

04TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – 24 DEC 2023

HOME SERVICE GUIDE

A very warm welcome to everyone who has joined us for our worship service this morning.



GREETING AND WELCOME

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Purple – Love or Bethlehem Candle)

Today, on this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the fourth candle in our Advent wreath, which is purple and symbolizes love. It is also called the “Bethlehem Candle” as a reminder of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem – becoming the symbol of love. It was in Bethlehem, where the love of God was played out in a child resting in a manger.

Let us pray

Heavenly Father, we light this forth candle as a reminder of your great love for us. Descended from heaven, born in a manger in Bethlehem, wrapped in flesh – God with us. Guide us as we strive to walk in that love together as a family. Prepare our hearts to receive Jesus, your greatest gift to us. Come, Lord Jesus! Come and dispel the darkness of our world with the light of your love. Amen.

The Lord be with you
And also with you

CANTICLE The Song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55)

- 1. My Soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord: my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.**
 - 2. For He has looked with favour on His lowly servant: from this day all generations will call me blessed.**
 - 3. The Almighty has done great things for me: and Holy is His name.**
 - 4. He has mercy on those who fear Him: in every generation.**
 - 5. He has shown the strength of His arm: he has scattered the proud in their conceit.**
 - 6. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones: and has lifted up the lowly.**
 - 7. He has filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he has sent away empty.**
 - 8. He has come to the help of His servant Israel: for He has remembered His promise of mercy.**
 - 9. The promise He made to our forebears: to Abraham and His children for ever.**
- Amen**

COLLECT FOR PURITY (APB P 105)

Let us pray

Almighty God to whom all hearts are open all desires known and from whom no secrets are hid: 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

PENITENCE

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments depend all the law and prophets.

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins (firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with our neighbour).

(Silence may be kept)

Almighty God, our heavenly Father in penitence we confess that we have sinned against you through our own fault in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. For the sake of your Son, Christ our Lord forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your Name.

ABSOLUTION

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

THE COLLECT

Let us pray

God of Elizabeth and Mary: make our hearts leap with joy, fill our mouths with songs of praise and make us ready to welcome the Christ in our midst; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. Amen.

OUR PARISH PRAYER

Lord our God, thank you for calling St Augustine's to be your church in our city. Help us to welcome you in all people, to praise you in prayer and worship, to love you, through serving this parish and the community, to travel and grow in faith together, to be a community of love and service in our world through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Word of God (APB p 107)

THE FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

PSALM: Psalm 89:1-4,19-27

THE SECOND READING: Romans 16:25-27

GRADUAL HYMN: SOF 395 (v 1, 3, 6, 7) My God how wonderful you are

My God, how wonderful thou art,
Thy majesty how bright,
How beautiful thy mercy-seat,
In depths of burning light!

How wonderful, how beautiful,
The sight of thee must be,
Thine endless wisdom, boundless power,
And awesome purity!

No earthly father loves like thee,
No mother, e'er so mild,
Bears and forbears as thou hast done
With me thy sinful child.

Father of Jesus, love's reward,
What rapture will it be
Prostrate before thy throne to lie,
And gaze and gaze on thee.

THE GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

NICENE CREED (APB p 108)

**We believe in one God
the Father, the Almighty
maker of heaven and earth
Of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ
the only Son of God
eternally begotten of the Father
God from God, Light from Light
true God from true God
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life
who proceeds from the Father and the Son
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

SERMON

THE PRAYERS – FORM B

THE PEACE (*APB p 115*)

Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace; of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Peace be with you.

THE PRESENTATION OF GIFTS (*APB p116*) Use Your Home-Made Collection Boxes.

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 do we give you. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER (In a language of your choice)

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

**Almighty and everlasting God
we approach the sacrament of your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ;
as sick, we come to the physician of life;
as unclean, to the fountain of mercy;
as blind, to the light of eternal splendour;
as needy, to the Lord of heaven and earth;
as naked, to the King of glory. Amen**

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER (*APB p 516*)

One who is unable to receive the Sacrament physically may make a spiritual communion, and be certain that Christ comes to them in this way as surely as he does in the Sacrament.

*Jesus, may all that is you flow into me.
May your body and blood be my food and drink.
May your passion and death be my strength and life.
Jesus, with you by my side enough has been given.
May the shelter I seek be the shadow of your cross.
Let me not run from the love which you offer
But hold me safe from the forces of evil.
On each of my dyings shed your light and your love.
Keep calling to me until that day comes when, with your saints, I may praise you
forever. Amen*

CONCLUSION (APB p 129)

Give thanks to the Lord for the Lord is gracious
The Lord's mercy endures for ever

**Father almighty we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

PRAYER FOR AFRICA

**God, bless Africa
protect our children
transform our leaders
heal our communities
restore our dignity
and give us peace;
for Jesus Christ's sake.
Amen**

FINAL BLESSING

God of surprises you grant us courage to respond willingly to the mystery of God with us, revealed to all people through Jesus Christ. May we sing of your steadfast love and faithfulness; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and all whom you love and pray for today and always. **Amen**

DISMISSAL (APB 129)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.