

**Opening Hymn: On Jordan's bank**

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
come then and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings from the King of kings.

Then cleansed be every Christian breast,  
and furnished for so great a guest!  
yea, let us each our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without thy grace our souls must fade,  
and wither like a flower decayed.

Stretch forth thine hand to heal our sore,  
and make us rise, to fall no more;  
once more upon thy people shine,  
and fill the world with love divine.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee  
whose advent sets thy people free,  
whom, with the Father, we adore,  
and Spirit blest, for evermore. Amen.

*Winchester New 12 NEH*

**The Advent Wreath: Advent 2 – The Prophets**

People of God: be glad!  
Your God delights in you, giving you joy for sadness  
and turning the dark to light.  
Be strong in hope therefore; for your God comes to save.

Let us pray:

God our Father,  
you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace.  
You helped them to spread the joyful message of his coming kingdom.  
Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,  
to share with those around us the good news of your power and love.  
We ask this through him who is the light coming into the world,  
the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**The Collect**

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us,  
and with great might succour us;  
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness  
we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us,  
your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us;  
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**The New Testament Reading**

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

This is the word of the Lord.

*2 Peter 3: 8–15a*

**Thanks be to God.**

### 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 Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight”’, John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*St Mark 1: 1–8*

**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: Long ago, prophets knew

Long ago, prophets knew  
Christ would come, born a Jew.  
Come to make all things new;  
bear his people’s burden,  
freely love and pardon.

God in time, God in man,  
this is God’s timeless plan:  
he will come, as a man,  
born himself of woman,  
God divinely human:

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!*

*Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!*

*When he comes, when he comes,*

*who will make him welcome?*

Journey ends: where afar  
Bethlem shines, like a star,  
stable door stands ajar.  
Unborn Son of Mary,  
Saviour, do not tarry!

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!*

*Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!*

*Jesus comes! Jesus comes!*

*We will make him welcome!*

**Communion Hymn: Purify my heart**

Purify my heart,  
let me be as gold and precious silver.  
Purify my heart,  
let me be as gold, pure gold.

*Refrain:*

Purify my heart,  
cleanse me from within and make me holy.  
Purify my heart,  
cleanse me from my sin, deep within. *Refrain:*

*Refiner's fire,  
my heart's one desire  
is to be holy,  
set apart for you, Lord.  
I choose to be holy,  
set apart for you, my Master,  
ready to do your will.*

*Purify 373 AM*

**The Anthem: How lovely are the messengers**

How lovely are the messengers that preach us the gospel of peace.  
To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words, throughout all the lands their glad tidings.

*Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)  
Romans 10: 15, 18*

**Hymn: Hark! a herald voice is calling**

Hark! a herald voice is calling:  
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;  
'Cast away the dreams of darkness,  
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,  
let the earth-bound soul arise;  
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,  
shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! The Lamb, so long expected,  
comes with pardon down from heaven;  
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,  
one and all to be forgiven;

so when next he comes in glory,  
and earth's final hour draws near,  
may he then as our defender  
on the clouds of heaven appear.

Honour, glory, virtue, merit,  
to the Father and the Son,  
with the co-eternal Spirit,  
while unending ages run. Amen.

*Merton 5 NEH*