



ELY CATHEDRAL

**ADVENT PROCESSION
with Carols**

Sunday 30 November 2025
6pm

The Church has always kept Advent as a season of great solemnity - a time in which to meditate upon the ultimate issues of death, judgement, hell and heaven. Advent, though, is also a time of great rejoicing. For Christ will come, not only as Judge, but also as Saviour, and usher in the Kingdom of God.

In the Middle Ages the observance of Advent became highly developed reflecting these themes, and therefore provided a vivid preparation for Christmas. Processions from west to east, and the use of lights, spoke of the Church's hope in the coming of Christ - the Light of the world - to banish sin and darkness. Antiphons were sung, calling upon God to deliver his people, and readings from the Old Testament were seen as pointing to the fulfilment of God's purpose in Jesus.

This service aims to recapture something of that Advent longing and hope. It begins in darkness with the Advent Responsory. The remainder of the service is structured around the Advent Antiphons, known as the Great 'O's. These were sung originally as antiphons to the Magnificat at the Evening Office from 17 to 23 December, and have provided a rich source of devotional imagery in Advent. The readings and music serve to complement the Antiphons, and help us reflect on the theme of the Christ who comes to judge and save his people. The Antiphons are gathered together in the hymn O come, O come, Emmanuel. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

There is an Induction Loop in both the North and South Transepts, the Choir and the Presbytery, for those using a hearing aid, and large copies of the service sheet are available on request. It is not permitted to use a personal device to film, make a sound recording, or take photographs of any part of this service. This is both for safeguarding and licensing reasons, and to avoid disturbing others attending. Please make any concerns known to a Steward or Verger. Please keep your mobile phone switched off throughout the service.

ORGAN MUSIC BEFORE THE SERVICE

Chaconne in C minor BuxWV159 – Dieterich Buxtehude 1637-1707
Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland – Nicolaus Bruhns 1665-1697

*After the Dean has welcomed the congregation,
silence is kept and the following is played*

Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen - Johannes Brahms 1833-1897

When the bell rings, please stand

ADVENT RESPONSORY *sung by the choir*

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

High and low, rich and poor, one with another.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep.

Tell us, art thou he that should come?

Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say:

Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

Text: Advent Responsory
Music: Richard Marlow 1939-2013

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

During this hymn the procession moves to the Octagon stalls

1 Choristers

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest thy virgin-birth:
Let ev'ry age adoring fall,
Such birth befits the God of all.

2 Choir only

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.

3 Choir only

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

4 All

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

5

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

6

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

ANTIPHON - O Sapientia *Please sit*

O Sapientia; quae ex ore Altissimi
prodisti, attingens a fine, usque ad
finem fortiter, suaviter disponensque
omnia; Veni ad docendum nos viam
prudentiae.

*O Wisdom, which camest out of the
mouth of the Most High, and reachest
from one end to another, mightily and
sweetly ordering all things: Come and
teach us the way of prudence.*

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book Proverbs.

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice? The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth—when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.

Thanks be to God.

Proverbs 8.1, 22-31

MOTET

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.

But they did eat which was a sin,
And so their ruin did begin:
Ruined themselves both you and me,
And all of their prosperity.

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

Thus 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.

And after that 'twas God's own choice
To place them both in Paradise
There to remain of evil free
Except they ate of such a tree.

And at that season of the year
Our blest Redeemer did appear;
He here did live, and here did preach,
And may thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,
To show us how we must be saved;
And if you want to know the way,
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

Words: English traditional carol
Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-1958 and Sarah MacDonald b. 1968

ANTIPHON - O Adonai

O Adonai, et dux domus Israel, qui
Moysi in igne flammae rubi
apparuit, et ei in Syna legem
dedisti; Veni ad redimendum nos in
brachio extento.

*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 of Sinai: Come and
deliver us with an outstretched arm.*

SECOND READING

A reading from the Book Exodus.

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Thanks be to God.

Exodus 3.1-6

HYMN *Please stand*



1
The Lord will come and not be slow,
His footsteps cannot err;
Before him righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger.

2
Truth from the earth, like to a flower,
Shall bud and blossom then;
And justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down on mortal men.

3 Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might, This wicked earth redress; For thou art he who shalt by right The nations all possess.	4 The nations all whom thou hast made Shall come, and all shall frame To bow them low before thee, Lord, And glorify thy name.
5 For great thou art, and wonders great By thy strong hand are done; Thou in thy everlasting seat Remainest God alone.	

Words: John Milton 1608-1674, James Martineau 1805-1900
 Music: *St Stephen* NEH 15 William Jones 1726-1800

O Radix Jesse: qui stas in signum
 populorum, super quem continebunt
 reges os suum, quem gentes
 deprecabuntur; Veni ad liberandum
 nos, iam noli tardare.

ANTIPHON - O Radix Jesse *Please sit
 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.*

THIRD READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

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.

Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 11.1-4a

MOTET

*There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,
 The root thereof is called Jesse,
 A flow'r of price;
 There is none such in paradise.*

This flow'r is fair and fresh of hue,
 It fadeth never, but ever is new;
 The blessed branch this flow'r on grew
 Was Mary mild that bare Jesu;

A flow'r of grace;
 Against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed hereof was Goddes sand,
 That God himself sowed with his hand,
 In Nazareth that holy land,
 Amidst her harbour a maiden found;
 This blessed flow'r
 Sprang never but in Mary's bower.

When Gabriel this maid did meet,
With 'Ave Maria' he did her greet;
Between them two this flow'r was set
And safe was kept, no man should wit,
Till on a day
In Bethlem it could spread and spray.

When that fair flow'r began to spread
And his sweet blossom began to bed,
Then rich and poor of ev'ry land
Marvelled how this flow'r might spread,
Till kings three
That blessed flower came to see.

Alleluia, alleluia...

Angels there came from heaven's tower
To look upon this freshele flow'r,
How fair he was in his colour
and how sweet in his savour;
And to behold
How such a flow'r might spring in gold.

*There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,
The root thereof is called Jesse,
A flow'r of price;
There is none such in paradise.*

Words: John Audelay, 15th Century
Music: Sir John Rutter b. 1945

ANTIPHON - O Clavis David

O clavis David; et sceptrum domus
Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit,
claudis et nemo aperit;
Veni et educ vincitum de domo carceris,
sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis.

*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.*

FOURTH READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

I will clothe him with your robe and bind your sash on him. I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open. I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honour to his ancestral house.

Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 22.21-23

HYMN *Please stand*



1
Hark the glad sound! the Saviour comes,
The Saviour promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

3
He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
Enrich the humble poor.

2
He comes the prisoners to release
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

4
Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With thy beloved name.

Words: Philip Doddridge 1702-51

Music: *Bristol* NEH 6 from Thomas Ravenscroft's *Psalmes* 1621

The congregation sits whilst processions continue

ORGAN Wachtet Auf! ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645
Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750

The choir sings

Zion hört die Wächter singen,
Das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen,
Sie wachtet und steht eilend auf.
Ihr Freund kommt vom Himmel prächtig,
Von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit mächtig,
Ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.
Nun komm, du werthe Kron',
Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn!
Hosianna!
Wir folgen all zum Freudensaal
Und halten mit das Abendmahl.

*Zion hears the watchmen's voices,
With gladness all her heart rejoices,
She eager wakes to greet the day.
See, her Lord from heav'n descending
With grace and truth and power unending,
Her daystar dawns with brightest ray.
O come, thou blessed One,
Lord Jesu, God's own Son,
Hosianna!
We follow there Thy feast to share,
And taste the joys beyond compare.*

Words: 6th century, tr. E Caswell 1814-78; P. Nicolai 1556-1608, tr. Sir John Rutter b.1945

Music: Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750

ANTIPHON - O Oriens

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

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

FIFTH READING

A reading from the Prophet Baruch.

‘Look towards the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God. Look, your children are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God. For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God’s command. For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.’

Thanks be to God.

Baruch 4. 36-37, 5. 7-9

MOTET

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.

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 to man and beast
Him who cometh from the East.
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.

Words: Eleanor Farjeon 1881-1965
Music: *Besañçon Carol* arr. June Nixon b. 1942



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 listening earth,
Carry on every breeze
Hope of a world's new birth:
In Christ shall all be made anew,
His word is sure, his promise true.

5
Shout, as you journey on,
Songs be in every mouth,
Lo, from the North they come,
From East and West and South:
In Jesus all shall find their rest,
In him the sons of earth be blest.

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 heavenly guest
In whom the dawn has come:
He brings a never-ending light
Who triumphed o'er our darkest night.

Words: after C. E. Oakley 1832-1865

Music: *Little Cornard* NEH 7 Martin Shaw 1875-1958

Please sit

ANTIPHON - O Rex Gentium

O Rex Gentium; et desideratus
earum, lapisque angularis, qui facis
utraque unum; Veni salva
hominem, quem de limo formasti.

*O King of the nations, and their
Desire; the Corner stone, who makest
Both one: Come, and save mankind,
Whom thou formedst of clay.*

SIXTH READING

A reading from the Revelation to John.

The angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

Thanks be to God.

Revelation 22.1-5

MOTET

Christ is the morning star who, when the night of this world is past, brings to his saints the promise of the light of life and opens everlasting day.

Christ is the morning star and opens everlasting day.

Words: The Venerable Bede 672/3-735

Music: Cecilia McDowall b.1951

HYMN *Please stand*



1
Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.

3
Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.

2
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

4
By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley 1707-88

Music: *Cross of Jesus* NEH 3 Sir John Stainer 1840-1901

Please sit

ANTIPHON - O Emmanuel

O Emmanuel; Rex et legifer noster,
expectatio gentium, et salvator
earum; Veni ad salvandum nos,
Domine Deus noster.

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

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

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.

Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 7.10-15

MOTET

Virga Jesse floruit:
Virgo Deum et hominem genuit:
pacem Deus reddidit,
in se reconcilians ima
summīs.
Alleluia.

*The rod of Jesse hath blossomed:
a Virgin hath brought forth God and man:
God hath restored peace,
reconciling in Himself the lowest with
the highest.
Alleluia.*

Words: based on Isaiah:11
Music: Anton Bruckner 1824-1896

EIGHTH READING

A reading from the Revelation to John.

It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star. 'The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let everyone who hears say, 'Come.' And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift. The one who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Thanks be to God.

Revelation 22.16-17,20

The congregation are asked to join in with the words in **bold**



1
O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Redeem thy captive Israel,
That into exile drear is gone
Far from the face of God's dear Son.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

2
O come, O Wisdom, from on high!
Who madest all in earth and sky,
Creating men from dust and clay;
To us reveal salvation's way.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

3
O come, O come, Adonāi,
Who in thy glorious majesty
From Sinai's mountain, clothed with awe,
Gavest thy folk the elder law.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

4
O come, thou root of Jesse! draw
The quarry from the lion's claw;
From those dread caverns of the grave,
From nether hell, thy people save.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

5
O come, thou Lord of David's Key!
The royal door fling wide and free;
Safeguard for us the heav'nward road,
And bar the way to death's abode.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

6
O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
Pour on our souls thy healing light;
Dispel the long night's lingering gloom,
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

7
O come, desire of nations!
Show thy kingly reign on earth below;
Thou cornerstone uniting all,
Restore the ruin of our fall.
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Lord Jesus,
you came to gather the nations
into the peace of your kingdom.

All Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

You come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.
Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

You will come in glory with salvation for your people.
Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

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.**

Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom
in the words our Saviour gave us.

**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.**

May God the Father, judge all-merciful,
make us worthy of a place in his kingdom. **Amen.**
May God the Son, coming among us in power,
reveal in our midst the promise of his glory. **Amen.**
May God the Holy Spirit make us steadfast in faith,
Joyful in hope and constant in love. **Amen.**
And the blessing of God Almighty,
✠ the Father, ✠ the Son, and ✠ the Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

HYMN *Please stand*



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1
Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand, thousand Saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluya!
God appears, on earth to reign. | 3
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! |
| 2
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 the true Messiah see. | 4
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!
Alleluya! Come, Lord, come! |

Words: Charles Wesley 1707-88
Music: *Helmsley* NEH 9 Thomas Olivers 1725-99
Last verse harmonisation by Martin How with descant by Sarah MacDonald b. 1968

ORGAN Prelude from Symphony 1 - Louis Vierne 1870-1937

A Retiring Collection will be taken in support of the following charities:



Ely Baby Bank is a charity that receives donations of baby-related items which are then sorted and displayed for families to freely select according to their needs. The charity also provides infant formula and nappies. The service is accessible to all members of the community and is offered entirely free of charge. www.elybabybank.com



The Mothers' Union is a women-led, international Christian movement dedicated

to ending poverty, violence and social injustice in communities in the UK and around the world. MU has four million members across over eighty countries and celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2026. We will be donating to the Ely Diocesan fund. www.mothersunion.org



The Friends of the Holy Land. This charity funds a mixture of sustainable and immediate relief work in the

West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan. It works in partnership with key Christian denominations in its mission to secure a resilient and enduring community in the region. www.friendsoftheholylnd.org.uk