of kings!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!***

***And let his kingdom in!***

**And those who mourn with heavy hearts,**

**Who weep and sigh;**



With laughter, joy and royal crown  
He'll beautify.

*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) For the King of kings!*  
*(Women) For the King of kings!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*And let his kingdom in!*

We call you now to worship him  
As Lord of all.  
To have no other gods but him:  
Their thrones must fall!

*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) For the King of kings!*  
*(Women) For the King of kings!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*(Men) Make way! (Women) Make way!*  
*And let his kingdom in!*

Graham Kendrick Copyright © 1986 Thankyou Music

### **Offertory Prayer:**

Yours, Lord, is the greatness,  
the power, the glory,  
the splendour, and the majesty;  
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.  
**All things come from you,**  
**and of your own do we give you.**  
**Amen**

### **Eucharistic Prayer (C):**

The Lord is here.  
**His Spirit is with us.**  
  
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 our Lord.

And now we give you thanks  
because your Son our Lord was awaited by the prophets,  
announced by an angel,  
conceived by a virgin,  
and proclaimed at last to men and women of every race.

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

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,** (sung)  
**God of power and might,**  
**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory be to you, our heavenly Father,  
who, in your tender mercy,  
gave your only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption;  
who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered  
a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice,  
oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world;  
he instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue,  
a perpetual memory of his precious death until he comes again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray,  
and grant that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
we receiving these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine,

according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution,  
in remembrance of his death and passion,  
may be partakers of his most blessed body and 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.

Great is the mystery of faith

**Christ has died:** *(sung)*

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

Therefore, Lord and heavenly Father,  
in remembrance of the precious death and passion,  
the mighty resurrection and glorious ascension  
of your dear Son Jesus Christ,  
we offer you through him this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Grant that by his merits and death,  
and through faith in his blood,  
we and all your Church may receive forgiveness of our sins  
and all other benefits of his passion.

Although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins,  
to offer you any sacrifice, yet we pray that you will accept this  
the duty and service that we owe.

Do not weigh our merits, but pardon our offences,  
and fill us all who share in this holy communion  
with your grace and heavenly blessing;

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.

**Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer:** *(sung)*

As our Saviour taught us, so we sing

**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.**

**Prayer of Humble Access**

**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.**

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.

**Worship During administration: *(instrumental)***

**Post Communion Prayer:**

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 forever.  
**Amen.**

**Opportunity for Sharing**

**Final Hymn:     How Lovely on the Mountains**

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him  
who brings good news, good news,  
announcing peace, proclaiming news of happiness.  
Our God reigns, our God reigns.  
*Our God reigns, our God reigns*  
*Our God reigns, our God reigns.*

You watchmen, lift your voices joyfully as one,  
Shout for your king, your king!  
See eye to eye, the Lord restoring Zion,  
Your God reigns, your God reigns.  
*Our God reigns, our God reigns*  
*Our God reigns, our God reigns.*

**Waste places of Jerusalem, break forth with joy!  
We are redeemed, redeemed,  
The Lord has saved and comforted his people.  
Your God reigns, your God reigns.**

***Our God reigns, our God reigns  
Our God reigns, our God reigns.***

**Ends of the earth, see the salvation of our God!  
Jesus is Lord! Is Lord!  
Before the nations he has bared his holy arm  
Our God reigns, our God reigns.**

***Our God reigns, our God reigns  
Our God reigns, our God reigns.***

Leonard E. Smith Jnr Copyright © 1974 New Jerusalem Music

**Blessing:**

May God himself, the God of peace,  
make us perfect and holy,  
and keep us safe and blameless, in spirit, soul and body,  
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
and the blessing of God the Father,  
God the Son and God the Holy Spirit  
be with you now and always.

**Amen**

**Dismissal:**

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

**Thanks be to God: Amen**

*Prayer ministry at the front and refreshments at the back.*