



Fourth Sunday of Advent 20th 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

Jesus says, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' So let us turn away from our sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**All Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.**

**We have not loved you
with our whole heart.**

**We have not loved our neighbours
as ourselves.**

In your mercy

**forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;**

**that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.**

Amen.

Absolution

Hymn

Hills of the North

1 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.

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

3 Lands of the east, arise,
he is your brightest morn,
greet him with joyous eyes,
praise shall his path adorn:
the God whom you have longed to
know
in Christ draws near, and calls you
now.

4 Shores of the utmost west,
lands of the setting sun,
welcome the heav'nly guest
in whom the dawn has come:
he brings a never-ending light
who triumphed o'er our darkest night.

5 Shout, as you journey on,
songs be in ev'ry 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.

Lighting the Advent Candle

**(All) Lord God, as we watch and wait
for the coming of your kingdom, may
we learn to recognise your love
already at work around us, as signs
that your kingdom is close at hand.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, the
light who is coming into the world.
Amen.**

Reading: *John 1:1-14*

At end of reading:

This is the Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

Sermon

An Advent Creed

All: I believe in a God of love.

I believe that in such an anxious, fearful world it is very easy to give in to anger. I believe it's very easy to read all the bad news that surrounds us every day and to be beaten down by it- to be crushed by it. But I believe in a God who brings light and life and joy and hope.

Who rescues us from slavery and gives us true, lasting freedom.

Who holds out the possibility of new starts and fresh beginnings.

I believe in a God who keeps promises with us, and that no matter how difficult life sometimes seems, there is always hope.

I believe that God wants us to be the world's encouragers and hope-bringers. We are surrounded every day by people who feel trapped and frightened.

They feel as though they've been captured by forces stronger than themselves and have been taken to a place where they do not want to be. I believe that God wants us to bring a joyful word of hope and encouragement to those people.

That God wants us to be the way in which people are freed.

I believe that we are God's agents of comfort and encouragement and freedom and hope

And that there is no time like the present to embark on our task

Prayers

Intercessions

The response to: 'Lord in your mercy'

Is; 'Hear our prayer'

Finish by saying:

Merciful Father

All: accept these prayers, for the sake of your son, our saviour
Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Collect

Father in heaven, who so loved the world, that you sent your only Son that we should not perish but have eternal life:

give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and love of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Hymn

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create;
The next thing which to you I'll tell
Woman was made with man to dwell.

And we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose;
And so a promise soon did run
That he would redeem us by his Son.

Notices

Blessing

Go now, with God's love,

**the only tool we need
to bring hope to the world.**

Go now, with the grace of Jesus,
the only tool we need to love God.

Go now, with the peace of the Spirit,
**the only tool we need
to offer love to others.**

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.