



Order of Service

*St. Matthew's Church, Wych Lane, Bridgemyary PO13 0JN
in partnership with Bridgemyary Community Sports College*

www.StMatthewsBridgemyary.org.uk



working towards being an Inclusive Church

Introduction to the Season

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:

Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty. (*Charles Wesley*)

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation. The characteristic note of Advent is therefore expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent. 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 spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour. 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. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath was imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century, and is now a common practice. The Moravian custom of the Christingle has similarly enjoyed great success in Britain since the latter part of the twentieth century, with the encouragement of the Children's Society; Christingle services may take place before or after Christmas. The Third Sunday of Advent was observed in medieval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (*Gaudete* or 'Rose Sunday'), and the last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great 'O' Antiphons, which continue to inspire modern Advent hymns and meditations.

Image on the front cover is by the artist Roger Hutchison

Roger writes of *Advent*, "This painting, for me, came out of a sense of waiting—of expectation. Mary is soon to give birth to Jesus. She is searching, watching, waiting. The star in the sky is also watching – waiting. The world is in a place of waiting—a place of fear and war. We await the Christ-child. We are hungry for peace and understanding."

The Liturgy for Advent

When the bell rings please stand

A hymn may be announced or music may be played as the procession enter

Priest Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you

All **and also with you.**

On a Sunday the next Advent Candle is lit using the words on page 17ff



The Litany may be used on page 19

Minister When the Lord comes, he will bring to light things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart. In that light we confess our sins.

silence is kept for reflection and personal confession

All Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrong doing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*We join in singing the Kyrie Eleison
or the following may be said*

Priest Lord, have mercy.
All **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

Priest Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you
pardon + and deliver you from all your sins,
Confirm and strengthen you
in all goodness and bring you to life eternal,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All AMEN



The Collect

Priest Let us pray *The priest says/sings the collect for the week*

All AMEN

Sit for the first readings

Each reading ends with the words

Reader This is the word of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

A hymn or song may be announced

Minister Alleluia, alleluia.
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see
the salvation of God. *cf Isaiah 40.3-5*
Alleluia.



The Gospel

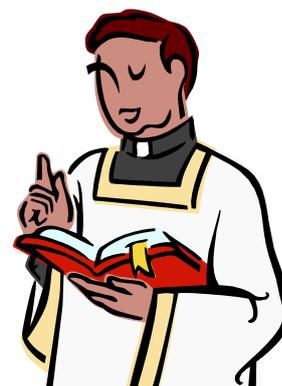
Minister The Lord be with you
All And also with you.

Minister Hear the + Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *N.*
All Glory to you, O Lord.

We listen attentively to the Gospel reading

Minister This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit



Sermon

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,

**All 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,

**All God from God, Light from Light
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

All Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

**All 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;

All 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,

All the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

All With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

All We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**All We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession *sit, kneel or stand before God*

This form or another form may be used

In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid we pray to Jesus, saying,
Maranatha:
Come, Lord Jesus.



Come to your Church as Lord and Judge.

We pray for ...

Help us to live in the light of your coming and give us a longing for your rule.

Maranatha:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Come to your world as King of the nations.

We pray for ...

Before you rulers will stand in silence.

Maranatha:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Come to your people with a message of victory and peace.

We pray for ...

Give us the victory over death, temptation and evil.

Maranatha:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Come to us as Saviour and Comforter.

We pray for ...

Break in to those areas of our lives where we live with failure and distress, and set us free to serve you for ever.

Maranatha:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Come to us from heaven with power and great glory,
to lift us up to meet you,
with all your saints and angels,
to live with you for ever.

Maranatha:

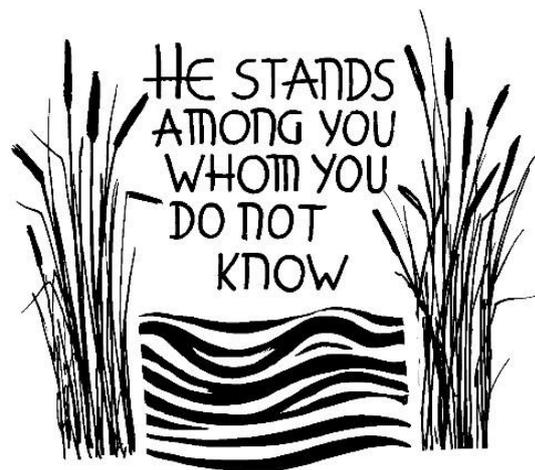
Come, Lord Jesus.

Come to us as we hold our own prayers and petitions before you in
the silence of our hearts.

Maranatha:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Priest Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay;
give new courage to your people
who trust in your love.
By your coming, raise us
to the joy of your kingdom,
where you live and reign,
with the Father and the Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**



The Peace

Stand

Priest The God of peace make us holy in all things
that we may be ready at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

Minister Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace,

Preparation of the Table

During the preparation we sing the hymn



Priest As this bread was scattered
and then gathered and made one,
so may your Church be gathered into your kingdom.
Glory to you, O God, for ever.

Wisdom has built her a house;
she has mixed her wine; she has set her table.
Glory to you, O God, for ever.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Priest The Lord be with you
All **and also with you**

All Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord

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

From the First Sunday of Advent until 16 December

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For when he humbled himself to come among us
in human flesh,

he fulfilled the plan you formed before
the foundation of the world

to open for us the way of salvation.

Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,
we now watch for the day

when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.

And so we join our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven

to proclaim your glory

for ever praising you and *saying:*

From 17 December until Christmas Eve

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling.

John the Baptist was his herald
and made him known when at last he came.

In his love Christ fills us with joy
as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
so that when he comes again he may find us

watching in prayer,

our hearts filled with wonder and praise.

And so, with angels and archangels,

and with all the company of heaven,

we proclaim your glory,

and join in their unending hymn of praise:

**All say Holy holy holy Lord
 God of power and might
 Heaven and earth are full of your glory
 Hosanna in the highest**

**All say Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
 Hosannas in the highest**



Priest Lord, you are holy indeed,
the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the + body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

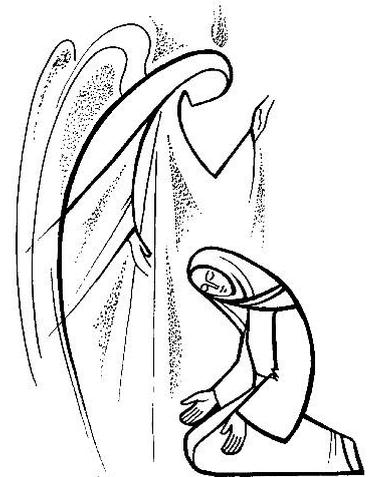
Minister Great is the mystery of faith:

**All say Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.**

Priest And so, Father,
calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins
of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup

and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and
one cup, so that we, in the company
of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
St Matthew and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;



by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours,
almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All AMEN

Sit or kneel for a moment of silent adoration



The Lord's Prayer

Priest As our Saviour taught us so we pray

**All 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.**

Breaking of the Bread

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

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

*As the bread is broken the we sing "**Lamb of God**".*

Priest Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon is said

If you normally receive Holy Communion in your Church you are welcome to do so here at St Matthew's.

Please come and STAND at the communion rail. Please hold your hands out clearly in front of you.

If you do not want to receive Holy Communion please come forward and keep your head bowed to receive a blessing.

Following the bishop's instructions we receive communion in one kind at the – bread only.

Music is used as an aid to prayer during communion and the clearing of the altar

silence is held



Prayer after Communion

Priest Let us pray

the post communion prayer is said

**All Father of all, we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off you met us
in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace,
and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn & any notices are given out

The Blessing and Dismissal

stand

Priest The Lord be with you
All **and also with you**

With love and compassion,
come, Lord Jesus.
With judgement and mercy,
come, Lord Jesus.
In power and glory,
come, Lord Jesus.
In wisdom and truth,
come, Lord Jesus.

Bow your heads and pray
for God's blessing

May God the Father,
who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son,
give you grace to prepare for life eternal.

Amen.

May God the Son,
who comes to us as redeemer and judge,
reveal to you the path from darkness to light.

Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit,
by whose working the Virgin Mary conceived the Christ,
help you bear the fruits of holiness.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
+ the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

As we await our coming Saviour, go in the peace of Christ.

.All **Thanks be to God.**





The Advent Wreath

The Advent Wreath has four red or blue candles in a ring around a white or gold candle. Alternatively, there may be three purple candles, reflecting the liturgical colour for Advent, with a pink candle for the Third Sunday, when rose-pink vestments are traditionally worn. The first candle is lit on Advent Sunday; additional ones are lit, one on each Sunday, and the white or gold one on Christmas Day. The new candle each week may appropriately be lit during the Prayers of Penitence.

In this case the material entitled 'Prayers of Penitence at the Advent Wreath' is used. Alternatively, the candles may be lit after the Gospel Reading, before the Peace, or after Communion, where the prayer(s) used at the lighting becomes a natural Post-Communion prayer. All five candles may appropriately be alight during services through the Christmas season.

There are several traditions about the meaning or theme of each candle. The scheme that accords best with the Common Worship Principal Service Lectionary is:

Advent 1 The Patriarchs
Advent 2 The Prophets
Advent 3 John the Baptist
Advent 4 The Virgin Mary
Christmas Day The Christ

Each of the four Sundays then reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ. 'The Patriarchs' can naturally focus on Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. 'The Prophets' gives an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was 'foretold'. John, who proclaimed the Saviour, and Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the picture.

Advent 1

God of Abraham and Sarah,
and all the patriarchs of old,
you are our Father too.

Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ,
Son of God and Son of David.

Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth
to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit
to make his home among us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
born in David's city of Bethlehem,
born like him to be a king:
be born in our hearts at Christmas,
be King of our lives today. Amen.**

Advent 2

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 Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
the prophets said you would bring peace
and save your people in trouble.
Give peace in our hearts at Christmas
and show all the world God's love. Amen.**

Advent 3

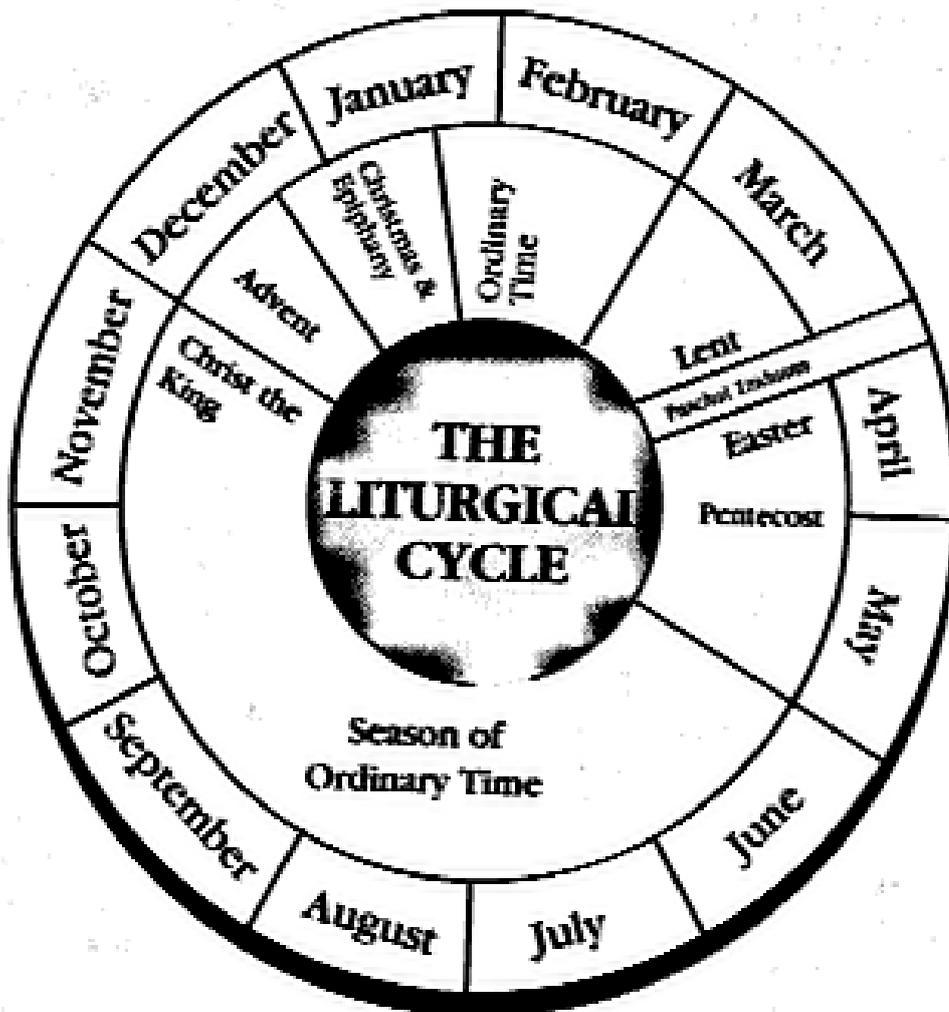
God our Father,
you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age
a son called John.
He grew up strong in spirit,
prepared the people for the coming of the Lord,
and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins.
Help us, who have been baptized into Christ,
to be ready to welcome him into our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

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
John told the people to prepare,
for you were very near.
As Christmas grows closer day by day,
help us to be ready to welcome you now. Amen**

Advent 4

God our Father,
the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary
that she was to be the mother of your Son.
Though Mary was afraid,
she responded to your call with joy.
Help us, whom you call to serve you,
to share like her in your great work
of bringing to our world your love and healing.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.
Amen.

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news;
blessed is Mary, your mother and ours.
Bless your Church preparing for Christmas;
and bless us your children, who long for your coming. Amen.**



THE LITANY FOR HOLY DYING

God the Father
have mercy on us.

God the Son
have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit
have mercy on us.

Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity
have mercy on us.

God, who took the form of a servant, and shared the life of suffering and sorrow,
have mercy on us.

God, who raised the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus at Bethany,
have mercy on us.

God, who bore our weaknesses and healed our sicknesses,
have mercy on us.

God, who became obedient unto death, even death on a cross,
have mercy on us.

God, who at the beginning breathed into us life, and appointed the hour of our death,
have mercy on us.

Hear our prayers, good Jesus, and grant that, dying to sin here, we may live for you in heaven:
Good Jesus, hear us.

May we, remaining your faithful soldiers and servants here, receive hereafter the crown of glory:
Good Jesus, hear us.

May we accept with joy all the suffering of sickness and death as no more than we deserve:
Good Jesus, hear us.

Be with us in the valley of the shadow of death:
Good Jesus, hear us.

Let us not, at our last hour, fall away from you.
Good Jesus, hear us.

Forgive us our sins, and strengthen us with the Bread of Life:
Good Jesus, hear us.

Let us die in your faith and fear, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life:
Good Jesus, hear us.

Deliver us, Lord, at our last hour; as you delivered Enoch and Elijah from the death which must come to all,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Noah from the flood,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Job from his affliction,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Isaac from the knife,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Lot from Sodom,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Daniel from the lions' den,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered the three young men from the fiery furnace,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Esther and her people from the power of Haman,
Save and deliver us.

As you delivered Susanna from false condemnation and stoning,
Save and deliver us.

As you have always delivered from evil those who put their trust in
you,
Save and deliver us.

Deliver us, Lord, on that fearful day, when the heavens and the
earth shall pass away, when you shall come to judge the world by
fire;
Save and deliver us.

In the day of judgment, when the books are opened, and the dead,
great and small, shall stand before you;
Save and deliver us.

Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.

Jesus, Lamb of God:
have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins:
have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world;
Give us your peace.

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Saviour gave us:

**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.**

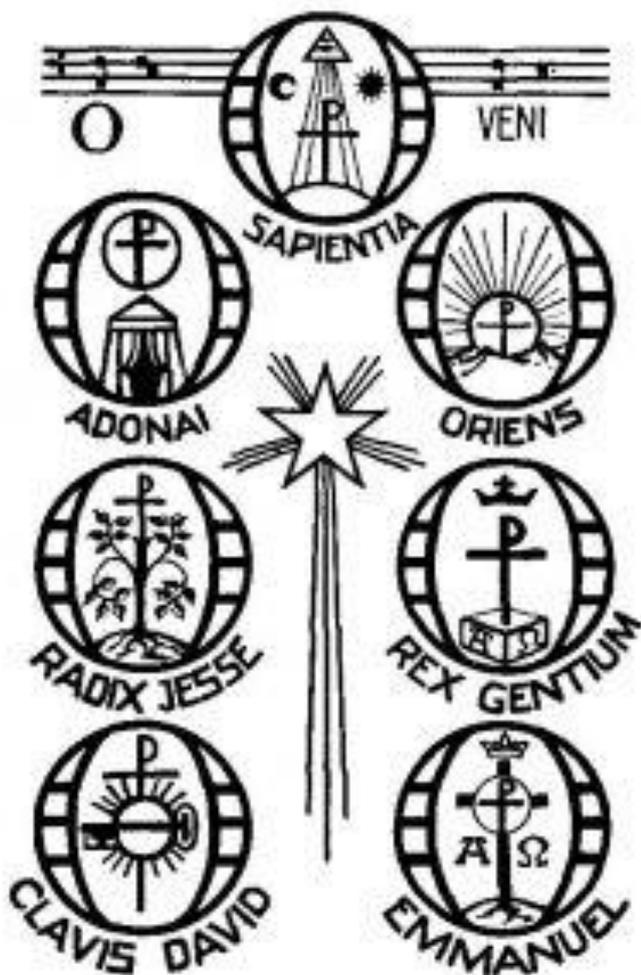
Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin
and protect us from all anxiety
as we wait in joyful hope
for the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Happy are the dead:
Who die in the faith of Christ.

Father, you made us in your image
and your Son accepted death for our salvation.
Help us to keep watch in prayer at all times.
May we be free from all sin
when we leave this world,
and rejoice in peace with you for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE JESSE TREE



The Christmas Tree can have a liturgical character if it is decorated to take the form of a Jesse Tree. Jesse Trees exist in the form of stone carvings, stained glass windows and elaborate candelabra, and were designed to show the genealogy of Christ in the form of a tree.

When this idea is adapted for the decoration of the Christmas Tree, the decorations are symbolic of events or people in the history of salvation. The sun, moon or stars can represent the creation, an apple stands for the fall, an ark or dove for the flood, the burning bush for Moses, a harp for King David, a temple for King Solomon and so on. There can be an angel of the annunciation, a rose or lily for the Blessed Virgin, and various symbols for Christ, such as a fish or a star. The

coloured balls which customarily hang on the tree can be painted with monograms symbolising Christ, such as XP or IHS. A small loaf together with a miniature chalice made of metal foil can be hung on the tree to represent the eucharist.

The easiest way to make most of the figures is to use cardboard, cut to outline, and then covered with metal foil in different colours. Another source of material is postcards and old Christmas cards. The process of making these designs will give parents an opportunity to talk with children about the themes which lie behind them.

On the evening of Christmas Eve the Tree and Crib may be blessed, while the main candle of the Advent Wreath is lit. This is a good opportunity for family prayers, or a simple part of a Crib service in church.

One or more of these prayers may be used.

1. In the beginning you gave us the tree of life;
we come to you, **Lord Jesus Christ.**

On the tree of the cross you took away our sins;
we come to you, **Lord Jesus Christ.**

You are the new branch of the tree of David,
bringing hope to all peoples;
we come to you, **Lord Jesus Christ.**

2. Loving God, may your gift to us of Jesus Christ
set us free to love and serve others
and to worship you with joy. **Amen.**

3. Lord Jesus Christ,
you shared human suffering
to reveal your Father's love;
draw near to those for whom Christmas brings little joy-
the hungry, the suffering, the lonely and the bereaved;
may they find joy and hope in you. **Amen.**

4. O God, you desire to enfold
both heaven and earth in a single peace;
Let the design of your great love
lighten upon the waste of our angers and sorrows;
and give peace to your church,
peace among nations, peace in our homes,
and peace in our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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