

Westminster Abbey

13th December 2020

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Evensong 3.00 pm

Welcome to Westminster Abbey. Daily prayer has been offered in this place for over a thousand years, and your participation in today's service is warmly welcomed. At Choral Evensong most of the service is sung by the choir on our behalf. We participate through our presence and our listening, that the words and the music might become a prayer within us and lift us to contemplate God's beauty and glory.

The service always includes one or more psalms. These ancient prayers, taken from the Old Testament, reflect the full range of human emotions and experiences; from the depths of anger, resentment, and abandonment to the heights of ecstatic joy and praise. They were used by Jesus, and have always been at the heart of the Church's daily prayer.

The canticles Magnificat (*Luke 1: 46–55*) and Nunc dimittis (*Luke 2: 29–32*) reflect two responses to the Incarnation (God becoming fully human in Jesus Christ). Both speak of the fulfilment of God's promises, not just to 'Abraham and his seed', but also 'to be a light to lighten the Gentiles' (all nations). With their themes of fulfilment and completion, these texts have been given central place for many centuries in the Church's prayers for the evening and at the end of the day.

This booklet gives the order of service together with details of the music and readings. Please say those parts of the service printed in **bold** type.

The service is sung by the Choir of Westminster Abbey.

While attendance is restricted during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Abbey will be making selected services available online. Please be aware that this service will be streamed live and will then be available to view for up to seven days at www.westminster-abbey.org.

All stand as the choir and clergy enter

The choir sings the Introit

Prepare ye the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

All flesh is grass,
and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.

All remain standing as the officiant introduces a general Confession, then kneel or sit to say together

**Almighty and most merciful Father;
we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.
We have offended against thy holy laws.
We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.
Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.
Restore thou them that are penitent;
according to thy promises declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesu our Lord.
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake;
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of thy holy name.
Amen.**

The officiant gives the Absolution. All respond Amen.

All say together 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, the power, and the glory, for ever and
ever. Amen.**

All stand. The officiant and choir sing the Responses

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

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.

Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Philip Radcliffe (1905–86)

All sit. The choir sings Psalm 104

Praise the Lord, O my soul :
 O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious;
 thou art clothed with majesty and honour.
Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment :
 and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.
Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters :
 and maketh the clouds his chariot,
 and walketh upon the wings of the wind.
He maketh his angels spirits :
 and his ministers a flaming fire.
He laid the foundations of the earth :
 that it never should move at any time.
Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment :
 the waters stand in the hills.
At thy rebuke they flee :
 at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.
They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath :
 even unto the place which thou hast appointed for them.
Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass :
 neither turn again to cover the earth.
He sendeth the springs into the rivers :
 which run among the hills.
All beasts of the field drink thereof :
 and the wild asses quench their thirst.
Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation :
 and sing among the branches.
He watereth the hills from above :
 the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.
He bringeth forth grass for the cattle :
 and green herb for the service of men;
that he may bring food out of the earth,
and wine that maketh glad the heart of man :
 and oil to make him a cheerful countenance,
 and bread to strengthen man's heart.
The trees of the Lord also are full of sap :
 even the cedars of Libanus which he hath planted;
wherein the birds make their nests :
 and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork.
The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats :
 and so are the stony rocks for the conies.
He appointed the moon for certain seasons :

and the sun knoweth his going down.
 Thou makest darkness that it may be night :
 wherein all the beasts of the forest do move.
 The lions roaring after their prey :
 do seek their meat from God.
 The sun ariseth, and they get them away together :
 and lay them down in their dens.
 Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour :
 until the evening.
 O Lord, how manifold are thy works :
 in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.
 So is the great and wide sea also :
 wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.
 There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan :
 whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein.
 These wait all upon thee :
 that thou mayest give them meat in due season.
 When thou givest it them they gather it :
 and when thou openest thy hand they are filled with good.
 When thou hidest thy face they are troubled :
 when thou takest away their breath they die,
 and are turned again to their dust.
 When thou lettest thy breath go forth they shall be made :
 and thou shalt renew the face of the earth.
 The glorious majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever :
 the Lord shall rejoice in his works.
 The earth shall tremble at the look of him :
 if he do but touch the hills, they shall smoke.
 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live :
 I will praise my God while I have my being.
 And so shall my words please him :
 my joy shall be in the Lord.
 As for sinners, they shall be consumed out of the earth,
 and the ungodly shall come to an end :
 praise thou the Lord, O my soul, praise the Lord.

All stand

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.

*Walter Parratt (1841–1924) and
 Thomas Attwood Walmisley (1814–56)*

All sit for the first Lesson Malachi 3: 1–4; 4

All stand. The choir sings Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord :
 and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded :
 the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold, from henceforth :
 all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
 and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him :
 throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm :
 he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
 and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things :
 and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :
 as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

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.

Gloucester Service

Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

All sit for the second Lesson Philippians 4: 4–7

All stand. The choir sings Nunc dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace :
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen : thy salvation,
which thou hast prepared : before the face of all people;
to be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

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.

Gloucester Service

Herbert Howells

All face east and say together the Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

All kneel or sit for the Lesser Litany, the Lord's Prayer, and the Responses

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save The Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The officiant sings the Collects; of the Day, of Advent, for Peace, and for Aid against all perils

O Lord Jesu Christ,
who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger
to prepare thy way before thee;
grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way,
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at thy second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight,
who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
ever one God, world without end.
Amen.

Almighty God,
give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness,
and put upon us the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which thy 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 quick and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal,
through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost,
now and ever.
Amen.

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels,
and all just works do proceed;
give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give;
that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments,
and also that, by thee,
we being defended from the fear of our enemies
may pass our time in rest and quietness;
through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils
and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The officiant says the Prayers; for the Royal Family, and for the members of the Order of the Bath

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness,
we humbly beseech thee to bless our most gracious Sovereign Lady,
Queen Elizabeth,
Philip Duke of Edinburgh,
Charles Prince of Wales,
and all the Royal Family:
endue them with thy Holy Spirit;
enrich them with thy heavenly grace;
prosper them with all happiness;
and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

God save our Gracious Sovereign,
and all the Brotherhood of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath
living and departed.
Amen.

All sit. The choir sings the Anthem

Te lucis ante terminum
Rerum creator poscimus
Ut pro tua clementia
Sis praesul et custodia.

*Before the ending of the day,
we beseech you, O Maker of all,
that in your mercy
you would be our guide and protector.*

Procul recedant somnia
Et noctium phantasmata
Hostemque nostrum comprime
Ne polluantur corpora.

*Let dreams and nightly fantasies
be put far from us,
and restrain our Enemy
lest our bodies be defiled.*

Praesta, Pater piissime
Patrique compar unice
Cum Spiritu Paraclito
Regnans per omne saeculum.
Amen.

*Protect us, O holy Father,
who, coequal with the Son
and with the Holy Spirit the Advocate,
reign throughout all ages.
Amen.*

All kneel or remain seated for the Intercessions, at the end of which all say

**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.**

The Sermon by The Venerable David Stanton Canon in Residence

The Blessing

All stand as the choir and clergy depart

Music after the service

Moto ostinato (Sunday Music)

Petr Eben (1929–2007)

Please remember to maintain social distancing when leaving the church

Details of all Abbey services are available at the Abbey website

westminster-abbey.org

The Abbey is grateful for your support. Cash and contactless donations may be given as you leave via the Great West Door and will be divided equally between the work of the Abbey and charities working with disadvantaged young people. UK residents may also donate £5 or £10 to the work of the Abbey by texting respectively ABBEY5 or ABBEY10 to 70025. Donations can also be made via the Abbey's website westminster-abbey.org

Live from London—Christmas: What sweeter music

The Choir of Westminster Abbey, Catherine Bott *reader*, Sally Pryce *harp*
Peter Holder *organ*, James O'Donnell *director*

This online concert will be broadcast at 7.00 pm on 15th December and ticket holders will be able to tune in live and/or on demand at any time from the date of broadcast until 15th January.

Tickets: westminster-abbey.org/events