

Opening Hymn: Hail to the Lord's anointed!

Hail to the Lord's anointed!
Great David's greater Son;
hail, in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.

He comes with succour speedy
to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth,
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth:
before him on the mountains
shall peace the herald go;
and righteousness in fountains
from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall fall down before him,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore him,
his praise all people sing;
to him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,
he on his throne shall rest,
from age to age more glorious,
all-blessing and all-blest:
the tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand for ever;
that name to us is Love.

Crüger 55 NEH

The Advent Wreath: Advent 3 – John the Baptist

People of God: return! You are called to be God's own.
From the mountains announce the good news.
God comes in justice and peace, to all who follow his ways.

Let us pray:

God our Father, you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age a son called John.
He grew up strong in spirit,
prepared the people for the coming of the Lord,
and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins.
Help us, who have been baptized into Christ,
to be ready to welcome him into our hearts,
and to grow strong in faith by the power of the Spirit.
We ask this through him who is the light coming into the world,
the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The New Testament Reading

A reading from the letter of St James.

Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

St James 5: 7–10

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Taize Community

The Gospel

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia.

cf Isaiah 40: 3–5

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

St Matthew 11: 2–11

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed:

Let us declare our faith in the living God.

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Offertory Hymn: Rejoice, the Lord is King

Rejoice! the Lord is King.
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore:
lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above:
lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given:
lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet:
lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

Gopsal 443 NEH

The Anthem: This is the record of John

This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; and said plainly, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What art thou then? Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not. Art thou the Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, What art thou? that we may give an answer unto them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord.

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)

Communion Hymn: Hark! the glad sound

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 beloved name.

Bristol 6 NEH

Final Hymn: Hills of the North, rejoice

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Little Cornard 470 AMNS