

# The Gathering

## 1 - Welcome - [OLIVER]

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

Welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow.

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, a season in which the Church calls people to wake up. Something is coming; get ready.

It might be easy to let things pass us by. Right now, folk are juggling a lot. But Jesus tells his disciples in today's Gospel the signs are there. Redemption is drawing near.

## 3 - Collect for Purity - [NICHOLAS]

**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.**

## 5 - Confession

[KELVIN] 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.**

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

### **7 - Kyrie- [MORVEN]**

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.  
Christ have mercy. Christ have mercy.  
Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

### **8 - Collect - [OLIVER]**

God our Saviour, you utter a word of promise and hope and hasten the day of justice and freedom, yet we live in world forgetful of your word, our watchfulness dulled by the cares of life. Keep us alert. Make us attentive to your word, ready to look on your Son when he comes with power and great glory. Make us holy and blameless, ready to stand secure when the day of his coming shakes the world with terror. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near: your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## **The Ministry of the Word**

### **11 - GOSPEL: John 18:33-37 – [ROBIN]**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

‘There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea

and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

Then he told them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

‘Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.’

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious gospel  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

## **12 - Sermon [HELENA]**

Be alert. Read the signs of the times. Pray. The words of today’s Gospel are the traditional call for the beginning of Advent, that multi-textured season in which we are invited to consider both the end of all things and the new beginning that is already and is about to come with the Incarnation of Christ

That might be paradox enough to deal with. Indeed, it may have been easier to comprehend in Jesus’ day, when people were more attuned to the rhythms of nature, and the seasons flowed one into another, seed-time and harvest. Not that natural disasters did not happen, they did, and were as frightening then as they are now, if less scientifically understood. But they were part of a wider

tapestry of all living things whose warp and weft wove all things together. Disruptions meant more because of that underlying pattern. Even excruciating tragedies like plague, famine, and conquest were part of life, and so was joy at new birth, an excellent harvest, or a long season of peace.

We have lost that connection, that sense of everything and everyone (even perceived enemies) being related. We have landed in our own place of paradox.

We know so much more about the workings of our world and society, and we have at our disposal such a glut of information, misinformation, and disinformation that even with the best intentions it is hard to keep alert in the blizzard of data overload. Even the popularity of the 'mindfulness' movement is all too often a paradoxical escape from temporal reality.

The most obvious escapists are those who buy into denial of disaster and conspiracy theories to explain whatever they conceive of as a plot against their freedoms, indulging in behaviour that endangers themselves and others in the name of that illusory freedom. Sadly, the need to limit contact with others has turned many of us inward, making our own desires loom larger than the needs of other people or indeed the planet.

Others blame anyone but ourselves for our problems, lamenting the masses of unfillable jobs that are directly related to the xenophobia that causes such shortages. Leaders of nations from America to the UK, Poland, Lithuania, and many others speak with impunity of 'armies of migrants massed on our borders', while turning firehoses on freezing refugees from war and torture or planning detentions in prison-like camps, proposing to dump them like refuse in someone else's country, the latest being Albania!

The earth itself is protesting more obviously than even the thousands of marchers who want to save it. Melting ice from the poles is inundating low-lying countries, shrinking of glaciers in the most majestic of mountains leads to drought, wildfires, and famine.

Changing weather patterns drown our towns or bury them under mudslides or eradicate them with almost unstoppable wildfires.

God made us out of nothing but love to be a part of the exquisite organism of creation, like any other part inextricably related to the whole. When one dies, we all die a little, and when one is saved, so are we all. But this creation, like the fabled Garden of Eden has its own sweet-talking Serpent of human selfishness, and from very early in our history we have talked ourselves out of cooperative relationship into the illusion of dominance and control.

We have denied our interdependence, we have 'othered' and commodified nature, its gifts, and the lives and aspirations of our fellow human beings. What cannot be used for our personal comfort and convenience seemingly no longer matters except as a threat to our cosily encapsulated 'comfort zones', a threat to be ignored or eradicated. Can there possibly be any gift or opportunity in these perceived threats and inconveniences?

Yes, we are beloved children of God, but does not the loving God who made us weep for our self-destructive folly? If we are too oblivious to comfort other living creatures, be they trees or streams or our fellow human beings have we not lost our own claim on comfort and security? How can we dare to ask for God's comforting grace unless our honest, active, and effective repentance for our greed, and selfish cruelty make some attempt to comfort our anguished fellow beings? Yes, God's grace is free, unmerited, and promiscuous, but can we not reach beyond ourselves and even dare to offer some paltry and inadequate comfort to our heart-broken God, whose Advent we await?

#### **14 - Intercessions [ROBERT]**

I ask your prayers for peace in the life of the world; for a just use of the planet's resources; that the kingdom of God may be fulfilled

Pray for God's peace.

*Silence*

I ask your prayers for all who suffer injury, sickness and loss, for those close to our hearts ..... (*Silence*), for those who are far from us; that none may lose hope.

Pray for all who are afflicted.            *Silence*

I ask your prayers for all who wield authority and influence, for the people of Ukraine and Russia, for leaders of nations who can shape war or peace.

Pray for all who exercise power.        *Silence*

I ask your prayers, as the people called to love one another, for all whom we have wronged in action or neglect.

Pray for all who hate us.            *Silence*

I ask your prayers for Bishop Kevin, for the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil, for the congregations of Christ Church, Lanark, and St Paul and St John the Evangelist, Monklands; for the fostering of vocations and those who help to discern and develop them; and for all whom Christ has appointed to his service.

Pray for God's people.            *Silence*

I ask your prayers for our communities, for schools and colleges, all students and staff; that our young people may have modelled the life of work and love.

Pray for our Communities.        *Silence*

Give thanks to God for all in whom Christ has been honoured, who have modelled for us the way to wait with hope: for John Taylor, Bishop; for Eleanor Child and Kathleen Riding.

May they Rest in Peace, **and Rise in Glory**

Holy God, receive the prayers of your people as the time approaches, for You are our Hope in all things. **Amen.**

# Communion

## 17 - Offertory - [OLIVER]

Jesus tells his disciples to look for signs.

I sure hope that when you engage with worship at this Cathedral you find signs of God's presence—that the prayer and music, the friendships, the welcome and the encouragement show God's love and God's work in the lives of God's people.

Perhaps you'll want to add another sign—a financial offering that expresses your solidarity, an act of care for this place and the people in it.

To learn more, visit [www.thecathedral.org.uk](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk) and click DONATE TO ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL.

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.**

## 18 - Eucharistic Prayer

[OLIVER] The Lord be with you.

[KELVIN] **And also with you.**

[OLIVER] Lift up your hearts.

[KELVIN] **We lift them to the Lord.**

[OLIVER] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[KELVIN] **It is right to give God 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:

### **SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [MORVEN]**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,  
God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

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 God's children 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.**

**19 - Breaking of the Bread - [OLIVER]**

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.

**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

**20 - Lord's Prayer - [KELVIN]**

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.**

**21 - Communion - [OLIVER]**

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds  
that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and  
was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be  
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for

yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.  
**Amen.**

**24 - Post Communion Prayer - [SUET]**

Almighty God, you have made us a royal priesthood in the kingdom of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Make known his victory through us, we pray, that all the world may see his light. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

**Amen.**

**25 - Blessing - [OLIVER]**

The work of many people has made this worship possible. During grey sky days, these kinds of gifts make a difference. They light things up. Thank you.

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.**

**Voluntary - [STEVEN]**

Chorale Prelude on 'Hark! the glad sound [Bristol] - Gordon Cameron