



## Third Sunday of Advent 13th December

### Opening Response

Now it is time to awake out of sleep,  
**All for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**

Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed,

**All for the night is far spent.**

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness

and put on the armour of light,

**All for the day is at hand.**

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ  
and make no provision for the flesh,

**All for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**

### Confession

A voice cries out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord'. So let us listen, and turn to the Lord in penitence and faith.

**All Lord God, we praise you for sending light into this world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated the darkness. Forgive us for keeping the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and not yearning for his coming in our waiting hearts. Prepare us for His return. Help us to rejoice in the light so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. In Jesus name, Amen.**

### Absolution

### Hymn

1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh; awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.
2. Then cleansed be every breast from sin;  
make straight the way for God within;  
prepare we in our hearts a home where such a mighty guest may come.
3. For thou art our salvation, Lord, our refuge and our great reward: without thy grace, we waste away, like flowers that wither and decay.
4. To heal the sick, stretch out thine hand,  
and bid the fallen sinner stand;  
shine forth and let thy light restore earth's own true loveliness once more.
5. All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose advent doth thy people free, whom, with the Father, we adore, and Holy Ghost, evermore.

### Lighting the Advent Candle

Lord God, Your witness John the Baptist loved your people and baptized them in the River Jordan to wash away their sins. His message of hope and peace prepared people for the coming of the Lord and the joy that Christ's presence would bring.

**All: May this Candle remind us that when Jesus is born in us we have joy, and that through Him there will be everlasting joy on earth. Amen**

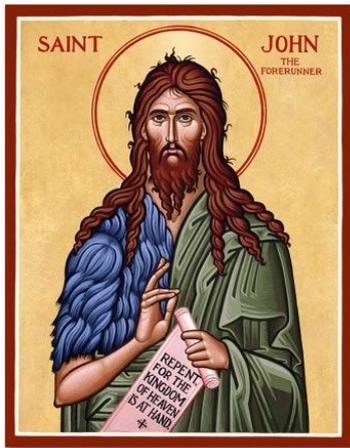
### Reading: *Matthew 3:1-12*

*At end of reading:*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

## Sermon



### The Apostles' Creed

**All:** I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

## Prayers

### Intercessions

*The response to:* 'Your kingdom come'  
Is; '**Your will be done**'

### The Collect

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, in the way that prepares us for receiving the joy of Christ's presence in our hearts.

**All: Amen**

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

## Hymn

Lo! He comes with clouds descending,  
once for favoured sinners slain:  
thousand thousand saints attending,  
swell the triumph of his train;  
Hallelujah! (X3)...  
God appears on Earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him  
robed in dreadful majesty;  
those who set at nought and sold him,  
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,  
deeply wailing...  
shall their 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...  
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, Amen! Let all adore thee  
high on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own;  
O come quickly...  
Hallelujah, come, Lord come!

## Notices

### Blessing

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with joy by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
And the blessing ...

**All Amen**

### Dismissal

As we await our coming Saviour,  
go in hope, peace and joy, to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**