



St Andrew's

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The Third Sunday of Advent 17th December 2025

8.00am BCP Holy Communion

President and Preacher: The Rev'd James Sampson-Foster

10.30am Choral Eucharist

President: The Rev'd Canon Edmund Newey

Preacher: The Rev'd James Sampson-Foster

Deacon: Helen Bryant

6.00pm Evensong

Officiant: The Rev'd Canon Edmund Newey

Reflection: Gwyneth Hickman

Welcome to St Andrew's - may God's peace be with you

After the service, please feel free to stay for refreshments—a chance for us all to get to know each other better.

If you have felt something special in this service and want to talk about faith, have a chat with one of the clergy or ministers after the service.

The service sheet gives directions on when to stand or kneel, but please feel free to remain sitting if you prefer. Toilets are available through the arch beside the main entrance.

We have a plate at the back of church for offerings; you will find a link to online giving with the offertory hymn.

Prelude *Symphony No 3 Poco Adagio Saint Saens*

The president welcomes the congregation

Introit *Sung by the choir*

Matin Responsory Palestrina

Please stand

**Opening Hymn 35: Fling wide the gates, unbar the
ancient doors**

The Greeting

The president says

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All And also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
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.
Amen.

Prayers of Penitence at the Advent Wreath

The president says

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

With all your soul, with all your mind,

and with all your strength.’

The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

When the Lord comes,

he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,

and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

During a time of silence, candles are lit on the Advent Wreath.

Heavenly Father,

you call us to prepare for the coming of your Son:

forgive us our unreadiness to receive him.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,

you were proclaimed by John the Baptist:

help us also to prepare your way.

Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

Holy Spirit,
you speak through the prophets:
make us attentive to hear your word.
Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy

Absolution

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
who in his great mercy
has promised forgiveness of sins
to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith
turn to him:
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and bring you to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

The Collect

The president says

Let us pray

Silence is kept.

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

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Please sit

The Liturgy of the Word

The Reading

Isaiah 35.1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

For the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Please stand

**Gradual Hymn 319: Sing we the praises of the great
forerunner**

Gospel Reading

Alleluia, alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

cf Isaiah 40.3–5

All Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Matthew (11.2-11)

We say together

All Glory to you, O Lord

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

We say together

All Praise to you, O Christ

Please sit

Please stand

**All 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.

Please sit or kneel as we are led in prayer

Prayers of Intercession

This response may be used

and at the end

Lord in your mercy

Merciful Father,

All Hear our prayer

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Healing prayer: Irene W, George W, Luci & Sophie, Gillian M, Caroline, Lily, Denise, Mary S, Mary G, Cheryl W, Teresa V, David, S.M, Faith F, Jane B, William B, Rosemary & John K, Chris & Chris H, Sue P, Chris C, Carol S, Elizabeth I.

In memoriam: Louis Dussey, Julian Bomyer

The Peace

Please stand

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All and also with you.

The Deacon says

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*We share the peace with those around us by saying
'peace be with you'*

Offertory Hymn 50: The advent of our King

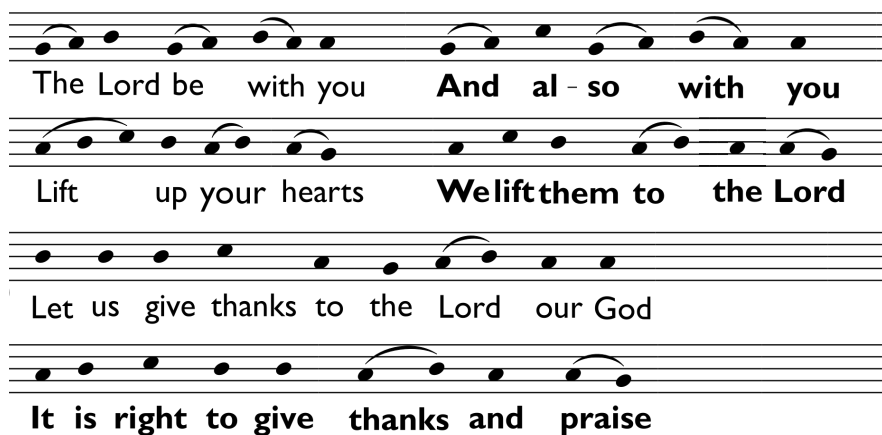
*A collection plate is available at the back of church or
this link will allow you to give to St Andrew's online:*



The Preparation of the Table

Please remain standing

The Eucharistic Prayer

Musical notation for the Eucharistic Prayer, consisting of four staves. Each staff has a series of dots representing notes, with some dots connected by curved lines (arcs) indicating a melody. The lyrics are written below each staff.

The Lord be with you And al - so with you

Lift up your hearts We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give thanks and praise

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For when he humbled himself to come among us in human
flesh,
he fulfilled the plan you formed before the foundation of
the world
to open for us the way of salvation.
Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,
we now watch for the day
when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.
And so we join our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven
to proclaim your glory
for ever praising you and saying

Sanctus and Benedictus *We sing together*

Sanc tus____ Sanc tus____ Sanc-tus Do-mi-nus De-us

Sa-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt cae-li et ter-ra glo-ri-a tu-a

Ho-san-na in ex-cel-sis. Be-ne-dic-tus qui

ve-nit in nom-i-ne Do-mi-ni. Ho-san-na in ex-cel-sis.

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;

he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

The sanctuary bell is rung

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

The sanctuary bell is rung, The Deacon then says:

Great is the mystery of faith

We say together

**All Christ has died,
Christ is risen
Christ will come again**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
St Andrew and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Sanctuary bell is rung, please sit or kneel

Believing the promises of God,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.

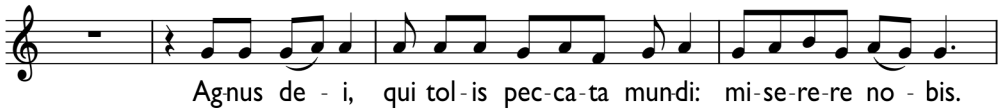
**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Invitation to Communion

God's holy gifts
for God's holy people.

**All Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) *We sing together*



Holy Communion will be administered at the High Altar and at the west end of church. Please come forward to receive communion as directed by the stewards. If you would prefer to receive a blessing, or a gluten free host please indicate this to the ministers.

Communion Hymn 44: O Child of promise, come!

Communion Anthem:

How lovely are the messengers *Mendelssohn*

Post Communion Prayers

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

All Amen.

**All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.
Amen**

Please stand

Recessional Hymn 41: Lo, he comes with clouds descending

During this hymn the ministers process to the back of church.

Conclusion

The president blesses the people, saying

May God the Father, judge all-merciful,
make us worthy of a place in his kingdom.

All Amen.

May God the Son, coming among us in power,
reveal in our midst the promise of his glory.

All Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit make us steadfast in faith,
joyful in hope and constant in love.

All Amen.

and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

The Deacon says

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The ministers depart.

Organ Voluntary

News and Notices

Any item to be included should be with the office by Wednesday, 12noon.

Bereavement Point 2pm - 3.30pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month (plus the 5th if there is one!). Opportunity for group conversation and relationship building where everyone is welcome and comfort is offered <https://compassionaterugby.co.uk/>

The Big Table Gospel group meets every week around the talking table in the cafe, alternating on Thursday and Friday mornings. Contact John on shoparound1938@gmail.com

Church Mice Stay and Play Group Great news! Church Mice has restarted at St Andrews. 10-11.30am Fridays (term time) for ages 0-4 years and it's free. Please spread the news where you can. Volunteers are warmly welcome, have a chat with Lydia, Joyce or Heather for more information. Thank you.

May Blossom Farm Live Nativity: Following the success of last year Hannah has kindly agreed to host another live nativity trail at her farm on the 20th December at 2-3.30pm. Come along and be prepared to dress up as a nativity character and follow the trail around the farm as we greet the animals that are there and sing a carol at each pen. Following the trail we will warm ourselves up again by having mulled wine/fruit punch and mince pies/shortbread. It was a lot of fun last year so we look forward to seeing you there. Car parking spaces are limited so it would be useful to have an indication as to whether you intend to come by speaking to either Joyce Wooding or Rev'd Alison Baxter.

Christmas Cards. We are delivering Christmas cards to all the residents of our parish and we'd be really grateful for help in distributing them. A list of roads in the parish, helpfully grouped by area, is at the back of church - please write your name against roads you would be willing to cover. You might like to do this with someone else, for company and safety.

Christingles. We're looking forward to our two annual Christingle services on Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th December at 4pm. We would really appreciate help in making the Christingles on Monday 22nd December between 10.30am and 1pm. Making Christingles is a fun sociable activity - with the odd spare sweet thrown in! - so please have a word with one of the clergy or Joyce if you can spare an hour or more of your time to help.

Carol Singing We would be delighted if you could join the pastoral team, Rector & hand bell ringers who will be taking Christmas communion to the care homes that we visit during the year. This is a valuable outreach that is much appreciated by the residents and enjoyed by all those who attend.

Monday 15th December, 10.30am Granville House

11.15am Te Hira Residential Home

3.00pm Trinity Court

Does your child enjoy singing? Come and sing Christmas carols at our Christingle Service, 23rd December. Suitable for children from 7 to 13 yrs old. Workshop 2.30pm - Service at 4pm. To register and more info, giving child's name, age and a contact number, please email youngchoristers@rugbychurch.org.uk.

Julian Bomyer's funeral will be at St Peter's Bengeworth, Evesham, on Friday 19th December, at 3.00pm. There will be refreshments in the church afterwards. There is a tribute page: merstowgreen.co.uk

Diary for the week 15th - 21st December

Monday

9.00am Morning Prayer
 10.00am Ball of Yarn Knitting &
 crochet drop-in group
 10.30am Art with Aish
Christmas Carols
10.30am Granville House
11.15am Te Hira
3.00pm Trinity Court
 5.30pm School Carol Service
 7.30pm Bell Ringing practice

Tuesday

9.00am Morning Prayer
 9.30am Reflective Eucharist
 1.00pm Tuesday Lunchtime
 Concert
 2.00pm Bereavement Point
 6.30pm Free Voice

Wednesday

9.00am Morning Prayer
 10.00am Pop Up Play Village
 12.00pm Eucharist
 5.00pm Young Choristers
 7.00pm Women's Support group

Thursday

9.00am Morning Prayer
 Church Closed for
 School Carol Service
 6.00pm Eucharist
 6.30pm Board Games group
 7.15pm Choir practice

Friday

9.00am Morning Prayer
 Church Closed for
 School Carol Service

Saturday

10am– 12pm Café Open

Sunday 21st November

4th Sunday of Advent

8.00am BCP Holy Communion
 10.30am Choral Eucharist
 6.00pm Christmas Carol Service

St Andrew's Staff Team

Rector: The Rev'd Canon Edmund Newey rector@rugbychurch.org.uk

Curate: The Rev'd James Sampson-Foster
james.sampsonfoster@rugbychurch.org.uk

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The Rev'd Alison Baxter missionhub@rugbychurch.org.uk

Associate Minister (Compassionate Communities):
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Community Engagement Lead: Joanna Bryan
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Parish Office: Kate Foster office@rugbychurch.org.uk

Bookkeeper: Gaynor Farthing bookkeeper@rugbychurch.org.uk

Technical Coordinator: Ben Foster ben.foster@rugbychurch.org.uk

Website: standrewrugby.org.uk
Livestream: [twitch.tv/standrewrugby](https://www.twitch.tv/standrewrugby)
Facebook: St.Andrew Church Rugby

A collection plate is available at the back of church
or this link will allow you to give to St Andrew's online



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