

CHESTER
CATHEDRAL

Advent Procession

29th November 2026
6.00pm

WELCOME

We welcome you to Chester Cathedral! It is a place where the mission of the church to proclaim God's love is central, and your welcome presence here for worship helps to strengthen this vital act of witness.

We're a paperless Cathedral and are working environmentally to save paper. The service can be downloaded to your device using the QR code at the back of the nave, or by visiting Services - Chester Cathedral. Hymns, readings and responses will be presented on the screens.

Throughout the service, where indicated, please only stand if you feel able to do so. The Cathedral will be dark for much of the service, so please be careful if moving around the building.

The Cathedral Choir is directed by Philip Rushforth, Organist and Master of the Choristers. The organ is played by Alex Lanigan-Palotai, Sub-Organist, and Daniel Mathieson, Head of Music Outreach and Assistant Organist.

COLLECTION

The Cathedral costs around £8000 a day to keep open, and we need your support.

We invite you to generously give to ensure our future:

A collection will be taken during the service; donations can otherwise be left with cash or using the
Contactless Donation Plates.
A sidesperson can help you with this.

Via the Cathedral Website
www.chestercathedral.com/donate

We need your help to make sure that services like this one can continue and that we can keep the doors open for everyone. Thank you for your generous contributions.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

Alex Lanigan-Palotai, Sub-Organist, plays

Prelude and Fugue in E minor (BWV 548)
J S Bach 1685-1750

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland
Nicolaus Bruhns 1665-97

When the lights are dimmed, please keep a few minutes silence and then remain seated as the Choir sings the introit from the Baptistry.

Introit

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
a-been heavenè queen.
Blessed be the time
that apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen:
Deo gracias!* **Thanks be to God*

15th century anon *Boris Ord 1897-1961*

Introduction

The Dean says

In the name of God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and made a place for us in the kingdom of his beloved

Son, we welcome you: grace to you and peace.

As we meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's kingdom, we hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us – how that when we were far off, he met us in his Son and brought us home; how he humbled himself to take our human nature, that we might share his divine glory.

Let us then so celebrate this coming with our carols and hymns of praise, that our lives may be charged with his life; that we may bear witness to his glory and so bring light to those who sit in darkness. So first we pray for those among whom the Christ was born: the poor and helpless, the aged and young children; the cold, the hungry and the homeless; the victims of poverty, injustice and oppression, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; those in despair or in the shadow of death.

Then, as we hear again the message of peace on earth and goodwill among all his people, we pray for the leaders of the nations, that all may be inspired to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace the world over.

And that we may bear true witness to this hope in a divided world, we pray for the

peace and unity of Christ's Body, the Church universal, that the whole earth may live to praise his name.

Finally, as we rejoice with the saints in heaven and on earth, we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we offer up our prayers for the coming of his kingdom, in the words he himself has taught us, saying:

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.

And may the Lord when he comes find us watching and waiting, now and at all times.
Amen.

Please stand to sing the hymn during which the Choir moves to the West Steps.

Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them vic'try o'er the grave.

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou key of David, come
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the Law,
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

from the 'Great O Antiphons' *VENI EMMANUEL*
trans. John Mason Neale 1818-1866 *French Missal*

Anthem

Please be seated. The Choir sings

Drop down ye heavens from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness.

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people;
My salvation shall not tarry.
I have blotted out as a thick cloud
thy transgressions.
Fear not, for I will save thee;
For I am the Lord thy God,
The holy one of Israel, thy redeemer.

Drop down ye heavens from above,
And let the skies pour down righteousness.

Advent Prose *Judith Weir b.1954*

Antiphons

O Sapientia:
O Wisdom, which camest out of the mouth of the most High, and reaches from one end to another, mightily, and sweetly ordering all things: come and teach us the way of prudence.

O Adonai:
O Adonai, and Leader of the house of Israel, who appearedst in the Bush to Moses in a flame of fire, and gavest him the law in Sinai: come and deliver us with an out-stretched arm.

Bible reading

Read by The Revd Canon Dr Anthony Lees-Smith, Canon Missioner

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

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 for
ever.
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.

Isaiah 40:1-11

Anthem

The Choir sings

O nata lux de lumine, Jesu redemptor saeculi, dignare clemens supplicum laudes preces que sumere. Qui carne quondam contegi dignatus es pro perditis, nos membra confer effici, tui beati corporis.

O Light born of Light, Jesus, redeemer of the world, with loving-kindness deign to receive suppliant praise and prayer.
Thou who once deigned to be clothed in flesh for the sake of the lost, grant us to be members of thy blessed body.

Hymn for the Feast of the Transfiguration
Ghislaine Reece-Trapp b.2003

Antiphons

During which the Choir moves to the centre of the Nave.

O Radix Jesse:
O Root of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom kings shall shut their mouths, to whom the Gentiles shall seek: come and deliver us, and tarry not.

O Clavis David:
O Key of David, and sceptre of the house of Israel: that openest, and no man shutteth; and shuttest and no man openeth: come, and bring the prisoner out of the prison-house, and him that sitteth in darkness, and the shadow of death.

Bible reading

Read by The Revd Tina Lightfoot, Priest Vicar

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

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.

Isaiah 7:10-15

Anthem

The Choir sings

Ave Maria, gratia plena dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Traditional *Esther Bersweden b.1996*

Please stand to sing the hymn, during which the Choir moves to the Nave choir stalls.

Hymn

Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

He comes the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim,
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with thy belovèd name.

Philip Doddridge 1702-51 (alt.) *BRISTOL*
Thomas Ravenscroft's Psalmes 1621

Please be seated. The Choir sings

Antiphon

O oriens:
O Dayspring, Brightness of Light everlasting, and Sun of righteousness: come, and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness, and the shadow of death.

Some of the Cathedral lights are illuminated.

Bible reading

Read by Dr Dotty King

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains
    are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
    who announces salvation,
    who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
    together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
    the return of the Lord to Zion.
Break forth together into singing,
    you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord has comforted his people,
    he has redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord has bared his holy arm

before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 52:7-10

Anthem

The Choir sings

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

Isaiah 52:7, para. *G.F. Handel 1685-1759*

Antiphon

O Rex Gentium:
O King of the nations, and their Desire; the Cornerstone, who makest both one: come, and save mankind, whom thou formedst of clay.

Bible reading

Read by Julia McGuinness, Cathedral Reader

A reading from the prophecy of Malachi.

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom

you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

Malachi 3:1-5

Please stand, if able, to sing the hymn.

Hymn

Ye servants of the Lord
each for your Master wait,
observant of his heavenly word,
and watchful at his gate.

Let all your lamps be bright,
and trim the golden flame;
gird up your loins, as in his sight,
for aweful is his name.

Watch! 'tis your Lord's command,
and while we speak, he's near;
mark the first signal of his hand,
and ready all appear.

O happy servant he,
in such a posture found!
He shall his Lord with rapture see,
and be with honour crowned.

Christ shall the banquet spread
with his own royal hand,
and raise that faithful servant's head
amidst the angelic band.

Philip Doddridge 1702-51 *NARENZA*
W.H. Havergal 1793-1870

Please be seated. The Choir sings

Antiphon

O Emmanuel:
O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of all nations, and their Salvation: come and save us O Lord, our God.

Bible reading

Read by Jennifer Jackson

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began

to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

Luke 1:57-66

Anthem

The Choir sings

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people;
and hath raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of his servant David;
as he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began;
That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us.
To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember his holy Covenant;
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, that he would give us;
That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear;

In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.
And thou, Child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, for the remission of their sins,
Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;
To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Luke 1:68-79 — *Morning Service in C major*
C.V. Stanford 1852-1924

Prayers

Led by The Revd Canon Rosie Woodall, Canon Precentor and Vice Dean

The following response will be used:

Maranatha.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

(Maranatha is an Aramaic phrase thought to mean, "Come, O Lord!"). The prayers conclude with the Collect for Advent.

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

Please stand to sing the hymn, during which a collection is taken.

Hymn

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
once for mortal sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ appears on earth to reign.

Ev'ry eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty;
we who set at naught and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
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 pow'r and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Charles Wesley 1707-88 *HELMSLEY*
Thomas Olivers 1725-99

Blessing

Please remain standing as The Bishop of Chester gives the blessing.

May God the Father,
who loved the world so much
that he sent his only Son,
give you grace to prepare for life eternal.
Amen.

May God the Son,
who comes to us as redeemer and judge,
reveal to you the path
from darkness to light.
Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit,
by whose working the Virgin Mary
conceived the Christ,
help you bear the fruits of holiness.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Please remain standing as the Clergy and Choir leave and then sit for the organ voluntary.

Voluntary

Fantasia and fugue in G minor (BWV 542)
J S Bach 1685-1750

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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