

***Worship in Song***

In the darkness there's a light before me

***Welcome***

***Lighting the Advent Candles*** *(John the Baptist)*

Lord Jesus, Light of the world, John told the people to prepare, for you were very near: as Christmas grows closer day by day, help us to be ready to welcome you now. Amen.

***Worship in Song***

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him  
Who brings good news good news  
Announcing peace, proclaiming news of happiness  
Our God reigns, our God reigns

Our God reigns, our God reigns *(repeat)*

You watchmen lift your voices joyfully as one  
Shout for your King, your King  
See eye to eye the Lord restoring Zion  
Our God reigns, our God reigns

Waste places of Jerusalem break forth with joy  
We are redeemed redeemed  
The Lord has saved and comforted his people  
Our God reigns, our God reigns

Ends of the earth see the salvation of your God  
Jesus is Lord, is Lord  
Before the nations he has bared his holy arm  
Our God reigns, our God reigns

***Confession***

In this season of busyness, and stress, God of Light, we confess how easy it is to slip off your paths and forget to prepare for your coming.

**Father, forgive us: save us and help us.**

For behaving just as we wish, without thinking of you  
**Father, forgive us: save us and help us.**

For failing you by what we do, and think and say;  
**Father, forgive us: save us and help us.**

For letting ourselves be drawn away from you by temptations in the world about us;  
**Father, forgive us: save us and help us.**

For living as if we were ashamed to belong to your Son  
**Father, forgive us: save us and help us.**

***Assurance of Pardon***

May almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever. Amen.

***Special Prayer for Today***

God of faithfulness and truth, you sent your servant John the Baptist to preach in the desert and summon the people to repentance. Make us and all things new, that in the wilderness of our world and in our lives, we also may prepare a way for Jesus. Amen.

***Bible Reading***

Mark 1.1-8 *(Church Bible page 836)*

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

***Sermon***

***Worship in Song***

In the darkness there's a light before me  
And it drives away my fear  
In the silence there's a voice that calls me  
And it tells me you are near

In the chaos there's a hand that holds me  
And will never let me go  
Yes I know that you are always for me  
For your word has told me so

I will follow you, I will walk by faith  
You have brought me near by your unrelenting grace  
I will set my mind on the things above  
You have won my heart with your everlasting love

I was lost but then you came and found me  
And in love you brought me home  
I was dead in sin but then you raised me  
I am saved by grace alone

For no height no depth no life no death  
No power on earth can take us from your love  
No height no depth no life no death  
No power on earth can take us from your love

### ***Affirmation of Faith***

Let us acclaim the Lord our God:

**We believe in God the eternal Father;  
heaven and earth are full of his glory. We  
believe in Jesus Christ, his true and only Son;  
he became man to set us free from sin. We  
believe in the Holy Spirit; he is our advocate  
and guide. We believe in one God; Father,  
Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### ***Prayers***

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

### ***The Peace***

May the God of peace make you completely holy,  
ready for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

### ***Offertory Prayer***

**Everything in heaven and earth comes from you,  
Lord. We give you only what is yours. May you  
be praised forever and ever. Amen.**

### ***The Eucharistic Prayer***

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

Blessed are you, Lord God, our light and our  
salvation; to you be glory and praise for ever.

From the beginning you have created all things  
and all your works echo the silent music of your  
praise. In the fullness of time you made us in  
your image, the crown of all creation. You give  
us breath and speech, that with angels and  
archangels and all the powers of heaven we may  
find a voice to sing your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and  
might, heaven and earth are full of your  
glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

How wonderful the work of your hands, O  
Lord. As a mother tenderly gathers her  
children, you embraced a people as your own.  
When they turned away and rebelled your  
love remained steadfast. From them you  
raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary, to  
be the living bread, in whom all our hungers  
are satisfied. He offered his life for sinners,  
and with a love stronger than death he  
opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died, he came to  
supper with his friends and, taking bread, he  
gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to  
them, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which  
is given for you; do this in remembrance of  
me.

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,  
he gave you thanks, and said: 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.

Jesus Christ is Lord:

**Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have  
set us free. You are the Saviour of the world.**

Father, we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross; we remember  
his dying and rising in glory, and we rejoice that  
he intercedes for us at your right hand. Pour out  
your Holy Spirit as we bring before you these gifts  
of your creation; may they be for us the body and  
blood of your dear Son.

As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence, form us in the likeness of Christ, and build us into a living temple to your glory.

Remember, Lord, your Church in every land. Reveal her unity, guard her faith, and preserve her in peace. Bring us at the last with all the saints to the vision of that eternal splendour for which you have created us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, by whom, with whom, and in whom, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in words of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

**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***

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

### ***Giving of Communion***

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*We receive communion*

### ***Worship in Song***

*Verse: Men (Women echo)*

Clear the road, make wide the way  
Welcome now the God who saves  
Fill the streets with shouts of joy

*Men: Prepare the way of the Lord*

*Women: Prepare the way of the Lord*

*Men: Prepare the way of the Lord*  
*Women: of the Lord*

Raise your voice and join the song  
God made flesh to us has come  
Welcome him, your banners wave

For all sin the price is paid  
All our sins on Jesus laid  
By his blood we are made clean

At his feet come humbly bow  
In your lives enthrone him now  
See, your great Deliverer comes.

### ***Worship in Song***

I am alive saved by your sacrifice  
Death overcome glory dispels the night  
You call the lifeless to wake from death to life  
Out of darkness arise

I am set free saved from the power of sin  
Guilt overcome your Spirit at work within  
You break the chains of the law I am released  
From the burden of sin

Now we cry Father we are your children  
We are adopted as your own  
No condemnation we are forgiven  
Nothing can take us from your love

I am redeemed raised with my Saviour Christ  
Fear overcome I will be glorified  
You will forever defend and stand beside  
I am safe in your love

### ***Bridge***

Creation awaits the glorious day  
When Jesus returns and trials will fade

### ***Worship in Song***

Man of sorrows Lamb of God  
By his own betrayed  
The sin of man and wrath of God  
Has been on Jesus laid

Silent as he stood accused  
Beaten mocked and scorned  
Bowing to the Father's will  
He took a crown of thorns

Oh that rugged cross my salvation  
Where your love poured out over me  
Now my soul cries out hallelujah  
Praise and honour unto thee

Sent of heaven God's own Son  
To purchase and redeem  
And reconcile the very ones  
Who nailed him to that tree

#### *Bridge*

Now my debt is paid, it is paid in full  
By the precious blood, that my Jesus spilled  
Now the curse of sin has no hold on me  
Whom the Son sets free oh is free indeed

See the stone is rolled away  
Behold the empty tomb  
Hallelujah God be praised  
He's risen from the grave

#### ***Prayer after Communion***

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to  
redeem the world and will send him again to  
be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him  
in the humility and purity of his first coming  
that, when he comes again, we may be ready  
to greet him with joyful love and firm faith;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### ***Worship in Song***

Hear me Lord out of the depths I call  
Comfort and guard my heart shelter me in this storm  
Turn to me see my distress and need  
Weary and poor I come calling upon your name

You are forgiving and good  
Abounding in love to the faithful who call  
No other god can compare to you  
Great is your mercy and grace  
With all of my heart I will sing of your name  
No other power can save but you

Teach me God show me the righteous path  
Lead me to walk with you trusting you all my days  
Hear my cry with terror on every side  
Justice will soon prevail you are the God who saves

#### ***Notices***

#### ***Blessing***

Go in peace; love and care for one another in  
the name of Christ; and may the rough places  
in your life be made smooth; may the dark  
valleys of your hearts be filled; may the  
rugged mountains levelled; and the way of the  
Lord be made ready in you; and may he come  
to you and shine forth from you;

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

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