

## Morning Prayer on Wednesday 23 December 2020

*Please either print this off or have it available on another device so that you can follow the service and join in those parts said by all of us.*

### *Preparation*

O Lord, open our lips

**All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Reveal among us the light of your presence.

**All that we may behold your power and glory.**

Blessed are you, Sovereign God of all,  
to you be praise and glory for ever.

In your tender compassion

the dawn from on high is breaking upon us  
to dispel the lingering shadows of night.

As we look for your coming among us this day,  
open our eyes to behold your presence

and strengthen our hands to do your will,

that the world may rejoice and give you praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

### ***A Song of the King's glory – we say this together***

- 1 The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it,  
the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2 For he has founded it upon the seas  
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3 'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord,  
or who can rise up in his holy place?'
- 4 'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart,  
who have not lifted up their soul to an idol nor sworn an oath to a lie;
- 5 They shall receive a blessing from the Lord,  
a just reward from the God of their salvation.'
- 6 Such is the company of those who seek him,  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors;  
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 'Who is the King of glory!'  
'The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord who is mighty in battle.'
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up you everlasting doors:  
and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10 'Who is this King of glory?'  
'The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.'

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;  
let us pray with one heart and mind.

*A short time of silence follows.*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
so may the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

*The Word of God*

**Psalm 130**

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

2 Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

4 But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning,  
more than those who watch for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem.

8 It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

***The first reading is from the Book of Isaiah, chapter 55***

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the

Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

**The second reading is from the second letter of Peter, chapter 4, 2 - end**

For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgement; and if he did not spare the ancient world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly; and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgement —especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

Bold and wilful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring against them a slanderous judgement from the Lord. These people, however, are like irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed. They slander what they do not understand, and when those creatures are destroyed, they also will be destroyed, suffering the penalty for doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, revelling in their dissipation while they feast with you. They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! They have left the straight road and have gone astray, following the road of Balaam son of Bosor, who loved the wages of doing wrong, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the deepest darkness has been reserved. For they speak bombastic nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just escaped from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb,

'The dog turns back to its own vomit',

and,

'The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud.'

This is the word of the Lord

*All*     **Thanks be to God**

***A short silence will follow***

***The Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah) - we say this together***

*All*     **Like the sun in the morning sky  
the Saviour of the world will dawn;  
like rain upon the meadows,  
the Christ will come down upon us.**

1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,  
who has come to his people and set them free.

2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,

born of the house of his servant David.

- 3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old to save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all that hate us,
- 4 To show mercy to our ancestors,  
and to remember his holy covenant.
- 5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
- 6 Free to worship him without fear,  
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
- 7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
- 8 To give his people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of all their sins.
- 9 In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- 10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**All Like the sun in the morning sky  
the Saviour of the world will dawn;  
like rain upon the meadows,  
the Christ will come down upon us.**

#### ***Intercessions are offered***

Response: Lord, in your mercy  
**hear our prayer.**

#### ***The Collect of the day***

God our redeemer,  
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the mother of your Son;  
grant us, 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.

**All Amen.**

#### ***The Lord's Prayer***

Awaiting his coming in glory,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**All Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
But deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
The power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

### **The Conclusion**

May the Lord, when he comes,  
find us watching and waiting.  
*All* **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**