

**The Parish Church of St.
Laurence, Hawkhurst,
Diocese of Canterbury
Changed Lives - Changing
Lives**

17th December 2023

**The Third Sunday of Advent,
Year B - Gaudete Sunday**

The Sidesmen today are: Diana
Ringer and Ali Jones

The Zoom details or this service
are:

Meeting ID: 457 244 0784

Passcode: 5i1UCa

As we gather and prepare to join
in worship, music is played on the
organ.

Welcome

Entrance Hymn:

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh:
awake and listen for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.

Let every heart be cleansed from
sin,
make straight the way for God
within,
and so prepare to be the home
where such a mighty guest may
come.

For you are our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward

without your grace we waste
away
like flowers that wither and decay.

To heal the sick, stretch out your
hand,
and make the fallen sinner stand;
shine out, and let your light
restore
earth's own true loveliness once
more.

To you, O Christ, all praises be,
whose advent sets your people
free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore!
In the Name of God: Father, Son
and the Holy Spirit . **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
And also with you

**The lighting of the third Advent
Candle - John the Baptist**

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord,
just and true: to you be praise and
glory for ever. Your prophet John
the Baptist was witness to the
truth as a burning and shining
light. May we your servants
rejoice in his light, and so be led
to witness to him who is the Lord
of our coming kingdom, Jesus our
Saviour and King of the ages.
Blessed be God for ever.

The third candle of the Advent
Wreath is lit

Collect for Purity

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. Amen

Penitence

Turn to us again, O God our saviour, and let your anger cease from us: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Show us your compassion, O Lord, and grant us your salvation: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Your salvation is near for those that fear you, that glory may dwell in our land: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

A time of silence and self-examination is kept.

Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and

restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

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. **Amen**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Prayer before receiving the Word of God — Before we read, we pray together

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scriptures, may your Word be heard; In the meditations of our hearts, may your Word be known; and in the faithfulness

of our lives, may your Word be shown. Amen.

First Reading read by Stephen Crowe - Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A Reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known

among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Gradual Hymn

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.

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.

Then after this, 'twas God's own choice

To place them both in Paradise,
There to remain from evil free
Except they ate of such a tree.

But they did eat, which was a sin,
And thus their ruin did begin;
Ruined themselves, both you and
me,
And all of their posterity.

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.

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.

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord!

Blessed is the kingdom of our fa-
ther David that is to come!

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
The Lord be with you. **And also
with you.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel
according to John, Chapter one,
beginning at the sixth verse.
Glory to Christ our Lord

A man named John was sent from
God.

He came for testimony, to testify
to the light,
so that all might believe through
him.

He was not the light, but came to
testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John.
When the Jews from Jerusalem
sent priests
and Levites to him to ask him,
"Who are you?"

He admitted and did not deny it,
but admitted, "I am not the Christ."
So they asked him, "What are you
then? Are you Elijah?"

And he said, "I am not." "Are you
the Prophet?" He answered, "No."
So they said to him, "Who are you,
so we can give an answer to those
who sent us? What do you have
to say for yourself?"

He said: "I am the voice of one
crying out in the desert, 'make
straight the way of the Lord, as
Isaiah the prophet said.'"

Some Pharisees were also sent.
They asked him,
"Why then do you baptize if you
are not the Christ or Elijah or the
Prophet?"

John answered them, "I baptize
with water; but there is one
among you whom you do not rec-
ognise, the one who is coming af-
ter me, whose sandal strap I am

not worthy to untie.” This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptising.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ

The Reflection

The Nicene Creed

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 from 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.

The Prayers of the Church led by Julian Van Kan

Mindful of the words of the prophet Isaiah, we gather our thoughts and prayers with hope and humbly call on God to help us in our needs.

Holy God, as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of Christ our Saviour we ask that you will answer our prayers and make us a holy people, fit to greet him with eager hearts. May all our Church

leaders be blessed with wisdom and holiness to guide us through this season of Advent, to a holy, peaceful and joyful Christmas. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

We raise before you our Church here in our parish and ask that with eager longing for the return of Christ, our Advent celebrations may help all who join with us to prepare a place in their hearts and homes for you and your son Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Creator God, help the leaders of nations to seek that justice and peace which come from the Word of God, may there be good news for the poor and the broken hearted; release for those illegally or wrongly imprisoned and an end to the conflicts throughout the world which lead to so much grief and mourning. We pray too for all those who strive to rebuild in places which have been ravaged by war or natural disaster.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Father God, your son Jesus lived an ordinary life in Nazareth, with human parents, brothers and sisters. He understands the difficulties faced in families. We

pray for all of those involved in providing support for troubled families and strengthening our community life. We especially pray for our family members who have not yet heard of the coming of Christ and that this Christmas they may hear and believe the Good News and receive the gift of the Christ Child. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Merciful God, may your blessing be upon all those who are in pain or sickness, those who are anxious or troubled. We know that you are always present with us, even when sometimes you seem far away. Help us to feel your presence when we pass through dark places, and sustain us and all who suffer through our pains and sorrows. We pray for: Robbie Robinson, Eleanor Ash, David Winstone, Christian Jervis-Read, Jan Edwards, Jill Fitzpatrick, Nigel Lemon, Ray Wicks, John Tanner, Hilary Deller, Georgie Whitaker, Brian Elliott. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Give rest to the souls of those who have gone from our lives to meet with you and may they now, released from pain or sorrow, find life eternal at rest in your presence. We pray for those

whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Michael Roger Fisher-Barham, David Colvin, Alice Mary Bennett, Diana Jones, Leslie Richardson, John Heady, Hebert Fautly, Matthew Liggett, Elizabeth Jones, George Longley, Millicent Butler, Lilian Guest, Sarah Scrivener, Mark Ryan, Sylvia Doreen Gould, Audrey Fautly, Irene Reed, Nancy Bennett, Charles Newcomb, Fergus Gask, Gerald Larkin, Ignace Van Kan. Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Faithful God, as we continue this Advent journey, teach us to turn to you in times of joy and pleasure as well as we do when faced with fear and sorrow. Help us to unite behind the great commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations and all people.

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

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you **And also with you.**

Offertory Hymn

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 salvation from above.

Isles of the Southern seas,
sing to the listening earth,
carry on every breeze
hope of a 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:
your seers have longed to know
their Lord;
to you he comes, the final word.

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 universe be blest.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

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.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.

The Eucharistic Prayer

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give thanks and praise**

The Priest continues with the Eucharistic Prayer Preface and then all sing:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of power and might
Heaven and earth are full of
your glory
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

(Sit/Kneel)

The Priest continues, recalling and remembering with us the Last Supper.... then we sing:

Great is the mystery of faith.
**Christ has died; Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.**

At the end of the next part of the Eucharistic Prayer we respond
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As Christ has taught us we are bold to say:

**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 Fraction

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

**Though we are many, we are
one body**

The Agnus Dei

We sing together

**Lamb of God, you take away
the sin of the world, have mercy
on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away
the sin of the world, have mercy
on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away
the sin of the world, grant us
peace.**

We Share in Holy Communion

Jesus is the Lamb of God who
takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called
to his supper. **Lord, I am not
worthy to receive you, but only
say the word, and I shall be
healed.**

The Prayer of Humble Access

**We do not presume to come to
this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteous-
ness, but in your manifold and**

**great mercies. We are not wor-
thy so much as to gather up the
crumbs under your table. But
you are the same Lord whose
nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious
Lord, so to eat the flesh of your
dear Son Jesus Christ and to
drink his blood, that our sinful
bodies may be made clean by
his body and our souls washed
through his most precious
blood, and that we may ever-
more dwell in him, and he in us.
Amen.**

A Prayer for those joining us on Zoom who are making their Spiritual Communion

**My Jesus, I believe that you are
present in the most Blessed
Sacrament. I love You above
all things and I desire to re-
ceive you into my soul. Since I
cannot now receive You sacra-
mentally, come at least spiritu-
ally into my heart. I embrace
You as if You were already
there, and unite myself wholly
to You. Never permit me to be
separated from You. Amen.**

The Chalice bearers today are:
Brian Elliott and Charles Vernede

Post Communion Hymn

Hark! a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;

'Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heaven;
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all to be forgiven;

So when next he comes with glory,
Wrapping all the earth in fear,
May he then as our defender
Of the clouds of heaven appear.

Honour, glory, virtue, merit,
To the Father and the Son,
With the co-eternal Spirit,
While unending ages run. Amen.

Post - Communion Prayers

Give thanks to the Lord for God is gracious. **God's mercy endures for ever.**

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. **Amen.**

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. Amen

Notices

The 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 ...

Dismissal

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

Closing Hymn

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n to earth come down,
fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
all Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love Thou art;
visit us with Thy salvation;
enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
let us find the promised rest.
Take away our love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning,

set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver;
let us all Thy life receive;
suddenly return and never,
nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve Thee as Thy hosts above;
pray, and praise Thee without
ceasing,
glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then, Thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see Thy great salvation
perfectly restored in Thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before
Thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God

May the divine assistance remain
with us always.

**And with all our brothers and
sisters in Christ.**

May the souls of the faithful de-
parted through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. **And rise in glory.**

Amen.

Retiring Organ Voluntary - Cre-
ator Alme Siderum - Pietro Yon

Please remain seated for the or-
gan voluntary

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**The Calendar 17th. December to 31st . December**

**17 O Sapientia**

**17 Eglantyne Jebb, Social Reformer, Founder of 'Save The Children', 1928**

**24 Christmas Eve**

**25 Christmas Day**

**26 Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr**

**27 John, Apostle and Evangelist**

**28 The Holy Innocents**

**29 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170**

**31 John Wyclif, Reformer, 1384**

**WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST at Bowles Lodge ~ 10.00 am.**

Please do join us.

**ADVENT GIVING TREE – SIGHTSAVERS**

**INTERNATIONAL** ~ Please feel free to take an envelope, make a donation and hang it on the tree. Your envelope will be removed and replaced by a star so that by Christmas we hope to see a tree full of stars.

**NATIVITY PLAY/CRIB SERVICE** - sign- up list on table if you wish to take part. Adults and children welcome to join in. Sun Dec 24<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

**TREE FESTIVAL-** a very big thank you to everyone who contributed to the festival – tree contributors, supporters of the event and a special thank you to the Social Committee for their hard work in organising such a wonderful event. A donation will be given to the Rokit Sensory Room.

**Tree Winners**

1st prize – Poppy Knitters

2nd prize – Cubs

3rd prize – Beavers

4th prize – Hawkhurst Pre – School

The total money raised to date is £1,984 with a little more to come in.

**Vicar:**

The Revd. Canon Rodney Dreyer  
01580 754459

**Churchwardens:**

Miss Alison Jones 01580 755705  
Mrs. Liz Hatcher 01580 712099

**Organist:**

Dr. Charlotte O' Neill 01580  
753817

**Safeguarding:**

Mrs Jane Cooper 07825044877

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES** **AT ST LAURENCE**

**SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER**  
– 6.00pm

**Village Carol Service**  
with mince pies and  
mulled wine afterwards.

**CHRISTMAS EVE – SUN**  
**24 DECEMBER –**  
**5.00pm.**

### **Crib Service**

All children welcome to  
join in....Rehearsals will  
be on 21<sup>st</sup> Dec from 10 -  
11.30, 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec from 10 -  
11.30, Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> -  
Dress Rehearsal from  
2.30 - 4.00

Adults and children wel-  
come to join in. **Sign up**  
**list on the table in the**  
**church.**

**CHRISTMAS EVE – SUN**  
**24 DECEMBER 11.30pm.**  
**Midnight Mass** with car-  
ols and the blessing of  
the Crib.

**CHRISTMAS DAY –**  
**MONDAY 25 DECEM-**  
**BER**

**8.00am.Holy Commun-**  
**ion BCP**

**10.00am. Parish Com-**  
**munion** with carols for  
Christmas Day.