

**ST NICHOLAS CHURCH
THIRD ADVENT SUNDAY
12TH DECEMBER 2021**



Opening Carol (Second/live service)

O Come all ye Faithful
O come all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye O come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold Him
Born the King of angels

Chorus

**O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord**

**Call to worship/
lighting the third advent Candle of joy**

The light from this candle, emitting great Joy,
bring thoughts of our Saviour who comes as a boy.
So let us be joyful, while singing his praise,
and welcome his coming then follow his way.
Light of darkness, Joy is to come,
for God will send his Son.
Joy everlasting when He shall come down,
the long awaited One.

Watch and wait for Christ's coming! We light this candle in hope (light the first candle). We light this candle for peace (light the second candle). We light this candle in joy (light the third candle) remembering the promises of God with prayer.

Rejoice! For our Lord is coming into the darkness of oppression's exile to lead us home, as we hear in 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.

Let us pray

O Lord, our redeemer, you lead us from languishing in sorrow's shadows into laughter's joy over your abundant restoration. Thank you that you are coming for us to lead us home along your Way, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Opening Carol (Zoom Service) O Holy Night
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17killxSdC0>

God of God
Light of light
Lo He abhors not the virgin's womb
Very God
Begotten not created

Sing choirs of angels
Sing in exultation
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above
Glory to God
In the highest

CCLI Song # 4758525, C. Frederick Oakeley | John Francis Wade | William Henry Monk © Words: Public Domain, CCLI Licence No. 1198082

Opening prayer

Held in the moments around us
between the waiting and the words
may we touch the expectation of something moving,
changing, quickening, something that holds the light,
wrapped in promise that speaks into our age, our
season, our time, a hope that will move the darkness
between us all.

In such a moment as this, O God,
may we dare believe beyond this moment, dare
believe that all we have taken for granted can change
within us and open our eyes to new visions
and speak new words into what is moribund and
believe new hope into well-worn patterns of habit
that beneath the surface of this moment, held in a
promise, a new world can be spoken of
where deserts bloom and the blind see and the lame
walk.

In such poetic faith and daring belief, this is our adoration:

- that we live a new way
- that lays down the past habits and picks up new patterns, new vision, to reshape our words and our living.
- May this moment become the sacred moment between the waiting and the words that dares us to pause and say:

“we are readying, we are preparing, we are waiting, for incarnation – God with us” Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

Hymn (Second/live service)

King of Kings, Majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQ-AiiVB7Sc>

Bible Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Brief reflection – ‘The missing man of Christmas’

Prayers and benediction

Here is our promise to you, O God, our promise of love in this gift to give ourselves over and over to the reshaping and the redemption of this world.

May what we lay here be gifts for the kingdom that transform into justice and grace and peace.

Loving God, in this Advent, may we live in the promise of a desert coming into bloom. Where the dry land of our politics regrows a politics of hope that speaks into the lives of the least, that deserts of hopelessness and powerlessness are broken open in a field of new life, of community that seeks the best for one another.

So may the weakest of hands find new strength, those on their knees, a new confidence, those who fear for life, a new empowerment, to live more strongly, to live without fear and seek a world, and a community that makes it possible.

So may we live compassionately believing the eyes of the blind shall be opened and speak justly that the ears of the deaf may hear and the lame leap with new hope in life and those who have been silenced speak nonstop about justice; so that waters of peace pour into the driest lands and the heat of the world cools in a new way of living together.

May we seek to build a highway that moves us and leads us from conflict to peace, from selfishness to compassion for one another, from power to sharing.

May we walk it, be companions along it, share the journey and find you there: one of us, among us, Emmanuel – God with us
So be it. Amen.

Hymn: Child in the Manger (tune: Morning has broken)

Child in the manger infant of Mary
Outcast and stranger Lord of all
Child who inherits all our transgressions
All our demerits on Him fall

Once the most holy child of salvation
Gently and lowly lived below
Now as our glorious mighty Redeemer
See Him victorious over each foe

Prophets foretold Him infant of wonder
Angels behold Him on His throne
Worthy our Saviour of all their praises
Happy for ever are His own

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Benediction and Amen

We go in hope, for it is the dominant story still; people of the incarnation with a word of truth; companions of God through the pathways of the world; peacemakers and travellers in the kingdom of love.

And may the grace...

Hymn after the Second/live service: Face of God

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_9ILAxOHAA

