



HOLY COMMUNION (ADVENT)

A very warm welcome to St Mark's, especially if you are new today. Please do fill in an electronic welcome card on the church website (if you fill in a welcome card then we can let you know more about the life of the church and how you can get involved).

We are a church of all ages – so whether you're young or old or somewhere in between we hope that you'll feel welcomed and included in the service today.

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (adventus) of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement. The characteristic note of Advent is expectation, rather than penitence. The anticipation of Christmas under commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness, but the fundamental Advent prayer remains 'Maranatha' – 'Our Lord, come' (1 Corinthians 16.22). Church decorations are simple and sparse, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour. For those like us in the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas (as demonstrated, for example, in the lighting of candles on the Advent wreath).

The Greeting

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

Come, Lord Jesus	Come as King
Rule in our hearts	Come as love
Rule in our minds	Come as peace
Rule in our actions	Come as power
Rule in our days	Come as joy
Rule in our darkness	Come as light
Rule in our bodies	Come as health
Rule in our labours	Come as hope
Thy Kingdom come	Among us.

Hymn

Confession and Forgiveness

...in the light of Christ let us confess our sins:

**Creator of light and darkness,
we so often chase shadows
and fail to walk in the light.
Forgive us O Lord.**

We travel through Advent
as forgiven people,
lifting our faces towards the light.
Let us walk together
in hope and in faith.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The First Reading

At the end the reader may say...

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

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)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *N*.

Glory to you, O Lord.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Creed (Declaration of Faith)

We say together in faith

Holy, holy, holy

**is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,

who created all things:

**for by his will they were created
and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,

who was slain:

**for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,**

**from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'

Even so come, Lord Jesus!

Amen.

Prayers

This or another response may be used...

Maranatha

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your
name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on
earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those
who sin against us. Lead us not into
temptation but deliver us from evil. For the
kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now
and for ever. Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

The Eucharistic Prayer (G)

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

*The minister praises God for his mighty acts and all
respond...*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and
might, heaven and earth are full of your
glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

*The minister recalls the Last Supper. These words
are used...*

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

and the Prayer ends...

**Blessing and honour and glory and power be
yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body, because
we all share in one bread.**

Giving of Communion (choir served first)

*Any baptized person, wherever you are on your
journey, is welcome to receive communion – we
would love you to join us.*

Prayer After Communion

**Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

The Blessing

Final Hymn

Closing Prayer

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.