

The Parish Eucharist Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, 14th December, 2025

9.00am

Welcome to this morning's service

The President and Preacher is Canon Dr Jenny Gaffin Precentor

The service is sung by The Cathedral Youth Choir Directed by **Helen Davies**

> The Organist is John Hosking Organist in Residence

The setting for the service is St Anne's Mass - James Macmillan (b.1959)

Preparation For individual use before the service begins. (Isaiah 35.1-10)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Gathering

Please stand to sing

Processional

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR NEH 19 ii



Come, thou Redeemer of the earth, and manifest thy virgin-birth: let every age adoring fall, such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will, but of the Spirit, thou art still the Word of God, in flesh arrayed, the Saviour, now to us displayed.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright, and darkness glow with new-born light, no more shall night extinguish day, where love's bright beams their power display.

O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee eternal praise and glory be, whom with the Father we adore and Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

Veni, Redemptor gentium,

Ambrose of Milan (340-397) translated by John M Neale (1818-1866)

The Greeting

The president greets the people

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you and also with you.

The Advent Wreath

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever.
Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light.
May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Prayers of Penitence

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.

Turn to us again, O God our Saviour, and let your anger cease from us: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

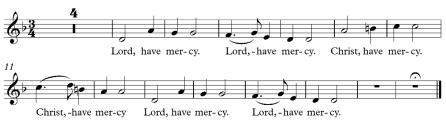
Show us your compassion, O Lord, and grant us your salvation: Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your salvation is near for those that fear you, that glory may dwell in our land: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Everyone sings



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

Let us pray.

Silence is kept - please remain standing

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**.

Please sit

The Liturgy of the Word

New Testament Reading

Read by Simon Mott

(James 5.7-10)

A reading from the letter of James.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

Please stand to sing

Gradual Hymn

WINCHESTER NEW NEH 12

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh; come then, and hearken, for he brings glad tidings from the King of kings.

Then cleansed be every Christian breast, and furnished for so great a guest! Yea, let us each our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

For thou art our salvation, Lord, our refuge and our great reward; without thy grace our souls must fade, and wither like a flower decayed.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee whose Advent sets thy people free, whom, with the Father, we adore, and Holy Ghost, for evermore.

Charles Coffin (1676-1749)

(Matthew 11.2-11)

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

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Canon Dr Jenny Gaffin

There is a period of silence after the sermon for reflection. Please stand with the President

The Creed

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.

The Prayers of Intercession

Led by Terry Givens

Please sit or kneel for the prayers.

This response is used

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who have requested prayer:

John Bertalot, Arthur Blundell, Chris Drewe, Sue Hughes, Margaret Young, Sue Penfold, Liam Johnson, Ray Hutchins, Peter Hardman, Graham Jordan, Brian and Ruth Whittle, Jenni Bellamy, Ruth McGaughey, Harvey Stansfield, Eric Barnes,

Frank Haworth, Carol Fishwick, Christopher Browne, Susan Garlick,
Isla Smith, Tracey Riley, Peter Howell-Jones, Elizabeth Mcguire
and those who mourn, remembering those who have died recently,

Clifford Fishwick, Ruth Taylor, Ray Duckworth, Peter Hughes, Pam Jelley and those whose anniversaries fall this week,

Olive Hunt, Minnie Royds (16), John William Nichols (20)

And at the end:

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please stand with the president for the peace

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

God will speak peace to his people, to those who turn to him in their hearts. The peace of the Lord be always with you. and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All my exchange a sign of peace. During the offertory hymn a collection is taken, please give what you prayerfully can. You may prefer to use the collection point or card reader on the way out. If you are a UK taxpayer, please use the blue gift aid form provided. If you would prefer to give online, please visit blackburncathedral.co.uk/donate

Preparation of the Table

Please remain standing to sing

Offertory Hymn

LITTLE CORNARD NEH 7



Hills of the north rejoice, echoing songs arise, hail with united voice him who made earth and skies: he comes in righteousness and love, he brings salvation from above.

Isles of the southern seas, sing to the listening earth, carry on every breeze hope of a world's new birth: in Christ shall all be made anew, his word is sure, his promise true.

Shout, as you journey on, songs be in every mouth, lo, from the north they come, from east and west and south: in Jesus all shall find their rest, in him the longing earth be blest.

Inspired by Charles Edward Oakley (1832-1865)

Taking of the Bread and Wine

Look upon us in mercy not in judgement; draw us from hatred to love: make the frailty of our praise a dwelling place for your glory.

Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

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 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,



that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them and said: 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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

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

Christ is the bread of life:

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth. Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with Mary, Paul and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven. Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Joining our prayers with those of the Church Universal, so we say, each in our own language, the prayer our Saviour taught us,

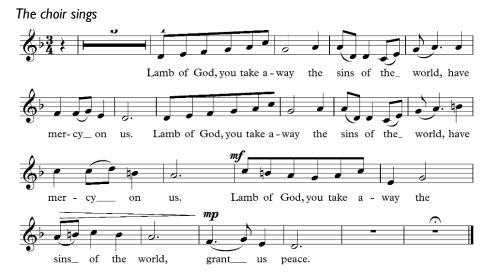
Notre père, qui es aux cieux ... Missierna, li inti fis-smewwiet... Vater unser im Himmel ... Padre nosso, que estais nos céus... Padre nostro che sei nei cieli ... Ojcze nasz, któryś jest w niebie... Otče náš, jenž jsi na nebesích ... تو السَمَاوُ اتِ

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.

The Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



The Giving of Communion

The president says

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.

When you are ready to receive communion please approach the president in single file and return to your seat by one of the side aisles.

Please do come and ask this first minister for any blessings.

Communion is available in both kinds, and the minister distributing bread will say

The body of Christ. Amen.

After receiving the bread, if you wish to receive wine please move to the next minister before returning to your place.

The minister distributing wine will say

The blood of Christ. Amen.

If you do not wish to receive communion wine, please walk past that second minister and return to your place.

The choir sings

Anthem

This is the record of John,

when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him,

Who art thou?

And he confessed and denied not, and said plainly,

I am not the Christ.

And they asked him, What art thou then? Art thou Elias?

And he said, I am not.

Art thou the prophet?

And he answered, No.

Then said they unto him,

What art thou? that we may give an answer unto them that sent us.

What sayest thou of thyself?

And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,

Make straight the way of the Lord.

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

Silence is kept

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.**

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.

Please stand

The Dismissal

May God the Father, who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son, give you grace to prepare for life eternal. And the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit Rest upon you and remain with you always.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Organ Voluntary

Prelude in E minor BWV 555

J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

Please do consider staying for tea or coffee after the service.

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Notices for the week beginning 14th December

Flowers

If you would like to make a contribution to Christmas flowers, please see Pat Wedgeworth or one of the Wardens. Thank you!

Foodbank - We are currently collecting tinned fish and meat, and any Christmas treats.

Servers and Live Streamers wanted. If you are interested in volunteering please speak to Alex or email alex.barnes@blackburncathedral.co.uk

Community Carol Service, Thursday 18th December, 7pm. All welcome.

Youth Choir Christmas Concert – Friday 19th December, 7.30pm

Britten's Ceremony of Carols, Saturday 20th December, 7pm, and Messiaen's "La Nativite". Book online.

https://blackburncathedral.com/event/christmas-musicaltreasures-2025/

Nine lessons and Carols, Tuesday 23rd December, 7.30pm. All welcome. Carols around the Crib, Christmas Eve, 4pm. All welcome. Midnight Mass, 11.30pm. All welcome.

Christmas Day, 9am Parish Eucharist, 10.30am Cathedral Eucharist

School Carol Services – Please come and support our local schools as they sing carols.

Monday 15th December, 1pm – St Leonard's Langho Cof E Primary School

Tuesday 16th December, 3pm – Blackburn College

Wednesday 17th December, 1pm – St Peter's Cof E Primary School Thursday 18th December, 12.30pm – St John's Cof E Cliviger Primary School

Friday 19th December, 1.45pm – Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School

Safeguarding Contacts

Diocesan Safeguarding Officer Catherine Smith 07711 485170

catherine.smith@blackburn.anglican.org

Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser Lesley Hurst 07483935584

Lesley.hurst@blackburn.anglican.org

Safeguarding Improvement Board

The Safeguarding Improvement Board has been established in response to the recommendation in INEQE's Safeguarding Audit of July 2025.

The purpose of which is to work with the Cathedral Chapter and executive, providing challenge and support to achieve the aims of the Cathedral's improvement journey.

The Board, which meets each month, is committed to open and transparent communication with our many communities and to this end, will publish 3 key messages from each meeting.

The messages from the latest meeting - held on 12th November - are:

1. The Safeguarding Improvement Board and Chapter, the trustees of the Cathedral, have signed off Blackburn Cathedral's Safeguarding Improvement Plan. This Improvement Plan has been submitted to the Charity Commission. A summary of the Improvement Plan will be signed off at the next Safeguarding Improvement Board meeting and then published.

- 2. The senior leaders at the Cathedral and members of Chapter, recognise the need for cultural change and are committed to actively working for positive cultural change in relation to safeguarding. These changes will bring wider positive benefits for those who work, volunteer or worship at the Cathedral. Everyone acknowledges this is not easy work, it will take time, but it has now begun.
- **3.** There is a new formal arrangement between the Cathedral and the Diocese to deliver operational safeguarding for the Cathedral, which has now started with a new Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor in post from the start of November, who is part of the wider safeguarding team in the Diocese. This brings added capacity, knowledge, quality assurance and experience to safeguarding in the Cathedral. This forms part of the approach to build wider partnerships to support the Cathedral to become more outward looking and collaborative.

The next meeting takes place on Wednesday 10th December.

The Board will publish updates each month and these can be found on the dedicated Safeguarding Improvement Board page at: blackburncathedral.com/improvement