**East Neuk Episcopal Churches**

**15 December 2024 — Third Sunday in Advent**

9.45am at St Michael’s and 11.30am at St John’s led by Revd David Gordon

Grace and peace to you from God our   
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Advent candle prayers**

**Opening hymn**

Hark! a thrilling voice is calling:

`Christ is nigh!' it seems to say;

`Cast away the dreams of darkness,

O ye children of the day!'

Wakened at the solemn warning,

let the earth-bound soul arise;

Christ, her Sun, all ill 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;

that when next he comes with glory,

and the world is wrapped in fear,

with his mercy may he shield us,

and with words of love draw near.

Honour, glory, might and blessing,

to the Father and the Son,

with the everlasting Spirit,

while eternal ages run.

*6th century*

**Collect for purity**  
**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Summary of the law**Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.”

The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.

**Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

**Confession and absolution**

God is love and we are God’s children.  
There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.  
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.  
  
*(Silence)*  
**God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by the Holy Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Spoken or sung:*

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

*or*

Kyrie eleison.

**Kyrie eleison.**

Christe eleison.

**Christe eleison.**

Kyrie eleison.

**Kyrie eleison.**

**Collect**  
**God of power and mercy, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

**Readings**

**Zephaniah 3.14-20**

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and raised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

**Canticle**

**Isaiah 12.2-6**

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,

**for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.**

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

**And you will say on that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.**

Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.  
**Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

**Glory to God, Source of all being,  
Eternal Word and Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and shall be forever. Amen.**

**Philippians 4.4-7**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Gradual hymn**

Sing we the praises of the great forerunner,

tell forth the mighty wonders of his story:

so may his Master cleanse our lips and make them

fit to extol him.

Lo, God’s high herald, swift from heaven descending,

gives to thy father tidings of thy coming,

telling thy name and all the tale of marvels

that shall befall thee.

Oft had the prophets in the time before thee

spoken in vision of the Daystar’s coming;

but when he came, ‘twas thou that didst proclaim him

Saviour of all men.

*Paul the Deacon*

**Gospel**

**Alleluia**

*(When the reading is announced, we say)*  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

**Luke 3.7-18**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’

And the crowds asked him, ‘What then should we do?’ In reply he said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

*(At the end)*  
Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

**Sermon**

**Nicene creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the**

**Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Intercessions**

**The Peace**We meet in Christ’s name.  
**Let us share his peace.  
  
Offertory hymn**

Lord of the church, we pray for our renewing:

Christ over all, our undivided aim;

fire of the Spirit, burn for our enduing,

wind of the Spirit, fan the living flame!

We turn to Christ amid our fear and failing,

the will that lacks the courage to be free,

the weary labours, all but unavailing,

to bring us nearer what a church should be.

Lord of the church, we seek a Father’s blessing,

a true repentance and a faith restored,

a swift obedience and a new possessing,

filled with the Holy Spirit of the Lord!

We turn to Christ from all our restless striving,

unnumbered voices with a single prayer:

the living water for our souls’ reviving,

in Christ to live, and love and serve and care.

Lord of the church, we long for our uniting,

true to one calling, by one vision stirred;

one cross proclaiming and one creed reciting,

one in the truth of Jesus and his word!

So lead us on, till toil and trouble ended,

one church triumphant one new song shall sing,

to praise his glory, risen and ascended,

Christ over all, the everlasting King!

*Timothy Dudley-Smith*

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**Liturgy of the sacrament**Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own we give you.**  
The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker. Out of nothing, you called all worlds to be, and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment. Dawn and evening celebrate your glory till time shall be no more.

In Christ your Son the life of heaven and earth were joined, sealing the promise of a new creation, given, yet still to come.

Taught by your Spirit, we who bear your threefold likeness look for the City of Peace in whose light we are transfigured and the earth

transformed.

As children of your redeeming purpose who await the coming of your Son, we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven singing the hymn of your unending glory:

*(Sung)*

Holy, holy, holy Lord  
God of power and might’  
heaven and earth

are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he, O blessed is he

who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
  
*(Please feel free to sit)*

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father. In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him, the first, the last, the living one. Obedient, even to accepting death, he opened the gate of glory and calls us now to share the life of heaven.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, alight with the vision of a feast that heralded a kingdom yet to come, at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: “Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you.”

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them, saying: “Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.”

**We now obey your Son's command. We recall his blessed passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension; and we look for the coming of his Kingdom. Made one with him, we offer you these gifts and with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by the Spirit’s life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and prophets, and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end. **Amen.**

The living bread is broken   
for the life of the world.  
**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

As our Saviour has 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. Do not bring us to the time of trial but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

**Lamb of God, you take away   
the sins of the world:   
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away   
the sins of the world:   
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away   
the sins of the world:   
grant us peace.**

**The Communion**

**Thanksgiving**

Merciful God, may this eucharist free us from our sins, fill us with unending joy, and prepare us for the birthday of our Saviour. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is Lord for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Give thanks to our gracious God,  
**whose mercy endures for ever.**

**Loving God, your steadfast purpose is the completion of all things in your Son. May we who have received the pledges of the kingdom, live by faith, walk in hope and be renewed in love, until the world reflects your glory and you are all in all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Blessing**Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**#**

**Closing hymn**

Father of heaven, whose love profound

a ransom for our souls hath found,

before thy throne we sinners bend,

to us thy pardoning love extend.

Almighty Son, incarnate Word,

our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord,

before thy throne we sinners bend,

to us thy saving grace extend.

Eternal Spirit, by whose breath

the soul is raised from sin and death,

before thy throne we sinners bend,

to us thy quickening power extend.

Thrice Holy! Father, Spirit, Son;

mysterious Godhead, Three in One,

before thy throne we sinners bend,

grace, pardon, life, to us extend.

*William Cooper*

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

**Notices**

**Next Sunday** services will be led by Revd David Gordon

**Wednesday** 7.00pm Carol service at St John’s

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