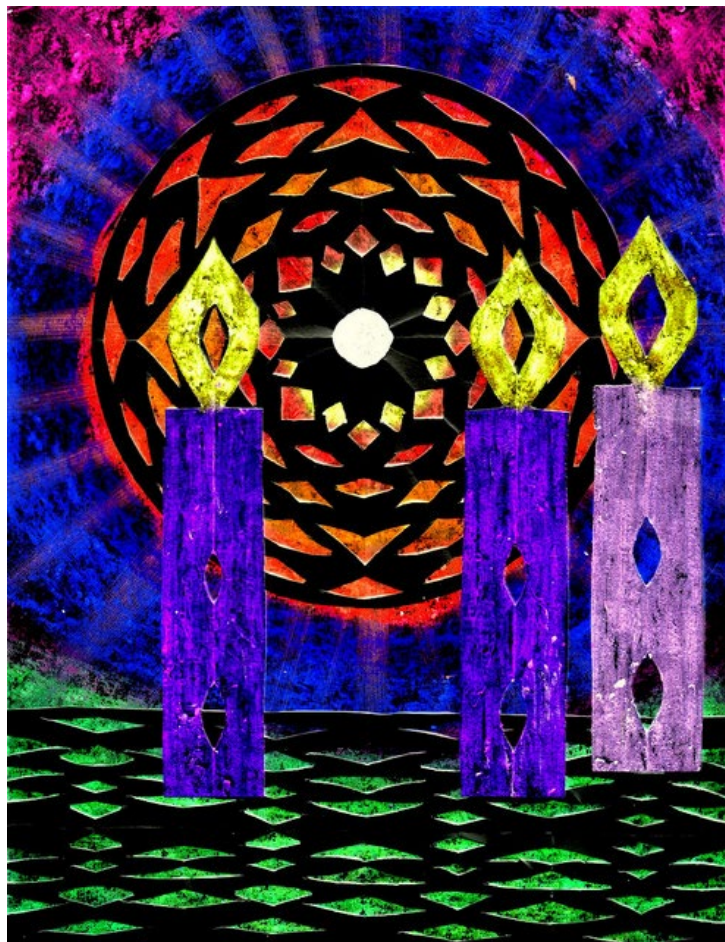


ADVENT 3 - JOY



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St Paul's Church • Ipswich
14 November 2025

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

Advent Candle Lighting

This week, we celebrate joy. In the midst of our busy lives, we pause to recognize the joy that the coming of Christ brings.

Reference Verse: Luke 2:10 (NRSV)

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.'"

Let us pray:

Loving God, as we light this third candle of joy, fill our hearts with the joy of Your presence. May we share this joy with others in our lives. **Amen.**

Processional Hymn

Hark the glad sound! The saviour comes [TIS 275]

The Greeting

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

And also with you.

Scripture Sentence

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.'

Isaiah 35.3–4

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.**

Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy)

**Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**

Ten Commandments

Hear the commandments which God gave his people Israel.

- I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of slavery; you shall have no other gods but me.
- You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them.
- You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shall you labour and do all you have to do, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God.
- Honour your father and your mother.
- You shall do no murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
- You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's.

Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

Silence may be kept.

Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

These words of assurance from the First Letter of John declare that:

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the offering for our sins, and not for us only, but for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

Collect

Almighty God,
you have made us and all things to serve you:
come quickly to save us,
so that wars and violence shall end
and your children may live in peace,
honouring one another with justice and love;
through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord,
who lives with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 35.1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus
it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord ,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;

they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 146

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul:
while I live I will praise the Lord;
While I have any being:
I will sing praises to my God.
Put not your trust in princes:
nor in flesh and blood, which cannot save.
For when their breath goes from them,
they return again to the earth:
and on that day all their thoughts perish.
Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob:
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
The God who made heaven and earth:
the sea, and all that is in them,
Who keeps faith for ever:
who deals justice to those that are oppressed.
The Lord gives food to the hungry:
and sets the captives free.
The Lord gives sight to the blind:
the Lord lifts up those that are bowed down.
The Lord loves the righteous:
the Lord cares for the stranger in the land.
He upholds the widow and the fatherless:
as for the way of the wicked, he turns it upside down.
The Lord shall be king for ever:
your God, O Zion, shall reign through all generations.
Praise the Lord.

Second Reading

James 5.7-10

Be patient, therefore, 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.

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

Fill thou my Life, O Lord my God [TIS 596]

The Gospel

Matthew 11.2-11

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

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
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

The officiant says.

In this season of Advent, as we reflect on the joyful anticipation of Christ's coming, let us bring our prayers before God, who delights in the hearts of all people.

The intercessor continues

We pray for the Church, that it may be a beacon of hope and joy in a world often shrouded in darkness. May our worship and service reflect the joy of the Gospel, inviting others to share in the abundant life Christ offers.

Lord, in Your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all nations and communities, especially those facing unrest and despair. May the joy of reconciliation and peace prevail, fostering a spirit of goodwill and understanding among all people.

Lord, in Your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the faithful departed, especially those whom we hold in our hearts. May they rest in the joy of God's eternal presence. We ask that those who mourn may find comfort and strength in the promise of resurrection and the hope of eternal life.

Lord, in Your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for our local community, that the joy of Christ may flow through our interactions and relationships. Help us to reach out to the lonely and the marginalized, sharing in the joy that comes from serving one another.

Lord, in Your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for ourselves, that we may open our hearts to the joy of the Lord, allowing it to be our strength. May we be transformed by this joy, becoming witnesses of hope to those around us.

Lord, in Your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we thank You for the joy that transcends our circumstances. May we joyfully await the coming of our Savior, carrying the light of His love into the world.

Please join me as we pray the Ipswich Anglicans Prayer together:

**God of new beginnings,
bless our Ipswich Anglican community
with a fresh vision for the future,
with generous hearts to love one another,
and with courage for the changes we now embrace.
Draw us more deeply into the mystery of Christ,
so that we draw closer to you and to each other.
Make us a blessing to the city of Ipswich
as we walk together
into the future you have prepared for us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Grant that what we have asked in faith
we may by your grace receive,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Offertory Hymn

O for a thousand tongues to sing [TIS 210]

During the offertory hymn the Sacrament which has been reserved from the 7.00-am Eucharist for use at this service will be brought to the Altar.
The regular offertory prayer for the collection is then said.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

COMMUNION

In place of the usual Great Thanksgiving Prayer, the following words are said by the lay Minister.

The Gospel of St Luke tell us that:

At supper with his disciples on the night he was betrayed Jesus took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, "this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

The Ipswich Anglican community of which we are members, has taken this bread and wine, and given thanks over it according to our Lord's command. I bring you these Holy Gifts so that you may share in the communion of our Lord's body and blood. For these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to 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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Table

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Notices

Prayer after Communion

Living God,
in this holy meal you fill us with new hope.
May the power of your love,
which we have known in word and sacrament,
continue your saving work among us,
give us courage for our pilgrimage,
and bring us to the joys you promise.

Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.

May the God of peace equip you with everything good for doing his will, working in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Amen

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

Recessional Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel [TIS 265]

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