

*St Stephen's Church, Canterbury*

# Looking for the Light



**Advent Sunday 2021**  
**4.00pm**



This service is being live-streamed onto YouTube and our website for those who are unable to attend in person. By attending this service, you may appear online.



An induction loop system for the hard of hearing is installed in our Church. Hearing aid users should adjust their aid to 'T'



Large print orders of service are available from the sidespersons. Please ask.



Toilet facilities are available in the Church Hall. Please ask a Sidesperson for directions.

*The Choir and clergy assemble in silence. We STAND as the choir sings*

## Choir

### **I look from afar**

*adapted from a Magnificat by Palestrina (c. 1525–1594)*

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

High and low, rich and poor, one with another, go ye out to meet him and say: Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep, tell us, art thou he that should come? Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

*We remain STANDING to sing the hymn*

## Hymn

### **Hark! a herald voice is calling**

*NEH 5*

### *Bidding Prayer*

In the name of God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, we welcome you: grace to you and peace.

We are gathered together to proclaim and receive in our hearts the good news of the coming of God's kingdom, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate with confidence and joy the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We pray that we may respond in penitence and faith to the glory of his kingdom, its works of justice and its promise of peace, its blessing and its hope.

And as we seek to renew our allegiance to God's loving purpose, we pray for all who at this time especially need his pity and protection: the sick in body, mind or spirit; those who suffer from loss of dignity or loss of hope; those who face the future with fear, or walk in the shadow of death.

May God, of his grace and mercy, grant to all his people a new trust in his good providence and a new obedience to his sovereign word, for to him is most justly due all glory, honour, worship and praise, world without end.

All

**Amen.**

*We SIT for the first reading*

## Reading 1

## Genesis 1: 1–5

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Thanks be to God.

*We STAND to sing the hymn*

## Hymn

### **Creator of the stars of night** NEH 1

*At the end of the hymn, the congregation SITS and the choir sings the psalm*

## Choir

### **Psalm 13**

*Chants by William Croft and Thomas Tomkins*

- 1 How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?  
how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
- 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?  
how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?
- 3 Consider and hear me, O Lord my God:  
lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;
- 4 lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him;  
and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.
- 5 But I have trusted in thy mercy;  
my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.
- 6 I will sing unto the Lord,  
because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,  
and see the joy that is coming to you from God.  
Look, your children are coming, whom you sent away;  
they are coming, gathered from east and west,  
at the word of the Holy One,  
rejoicing in the glory of God.

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem,  
and put on for ever the beauty of the glory from God.  
Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God;  
put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting;  
for God will show your splendour everywhere under heaven.  
For God will give you evermore the name,  
'Righteous Peace, Godly Glory'.

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height;  
look towards the east,  
and see your children gathered from west and east  
at the word of the Holy One,  
rejoicing that God has remembered them.  
For they went out from you on foot,  
led away by their enemies;  
but God will bring them back to you,  
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.  
For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills  
be made low  
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,  
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.  
The woods and every fragrant tree  
have shaded Israel at God's command.  
For God will lead Israel with joy,  
in the light of his glory,  
with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Thanks be to God.

*At the end of the reading we STAND to sing the hymn*

*We SIT for the third reading*

**Reading 3**

*Isaiah 9: 2–3, 6–7*

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:  
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,  
upon them hath the light shined.  
Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy:  
they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest,  
and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.  
For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder:  
and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,  
The mighty God,  
The everlasting Father,  
The Prince of Peace.  
Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,  
upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,  
to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice  
from henceforth even for ever.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Thanks be to God.

*We STAND to sing the hymn*

*At the end of the hymn we SIT for the fourth reading*

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Thanks be to God.

## Choir

### **This is the truth sent from above**

*traditional English carol, arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*

- 1            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.
- 2            The first thing, which I do relate,  
              That God at first did man create  
              The next thing, which to you I tell,  
              Woman was made with him to dwell.
- 3            Thus we were heirs to endless woes,  
              Till God the Lord did interpose  
              For so a promise soon did run  
              That He'd redeem us with a Son.

- 4           And at this season of the year  
              Our blest Redeemer did appear  
              He here did live, and here did preach,  
              And many thousands He did teach.
- 5           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.

## Reading 5

## John 3: 16–21

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Thanks be to God.

## Choir

### **O thou the central orb**

*Words by Henry Ramsden Bramley (1833–1917)*

*Music by Charles Wood (1866–1926)*

O Thou, the central orb of righteous love,  
Pure beam of the most High, eternal Light  
Of this our wintry world, Thy radiance bright  
Awakes new joy in faith, hope soars above.

Come, quickly come, and let thy glory shine,  
Gilding our darksome heaven with rays Divine.

Thy saints with holy lustre round Thee move,  
As stars about thy throne, set in the height  
Of God's ordaining counsel, as Thy sight  
Gives measured grace to each, Thy power to prove.

Let Thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin,  
Our nature all shall feel eternal day  
In fellowship with thee, transforming clay  
To souls erewhile unclean, now pure within. Amen.

# Prayers of Intercession

*We SIT or KNEEL*

Watchful at all times,  
let us pray for strength to stand with confidence  
before our Maker and Redeemer.  
That God may bring in his kingdom with justice and mercy,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That God may establish among the nations  
his sceptre of righteousness,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures  
and recognize him in the breaking of the bread,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That God may bind up the brokenhearted,  
restore the sick  
and raise up all who have fallen,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That the light of God's coming may dawn  
on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

That, with all the saints in light,  
we may shine forth as lights for the world,

*All* let us pray to the Lord:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

All Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us  
**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.**

We commend ourselves and all for whom we pray  
to the mercy and protection of our heavenly Father:

*Silence is kept.*

Almighty God,  
as your blessed Son Jesus Christ  
first came to seek and to save the lost;  
so may he come again to find in us  
the completion of his redeeming work;  
for he is now alive  
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

*We STAND to sing the hymn*

# Hymn

## ○ come, ○ come, Emmanuel

*arranged by Andrew Carter (b. 1939)*

1 ○ come, ○ come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*Lower voices* 2 ○ come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.

*Higher voices* 3 ○ come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

4 ○ come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.

5 ○ come, Adonai, Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,  
In ancient times didst give the law  
In cloud and majesty and awe.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*We remain STANDING for the Blessing*

## Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,  
scatter the darkness from before your path,  
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

### *Closing responses*

O Lord Jesus Christ, come at evening time with light,  
and in the morning with your glory:

Choir **To guide our feet into the way of peace.**

He who receives our prayers says: Surely I come quickly.  
I am the root and offspring of David, I am the bright and the morning star.

Choir **Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

*Music: Stephen Barker (b. 1977)*

*The service concludes with the organ voluntary*

### **Toccata on 'Veni Emmanuel'**

*Andrew Carter (b. 1939)*