A SERVICE OF ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS



The First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2026

at 5:00 p.m.

The Parish of Christ Church

Andover, Massachusetts

A Note on the Liturgy: *This service, built to a large extent upon ancient models, presents the double meaning of the Advent season. From the West, the ancient Responsory of Matins on Advent Sundays announces the hope of the Messiah. The choir and chancel party move in procession from west to east, from "darkness to light." The subsequent readings and music direct attention to the coming of the Messiah Incarnate, and to his second coming at the end of the age. The Church lies between these two points: the first, Christmastide with the Incarnation of the Son of God; the second, his coming again to judge and to recreate his universe.*

PRELUDE

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645 *Johann Sebastian Bach* (1685-1750)

Please stand as the service begins. All are invited to join in the singing of the congregational hymns.

MATIN RESPONSORY *G. P. da Palestrina* (c.1525-1594)

Cantor: I look from afar:
Solo: And lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.
Cantor: Go ye out to meet him and say:
Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?
Solo: High and low, rich and poor, one with another,
Choir: Go ye out to meet him and say:
Solo: Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,
Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come?
Women: Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come
Choir: to reign over thy people Israel.
Cantor: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
Choir: I look from afar:
and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud cov'ring the whole earth.
Men: Go ye out to meet him and say:
Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

HYMN IN PROCESSION *Traditional German Melody, Arr. Sir David Willcocks* (1919-2015)

Verses 1 and 2 sung by choir.

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 promised fruit to man displayed.

All sing:

The virgin womb that burden gained with virgin honour all unstained;
The banners there of virtue glow; God in his temple dwells below.

Forth from his chamber goeth he, that royal home of purity,
A giant in twofold substance one, rejoicing now his course to run.

From God the Father he proceeds, to God the Father back he speeds;
His course he runs to death and hell, returning on God's throne to dwell.

O equal to the Father, thou! Gird on thy fleshly mantle now;
The weakness of our mortal state with deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright, and darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene, and twilight never intervene.

All laud, eternal Son, to thee whose advent sets thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Ghost for evermore. Amen.

Saint Ambrose (340-397)

THE BIDDING PRAYER The Rector

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE GRACE

The congregation is seated.

FIRST LESSON: *Genesis* 3:1-22

Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, `You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, `You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire

shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And to the man he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, `You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return." The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever."

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM Adam lay ybounden *Boris Ord* (1897-1961)

Adam lay ybounden, Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple, An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been, The apple taken been,
Ne had never our lady Abeen heavné queen.

Blessed be the time That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen, *Deo gracias!*

15th century English

SECOND LESSON: Isaiah 40:1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN 67 Comfort, comfort ye my people *Psalm 42*

Sung by all, standing

THIRD LESSON: Jeremiah 31:31-34

The new covenant is promised which will be written in our hearts.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the LORD', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM Remember, O thou man *Thomas Ravenscroft (c. 1582-1635)*

Remember, O thou man, thy time is spent: remember, O thou man,
how thou art dead and gone, and I did what I can; therefore repent!

Remember Adam's fall, O thou man, remember Adam's fall from heaven to hell!
Remember Adam's fall, how we were condemned all in hell perpetual, there for to dwell.

Remember God's goodnesse, O thou man, remember God's goodnesse, and his promise made!
Remember God's goodnesse; how He sent His Sonne, doubtlesse, our sinnes for to redresse:
Be not afraid!

The angels all did sing, O thou man, the angels all did sing upon the shepherd's hill;
the angels all did sing praises to our heavenly King, and peace to man living with a good will.

16th century English

FOURTH LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet proclaims that God will come and save us.

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 traveler, 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.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM Laudamus te (from *Gloria*) *Antonio Vivaldi* (1678-1741)

Sung by the St. Cecilia Choristers and Parish Choir Women

Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Translation: We praise thee, we bless thee, we adore thee, we glorify thee.

HYMN 65 Prepare the way, O Zion *Bereden väg för Herran*

Sung by all, standing

FIFTH LESSON: Isaiah 7:10-15

God promises that a child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us".

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? 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. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good."

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM People, look East *Besançon Carol, Arr. John L. Hooker (b. 1944)*

People, look East. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth, and set the table.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:
give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look East and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way.

Birds, though ye long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen He for fledging-time has chosen.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Bird is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim.
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Star is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word the Lord is coming.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965)

SIXTH LESSON: Isaiah 11:1-9

The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon the Holy One.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN 597 O day of peace that dimly shines *Jerusalem*

Sung by all, standing

SEVENTH LESSON: Micah 5:2-5

The one who is to rule Israel will be born in the village of Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM Never weather-beaten sail *Charles Wood* (1866-1926)

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more;
Than my weary sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast.
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of Heav'n's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears, nor vapour dims our eyes;
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the blessed only see.
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to thee!

Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

HYMN 54 Savior of the nations, come! *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

Sung by all, standing

EIGHTH LESSON: Luke 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the son of the Most High.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reader The word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM O Oriens *Nicholas White* (b. 1967)

Anney Barrett, soloist

O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol justitiae:
Veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris, et umbra mortis.

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

GREETING AND WELCOME The Rev. Michael J. Hodges

An offering will be taken at this time to support the music ministry at Christ Church.

ANTHEM O thou, the central orb *Charles Wood* (1866-1926)

O Thou the central orb of righteous love, pure beam of the most high, eternal light of this our wintry world. Thy radiance bright awakes new joy in faith, hope soars above. Come, quickly come, and let thy glory shine, gilding our darksome heaven with rays divine. Thy saints with holy luster round thee move, as stars about thy throne, set in the height of God's ordaining counsel, as thy sight gives measured grace to each, thy power to prove. Let thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin, our nature all shall feel eternal day, in fellowship with thee, transforming day to souls erewhile unclean, now pure within. Amen.

H. R. Bramley (1833-1917)

VESPER REPONSORY

The congregation stands.

Leader: Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed;
People: **Tomorrow go forth, and the Lord will be with you.**
Leader: Stand ye still, and you shall see the salvation of the Lord.
People: **Tomorrow go forth, and the Lord will be with you.**
Leader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
People: **Tomorrow go forth, and the Lord will be with you.**
Leader: We wait for your loving kindness, O God,
People: **In the midst of your temple.**

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

HYMN 57 Lo! He comes, with clouds descending *Helmsley*
Baritone Descant by James L. McConaughy (b. 1946)

POSTLUDE Toccata on "Nun Komm der Heiden Heiland" *Hugo Distler* (1908-1942)

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Everyone is Welcome at God's Table ~ Christ Church Andover

UPCOMING SPECIAL MUSIC EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6 at 3 p.m.
Holiday Concert
"Bach to Bach": Cantata #50 and Magnificat in D
NEW ENGLAND CLASSICAL SINGERS
David Hodgkins, Artistic Director

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7 at 3 p.m.
Marie Stultz Legacy Concert
***Gloria* by Antonio Vivaldi**
Rebecca Kenneally, Guest Conductor
Anney Barrett, soprano
Krista River, mezzo-soprano
Endicott College Singers & Chamber Orchestra
Christ Church Parish Choir & St. Cecilia Choristers

SUNDAY, MARCH 7
Organ Recital at 4:30 p.m. by Barbara Bruns
Choral Evensong at 5 p.m.
Sung by the Christ Church Parish Choir

SUNDAY, MARCH 21 – SUNDAY, MARCH 28
Palm Sunday, Holy Week & Easter Services with Brass Quintet
Please consult our website for a schedule of services.

SUNDAY, MAY 16
Organ Recital at 4:30 p.m. by Cecily DeMarco
Choral Evensong at 5 p.m.
Douglas Major, Guest Conductor
Sung by the Christ Church Parish Choir

SUNDAY, JUNE 6 at 3 p.m.
Concert
"Sailing Down the River Po: Riches of Northern Italy"
CONVIVIUM MUSICUM
Allegra Martin, Music Director

CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2026

CHRISTMAS EVE

Thursday, December 24th

4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist with Pageant

8:30 p.m.

Christmas Carol Sing

9:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Festival Holy Eucharist

CHRISTMAS DAY

Friday, December 25th

10:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 27th

10:00 a.m.

Christmas Carol Sing & Holy Eucharist

THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

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