

ORDER OF SERVICE: ST ANDREWS

17 December 2023

Advent 3



Welcome & Time of Sharing

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here. We acknowledge the Kurna People, traditional custodians of this land under God. We acknowledge that their sovereignty has never been ceded and their connection remains unbroken. We commit ourselves again to working together for reconciliation in this land.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES

As we gather to worship God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we remember the hope that is Christ Jesus.

The first and second candles are lit.

Jesus said, 'No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!

The third candle is lit and this response is used:

Jesus is the light of the world.

A light no darkness can ever put out.

We sing:

Advent candles tell their story, as we watch and pray,
 longing for the Day of Glory, 'Come, Lord, soon,' we say.
 Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness
 changed for gladness on that Day.

John the Baptist, by his preaching,
 and by water poured,
 brought to those who heard his teaching
 news of hope restored:
 'Keep your vision strong and steady,
 and be ready, for the Lord.'

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We take once more an appropriate posture before you,
 Holy One, sorry for our turning away from your teaching.

We are sorry:

**for the times we have been proud, and we, and others, have stumbled;
 for the times our thoughts were unworthy, and we, and others, have
 been diminished;**

**for the times we used power over another, and we, along with others,
 have been harmed;**

**for the times we held onto riches, and we, and others, were made
 poorer.**

We are sorry, God. **Forgive us, we pray.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Holy One does great things for us, forgives, restores, and welcomes
 home.

Feel yourselves lifted up, filled with God's goodness,
 gifted with holy mercy – and rejoice!

Rejoice! We are forgiven!

We rejoice! Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

Friends, may the peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING – Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
 then it was said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
**Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come
 home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. Amen**

SONG: TIS 283 Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring! (refer attached song sheet)

NEW TESTAMENT READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

REFLECTION: Joy to the World!

SONG: God of All People – David Haas (refer attached song sheet)

OFFERING PRAYER

God of peace, you have restored our hope, and sanctified our dreams.

**May our offering express the joy we feel for the gift of your
 salvation.**

May our gifts reflect our wonder and gratitude

**For being clothed in garments of salvation and robes of
 righteousness.**

May the gifts we give and our very lives

**Help restore the dreams of the downhearted,
 And fill the hungry with good things. Amen.**

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
 Your kingdom come, your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us this day 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 forever. Amen.*

SONG TIS 278 Canticle of the Gift (refer attached song sheet)

Blessing:

Go forth, sanctified in the love of God.

God has turned our weeping into laughter.

Go forth, clothed in the garments of salvation and the robes of righteousness.

Christ has turned our sorrow into joy.

Go with God.

Amen.

SONG: TIS 268 Joy to the world! (refer attached song sheet)

[You are invited to light a candle as you leave the sanctuary.]

PREACHER FOR NEXT WEEK:

Sunday December 24 **Worship Leaders Kate and Paul**

Monday December 25 **Rev Ian Dow**