

ST ANDREWS CHURCH - MOSCOW

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

21st DECEMBER, 2025.



A SERVICE OF THE WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. *(Psalm 24:7)*

Our Lord says, 'Surely, I come quickly.' Even so; come, Lord Jesus.

(Revelation 22:20)

We begin our worship by singing:

Opening Hymn: 447 – Morning has broken

Good morning and welcome in the name of Christ.

Let us pray:

Loving God, we have come to worship you.

**Help us to pray to you in faith,
to sing your praise with gratitude,
and to listen to your word with eagerness;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The fourth candle on the Advent wreath is lit.

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle:
to you be praise and glory for ever.

Your light has shone in our darkened world
through the child-bearing of blessed Mary;
grant that we who have seen your glory
may daily be renewed in your image
and prepared like her for the coming of your Son,
who is the Lord and Saviour of all.

Blessed be God for ever.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

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.

(cf 1 Corinthians 4:5)

A moment of silence:

**O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:**

**holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.**

**In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

**May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins,
and restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE COLLECT

Let us say the Collect together:

**God our redeemer,
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

Hymn: 350 – Jesus, Name above all names

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading – Isaiah 7: 10-16

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹² But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. ¹³ Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 80: 1-8, 18-19

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
² before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might, and come to save us!
³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

- ⁴ O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
- ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
- ⁶ You make us the scorn of our neighbours;
our enemies laugh among themselves.
- ⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
- ⁸ You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.
- ¹⁸ Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.
- ¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Second Reading – Romans 1: 1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The crib figures are brought up to the altar.

Gospel reading - Matthew 1: 18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²² All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION/HOMILY

THE NICENE CREED (*All stand*)

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,**

**God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made; of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

This response is used:

God come among us: **make your home with us.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Believing the promises of God, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

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,
forever and ever. Amen.

THE PEACE (*All stand.*)

May the God of peace make us completely holy,
ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn: 124 – Creator of the starry height

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray together:

**Generous God, creator, redeemer, sustainer,
at your table we present this money,
symbol of the work you have given us to do;
use it, use us, in the service of your world
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

NOTICES

ACCLAMATION

People of God: prepare!

God, above all, maker of all,
is one with us in Christ.

Maranatha!

Come, Lord Jesus!

God, the mighty God,
bends down in love to earth.

Maranatha!

Come, Lord Jesus!

God with us, God beside us,
comes soon to the world he has made.

Maranatha!

Come, Lord Jesus!

We are God's children,
we seek the coming Christ.
Maranatha!
Come, Lord Jesus!

Closing Hymn: 255 – Heaven shall not wait

CLOSING PRAYER AND DISMISSAL

Heavenly Father,
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE GRACE:

We say together:
**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore. Amen**

*Acknowledgment: Common Worship- Service and Prayers for the Church of England
– Times and Seasons © The Archbishops' Council 2006. New Patterns For Worship, © The
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