

The Gathering – first video

Welcome - [KELVIN]

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

Hello and welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow for this worship for the second Sunday in Advent. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I'm the Provost here.

When Advent started, last week, the church began to celebrate a new liturgical year. Everything starts afresh. And for the year ahead, most of the gospel readings will be drawn from Mark's gospel. This is the year of Mark. Occasionally the readings will be supplemented by the other gospel writers but for the most part, it is his voice whom we will hear.

And today we hear the very start of Mark telling his stories about Jesus. But he doesn't start in Bethlehem as many would expect. He starts in the desert, with the emergence of another religious figure altogether who has a cry that echoes through Advent.

Prepare, oh yes, prepare the way of the Lord!

Collect for Purity - [BECKI]

Let us pray.

**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.**

Confession

[AUDREY] 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.

[KELVIN] 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.**

KYRIE- [OLIVER]

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

Collect - [KELVIN]

With tender comfort and transforming power
you come into our midst,
O God of mercy and might.

Make ready a way in the wilderness,
clear a straight path in our hearts,
and form us into a repentant people,
that the advent of your Son
may find us watchful and eager for the glory he reveals.

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 – second video

GOSPEL: Mark 1.1-8 – [OLIVER]

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

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight” ’,

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

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

Sermon [AUDREY]

Each year, if you come to church during Advent, you will hear messages about slowing down, not trying to make Christmas come too soon, and taking your time with preparations in your heart and in your home for the coming of Christ.

Not this year.

Sorry, that's not the message you're going to hear from me this year. Do we need to be patient? Of course. Do we need to be complacent? Absolutely not. So, That part is the same.

But this year is going to be very different for most us. We won't be able to gather in the ways we are used to. We can't travel as much. We can't participate in some of the rituals we know and love – like the Advent carol service right here at Saint Mary's or visiting Santa with our little ones.

I'm preaching this sermon sitting at home with full view of the fairy lights strung out on my front porch and in the bushes. My Christmas tree was just delivered, which set off my dog barking, and I had to start filming again. There are more fairy lights being delivered this afternoon and my goal is to light up the plants in our back garden before I go get the kids from nursery. I am usually militantly anti-celebrate Christmas too early – but not this year. This year, the knowledge that Christ will come at Christmas is the balm getting me through this season. So if you venture up to my neighborhood, I make no apologies, my house is lit up and proclaiming the birth of our Lord and it will probably stay that way, at least, until Ash Wednesday.

My neighbor recently expressed weariness at the thought of needing to decorate for Christmas while homeschooling her daughter because of covid exposure in the classroom. My response: there is no "need" to decorate, unless it will bring you a sense of peace or joy. We don't have to do things over the top to make up for the fact that things are weird this year.

Prepare for the coming of our Lord in the way that meets you where you are, and in the way that invites you forward in your walk with God.

In the reading from 2 Peter we are urged not to “ignore the fact: that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day...”

No wonder we are constantly being told to slow down and take our time during Advent, this season is an eternity for God. I joke, but only just.

This year has simultaneously felt like it hasn't begun and like it has lasted forever. This is as close as I will ever come to understanding what Kairos, or God's time, is like. I can't shake the feeling that it should be April and I should be getting ready to bring my 4-month-old home to meet my family for Easter. But, at the same time, I know that I went and picked up a new play pen to secure my Christmas tree from being demolished by a super mobile 12-month-old who lives in my house. This year has been both a single day and a thousand years all at once.

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation. It is a time for repenting of the evil that enslaves us and for renewing our hearts to make room for the hope to come. But this year, I feel like the waiting needs to take a back seat to the Joy. The patience needs to step aside in favor of the peace. The call to keep awake needs to make space for a holy rest.

“In accordance with God's promise, we will wait for new heavens and a new earth,” and a vaccine to restore some sense of normalcy in our lives... But we won't wait to welcome the newborn baby Jesus, because Joy is in short supply these days and baby therapy fixes everything.

Prepare for Christmas however you need to – God will meet you there.

Intercessions [PAT]

Emmanuel

We pray for those for whom this Advent will not be a time of watchful waiting but of unremitting busyness:

For those in the retail, service, and delivery industries; and all in front line medical, vaccination, and support services -

May they find time for rest and relaxation, peace and preparation; and time to be with families and friends.

We remember all who minister in and support the work of churches throughout the world as they prepare to celebrate your Nativity - praying especially today for Bishop Kevin, for those who serve in the Reformed Episcopal church in Spain, and for the churches of St John the Evangelist in Annan, in Eastriggs, and in Moffat; and the churches of All Saints, in Gretna, and in Lockerbie

May they find places for watching and wonder and know again the joyful thrill of Advent's anticipation .

Emmanuel, God with us - hear our prayer

We pray for those for whom this Advent will not be a time of pleasurable anticipation but of grappling with present harsh reality.

For those who living with the fall-out of Covid and Brexit; those trying to make ends meet so they can feed and clothe their families; all who face winter on the streets or in refugee camps;

May they encounter generosity in friend and stranger and find shelter and comfort in the midst storms.

And we pray for all who work to support those on the margins; those who speak out and work for justice, and all who labour to bring light and peace into dark and troubled places. May they see dawn softening the darkness of night.

Emmanuel, God with us - hear our prayer

We pray for those for whom this Advent will not be a time of comfort and hope but of distress and loneliness.

For those in the grip of ill health, weary in spirit or isolated from family and friends; for all facing death or mourning the loss of those they love; remembering especially those affected by the events at Avonmouth; for the family and friends of Thomas McIlwraith and Elma Johnstone whose year's mind falls today

May all who suffer be comforted and consoled and feel again the certainty that spring will return.

And we pray for all those who work to relieve suffering and distress, and who watch and wait with the dying and support the bereaved. May they find strength and resilience for their task and know in turn the healing hands of love holding them.

Emmanuel, God with us - hear our prayer

And we pray for ourselves in this season of Advent
that you, Emmanuel, will fire our imagination,
stretch our living
and energise our acting
That we may always be ready
for your coming
however and wherever
it happens. Amen

Communion – third video

Offertory - [KELVIN]

In our own way, we each get to hear the invitation of the Baptist each year at Advent – prepare the way of the Lord. There's things that need to be done in order to be able to welcome Christ and proclaim him to the world. One of the ways we do that is by joining together to ensure that the church is prepared and ready for all that is to come in order that it can proclaim the good news. If you would like to join those who give financially to this place, please go to thecathedral.org.uk and click on DONATE TO ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL.

And thank you.

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.

Eucharistic Prayer - [KELVIN]

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,
in every place and at all times.

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:

**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 his 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 our brothers and sisters 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.

Breaking of the Bread

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

Lord's Prayer - [AUDREY]

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.**

Communion - [KELVIN]

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.

Music at Communion - [MORVEN]

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing, which I do relate,
Is that God did man create
The next thing, which to you I tell,
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose
And so a promise soon did run
That he would redeem us by his Son.

And at that season of the year
Our blest Redeemer did appear
He here did live, and here did preach,
And many thousands he did teach.

Thus He in love to us behaved,
To show us how we must be saved
And if you want to know the way
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

Post Communion Prayer - [BECKI]

Let us pray...

Faithful God, we thank you for feeding us with this heavenly banquet. Help us always to hear the prophet's call to turn our hearts to you; in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Amen.

Blessing - [KELVIN]

It has been good to join together in worship today. I'll be online at 1 pm on Sunday as usual for the online coffee hour. The details of how to join that are in the weekly email that I send to those who want to receive it. To get the emails, just sign up at thecathedral.org.uk and remember to check your spam or junk mail box if you haven't received the confirmation email.

But now the blessing...

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and illuminate the path before you; 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]

Fantasia (Variations on Veni Emmanuel, Var. XI) - John Ellis

Picture at the Gospel

Unknown - *Saint Mark*, about 1325–1345, Tempera colors and gold leaf on parchment

Leaf: 19.2 × 14.5 cm (7 9/16 × 5 11/16 in.), Ms. 70 (2002.23), verso

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 70, verso

Picture at communion

Initial D: Saint John the Baptist

[Matteo da Milano](#) (Italian, active 1492 - 1523)

about 1520

Tempera and gold on parchment

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Ms. 87 (2004.65), fol. 4

*A hymn and materials for Young Church are available on the online
worship page at www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship.*