

Face Coverings

As per government guidelines

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/> and guidelines from the church leaders, please wear a face covering in church, unless you have a condition, or are in a specified category which exempts you from wearing a mask.

Those who are leading/reading at the service may remove their face covering whilst they are leading/reading but must observe social-distancing whilst doing so.

Contact Tracing

We are obliged to get the contact details of everyone who attends this service. These will only be used in the event of someone attending the service being diagnosed with Covid-19, in which event, they will be passed to the health authorities for Contact Tracing purposes. Please complete the form which is available at the church doors and drop into the box provided.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the congregation is not permitted to sing in church this morning. Charles Pearson, our organist, is going to play the tune of the hymns chosen for this service and I invite you to reflect upon the words which have been included in this service sheet as you listen to the music.

The Gathering of God's People

p. 101 (L.P. p.37)

*The Lord be with you
and also with you.*

*God has called us:
to bring good news to the poor,
to live with integrity.*

*God has called us:
to heal the broken-hearted,
to bring just to the hungry.*

*God has called us:
to hold on to what is good,
to avoid every form of evil.*

*The Spirit of God is in us:
we are the people of God.*

Hymn No. 141 (TATDOE)

*These are the days of Elijah,
declaring the word of the Lord;
and these are the days of your
servant Moses,
righteousness being restored.
And though these are days of great
trial,
of famine and darkness and sword,
still we are a voice in the desert
crying
'Prepare ye the way of the Lord'.*

*Behold he comes
riding on the clouds,
shining like the sun
at the trumpet call;
lift your voice,
it's the year of jubilee,
out of Zion's hill
salvation comes.*

These are the days of Ezekiel,
the dry bones becoming as flesh;
and these are the days of your
servant David,
rebuilding a temple of praise.
These are the days of the harvest,
the fields are as white in the world,
and we are the labourers in your
vineyard
declaring the word of the Lord.

Lighting the Third Candle on the Advent Wreath



Three candles are lit on the Advent Wreath.

In this season of Advent, we are here
to watch and wait and pray for the
coming of the light into the world.
We long for the day when the things
of darkness - selfishness and greed,
suffering and oppression - shall be no
more.

The candles on our Advent Wreath
will remind us of the story of how,
through the years, through different
people, and finally in Jesus Christ,
God's Kingdom comes on earth.

The first candle is to remind us of
the patriarchs (the leaders God sent
before Jesus). The second candle is
to remind us of the prophets, and now
the third candle for John the Baptist,
who called people to change their way
of living to prepare for the coming of
Christ. We light the third candle for
all God's messengers, preparing the
way for change, signs pointing to a
new age to come.

***God, as we wait for your promise,
give light, give hope.***

The light shines in the darkness and
the darkness has never put it out.
God sent his messenger, a man named
John, who came to tell people about
the light, so that all should hear the
message and believe. *[John 1: 5-7]*

***Disturbing God,
we thank you for the witness of
John the Baptist.
Help us to be open to the changing
power of your love,
and to be true witnesses to the
power of Jesus in our lives. Amen.***

Hymn - Three Candles (Frère Jacques)

[Repeat each line]

Three candles,
burning slow.
Advent weeks of waiting,
one-and-a-bit to go.

Shepherds listening,
in the night.
Will they hear the angels
sing tonight?

The Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree shows Jesus' family tree. Today, we are putting a shepherd's crook and harp for David, a stone altar for Elijah, an empty tent for Hezekiah, a fire tongs with a hot coal for Isaiah, tears for Jeremiah, a stone watch tower for Habakkuk and a city wall for Nehemiah, on the tree.



The Preface

Beloved in Christ, we come together to offer to Almighty God our worship and praise and thanksgiving, to confess our sins and to receive God's forgiveness, to hear his holy word proclaimed, to bring before him our needs and the needs of the world, and to pray that in the power of his Spirit we may serve him and know the greatness of his love.

Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

[Please kneel or sit]

**Heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you and
against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through
weakness, through our own
deliberate fault;
by what we have done and by what
we have failed to do.
We are truly sorry and repent of
all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus
Christ who died for us,
forgive us all that is past;
and grant that we may serve you in
newness of life to the glory of your
name. Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy on you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

[Please stand]

O Lord, open our lips
**and our mouth shall proclaim your
praise.**

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

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

Praise the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Psalm - Hymn No. 124 (St. Magnus)

Hark the glad sound! The Saviour
comes,
the Saviour promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

He comes the prisoners to release,
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
the wounded soul to cure;
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
your welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your belovèd name.

[Please sit]

The Reading - John 1: 6-8, 19-28

6 There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John. ⁷He came as a
witness to testify to the light, so that
all might believe through him. ⁸He
himself was not the light, but he came
to testify to the light.

19 This is the testimony given by John
when the Jews sent priests and
Levites from Jerusalem to ask him,
'Who are you?' ²⁰He confessed and did
not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not
the Messiah.' ²¹And they asked him,
'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said,
'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He
answered, 'No.' ²²Then they said to
him, 'Who are you? Let us have an
answer for those who sent us. What
do you say about yourself?' ²³He said,
'I am the voice of one crying out
in the wilderness,
"Make straight the way of the Lord" ',
as the prophet Isaiah said.

24 Now they had been sent from the
Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, 'Why
then are you baptizing if you are
neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor
the prophet?' ²⁶John answered them,
'I baptize with water. Among you
stands one whom you do not know,
²⁷the one who is coming after me; I
am not worthy to untie the thong of
his sandal.' ²⁸This took place in
Bethany across the Jordan where
John was baptizing.

Here ends the Reading.

**Canticle: Hymn No. 128 (Little
Cornard)**

Hills of the north, rejoice,
river and mountain-spring,
hark to the advent voice;
valley and lowland, sing.
Christ comes in righteousness and
love,
he brings salvations from above.

Isles of the southern seas,
sing to the listening earth;
carry on every breeze
hope of the world's new birth:
in Christ shall all be made anew;
his word is sure, his promise true.

Lands of the east, arise!
He is your brightest morn;
greet him with joyous eyes,
praise shall his path adorn:
the God whom you have longed to
know
in Christ draws near, and calls you
now.

Shores of the utmost west,
lands of the setting sun,
welcome the heavenly guest
in whom the dawn has come:
he brings a never-ending light,
who triumphed o'er our darkest night.

Shout as you journey home;
songs be in every mouth!
Lo, from the north they come,
from east and west and south:
in Jesus all shall find their rest,

in him the longing earth be blessed.

The Apostles' Creed

p.112 (L.P. p.48)

***I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of
the Father,
and he will come again to judge the
living and the dead.***

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

The Prayers of the People

**The Lord be with you
and also with you.**

[Please sit or kneel]

Let us pray.

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

The Lord's Prayer

The Versicles and Responses

Show us your mercy, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.

O Lord, guide and defend our rulers
and grant our government wisdom.

Let your ministers be clothed with
 righteousness
and let your servants shout for joy.

O Lord, save your people
***and bless those whom who have
 chosen.***

Give peace in our time, O Lord,
***and let your glory be over all the
 earth.***

O God, make clean our hearts within
 us
and renew us by your Holy Spirit.

The Collect of the 3rd Sunday in Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ,
 who at your first coming sent your
 messenger
 to prepare your way before you:

grant that the ministers and stewards
 of your mysteries
 may likewise so prepare and make
 ready your way
 by turning the hearts of the
 disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
 that at your second coming to judge
 the world
 we may be found an acceptable people
 in your sight;
 for you are alive and reign with the
 Father and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, world without end. ***Amen***

*This Collect is said after the Collect of the day until
 Christmas Eve.*

Almighty God,
***give us grace that we may cast
 away the works of darkness,
 and put upon us the armour of light,
 now in the time of this mortal life,
 in which thy Son Jesus Christ
 came to visit us in great humility;
 that in the last day,
 when he shall come again in his
 glorious Majesty
 to judge both the quick and the
 dead,
 we may rise to the life immortal;
 through him who liveth and reigneth
 with thee
 and the Holy Spirit, now and ever.
 Amen***

The Prayers

Hymn No. 132 (Helmsley)

Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
 once for favoured sinners slain;
 thousand thousand saints attending
 swell the triumph of his train:
 alleluia!
 God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
 robed in dreadful majesty;
 we who set at nought and sold him,
 pierced, and nailed him to the tree:
 Lord, have mercy,
 let us all thine Advent see.

Those dear tokens of his Passion
 still his dazzling body bears,
 cause of endless exultation
 to his ransomed worshippers:
 with what rapture
 gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
 high on thine eternal throne;
 Saviour, take the power and glory;
 claim the kingdom for thine own:
 O come quickly,
 everlasting God, come down.

The Sermon**Hymn No. 131 (Gonfalon Royal)**

Lift up your heads, you mighty gates;
 behold, the king of glory waits!
 the King of kings is drawing near;
 the Saviour of the world is here.

O blessed the land, the city blessed,
 where Christ the ruler is confessed!
 O happy hearts and happy homes
 to whom this King in triumph comes.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
 make it a temple set apart
 from earthly use for heaven's employ,
 adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come, with us abide!
 our hearts to you we open wide:
 let us your inner presence feel;
 your grace and love in us reveal.
 Amen.

The Blessing for Advent

May God wrap us in integrity,
 clothe us in salvation,
 and adorn us with beauty and joy.

And may the blessing of the God,
 Protector, Perfecter and Spirit of
 Joy,
 surround us all our nights and days.
 Amen.

The Dismissal

Be happy.

Be holy.

Rejoice in God.

Be brave.

Love justice.

Rejoice in God.

Be merciful.
Walk wisely.
Rejoice in God.

Be good.
Avoid evil.
Rejoice in God.



Advent Reflections by Zoom

**Tuesdays in Advent
20.00 hours**

**Tuesday 15th December 2020
Tuesday 22nd December 2020**

This is a series on Christ in the time of strife through the memories of Mary. In these narratives, we will be looking at the Gospel stories of the Nativity in a different order.

The Zoom details are the same for each Tuesday.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86910597531?pwd=TTRsWnE1YnJlTHlvSEpwQU14OURuQT09>

Meeting ID: 869 1059 7531
Passcode: 471837

You can also join by phone:

Dial by your location
(01) 653 3897

Meeting ID: 869 1059 7531
Passcode: 471837

**MOUNT MERRION SELECT
VESTRY MEETING
MONDAY 14TH DECEMBER
2020
20.00 BY ZOOM**

Plans for Christmas 2020

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7ba40-guidance-for-religious-services/>

The above is the link to the information that is available so far regarding religious services during Advent and Christmas 2020. All the details are in the Christmas Newsletter which is now available.

The services next Sunday are:

Sunday 20th December 2020

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church



**10.30 'A Quiet Christmas' in St Philip and St James' Church
(live-streamed)**

A quiet and reflective service for those who may not want the 'razzle-dazzle' of Christmas. This service is particularly designed with those who have been bereaved or ill during the year in mind.

We ask parents not to bring their children to this service as 'quiet' and children do not often work well together!



**16.30 Christingle Service by Zoom
from St Philip and St James' Church
(live-streamed)**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89678642244?pwd=M3NGMHBITXIEU0ITSUkrSk00NXRjQT09>

Unfortunately, due to government restrictions regarding COVID-19, we are not able to have any carol singing (indoors or outdoors) and we may not have more than 15 at an outdoor service. Therefore, our plans to have an outdoor Carol Service have had to be cancelled.

Wednesday 23rd December 2020

10.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

**Thursday 24th December 2020
– Christmas Eve**

21.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

23.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

**Friday 25th December 2020 –
Christmas Day**

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Holy Communion in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)

Sunday 27th December 2020

8.30 Holy Communion in St Thomas' Church

10.30 Service of the Word in St Philip and St James' Church (live-streamed)