

The Cathedral Eucharist

Sunday, 21st December, 2025

The Fourth Sunday of Advent



The President today is the Reverend Su McClellan, Cathedral Associate Minister. The Deacon is the Reverend Kate Massey, Canon for Arts and Reconciliation. The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry, is sub-deacon. Our preacher today is the Reverend Nitano Muller, Canon for Worship and Welcome.

The Cathedral Choir is directed by Joe Watson, Acting Director of Music. The organists are Liam Condon, Assistant Director of Music, and Adam Heron, Organ Scholar. The service setting is Communion Service in C and F by Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924).

We encourage our visitors to take photographs of our beautiful cathedral, but please no photography during the service. Thank you.

The Collect

God our redeemer,
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The First Reading

Read by Canon Margaret Sedgwick, Reader Emeritus, representing the Cathedral community.

A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah.

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.

¹³Then Isaiah said: ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted..

Isaiah 7.10–16

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Luke 1.45

The Gospel Reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ ²²All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ ‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel’,
which means, ‘God is with us.’

²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Offertory Hymn

**The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favoured lady,' *Gloria!***

**'For known a blessed mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honour thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favoured lady.' *Gloria!***

**Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said.
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name.'
Most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!***

**Of her Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn.
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
Most highly favoured lady. *Gloria!***

Words by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)
Basque Carol arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

A spotless Rose is blowing
sprung from a tender root,
of ancient seers' foreshowing,
of Jesse promised fruit;
Its fairest bud unfolds to light
amid the cold, cold winter
and in the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,
whereof Isaiah said,
is from its sweet root springing
in Mary, purest Maid;
for through our God's great love and might
the blessed babe she bare us
in a cold, cold winter's night.

*from Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen,
paraphrased by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)
Music by Herbert Howells (1892-1983)*

Communion Hymn

**Now let us from this table rise
renewed in body, mind and soul;
with Christ we die and rise again,
his selfless love has made us whole.**

**With minds alert, upheld by grace,
to spread the word in speech and deed,
we follow in the steps of Christ,
at one with all in hope and need.**

**To fill each human house with love,
it is the sacrament of care;
the work that Christ began to do
we humbly pledge ourselves to share.**

**Then grant us grace, Companion-God,
to choose again the pilgrim way,
and help us to accept with joy
the challenge of tomorrow's day.**

*Words by Fred Kaan (1929-2009)
Tune CP 315 Solothurn (Swiss traditional melody)*

Post Communion

Eternal God,
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,
so we wait for his coming in glory;
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age
to see, with her, our great salvation
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord:
unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name:
make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might:
powers and dominions lay their glory by;
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word:
firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore.**

*Words by Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)
Tune CP 362 Woodlands Walter Greatorex (1877-1949)*

Voluntary

Please do stay for the organ voluntary, played by Liam Condon.

Veni ad Salvandum Nos (trad)

If you would like to make a one-off donation to the Cathedral via your phone, or set up a recurring donation, please use the QR code below. There are also contactless donation points and collection boxes near the entrance.

Thank you for your support.



*If you would like to revisit this morning's sermon, please visit this page:
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/worship-music/services/sermons>*

*We serve refreshments at the back of the Nave after this service, so
please feel free to stay for a chat over a cup of tea or coffee!*

DAILY SERVICES AT THE CATHEDRAL

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

(followed on Thursdays by *BCP Holy Communion*)

4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

(or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: *Choral Evensong*, 5:15 - 6pm)

Saturday

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*

4 – 5pm: *BCP Evening Prayer (Choral Evensong during term time)*

JOINING OUR CHOIRS

Do you know a child who loves to sing? Boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 10 are welcome to audition for the Cathedral Boys' and Girls' Choirs. They sing an average of four times per week during term time in recordings, services and concerts. Children receive a world-class music education completely free and even receive scholarship payments. Please get in touch with the Director of Music to learn more:

rachel.mahon@coventrycathedral.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding

You can report a concern using the same link or by contacting Jane Williams, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, calling 024 7650 2349 or by emailing JaneMLWill@aol.com

Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price: 024 7652 1345 or safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org

COMMUNITY NEWS

Advent and Christmas Services

Please visit our Cathedral website for the upcoming Advent and Christmas services and events.

Please take a copy of the Christmas program on the community table or visit the Cathedral website. www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/christmas

COMING SOON

Carols by Candlelight

TODAY, 21 December at 5pm

Our traditional carol service lit by hundreds of candles in the Cathedral. A chance to sing your favourite carols and hear stunning singing from the Cathedral Choirs with a sequence of Christmas readings.

La Nativité du Seigneur – Messiaen

Monday, 22 December at 5pm

Richard Lea will perform one of the greatest organ works of all time, Olivier Messiaen's festive masterpiece *La Nativité du Seigneur*. The work features 9 movements that meditate on the mystery of Christ's birth and these will be interspersed with reflective readings.

Carols for Families

Wednesday, 24 December at 2.30pm

A fun, interactive retelling of the Christmas story with singalong carols. A lighter take on Christmas, children are welcome to come dressed as nativity characters and everyone is welcome!

Form of A Servant

Wednesday, 24 December at 7pm

The Cathedral's unique reflection on the Christmas story with peace at its heart, a sequence of moving music, readings and prayers.

Christmas Day

Thursday, 25 December 2025 at 10.30am

Join us for our traditional Christmas Day Eucharist, with Bishop Sophie as our preacher.