



THE CHURCH  
OF ST. MICHAEL & ST. GEORGE

# The Order for Morning Prayer

## The Second Sunday of Advent

### December 6, 2020

#### Opening Sentences

*Officiant* Prepare ye the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *Isaiah 40:3*

#### Confession of Sin

*¶ The Officiant says*

**D**EARLY BELOVED, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

*¶ Officiant and People, all kneeling*

Almighty and most merciful Father,  
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,  
we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,  
we have offended against thy holy laws,  
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,  
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;  
And there is no health in us.  
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,  
spare thou those who confess their faults,  
restore thou those who are penitent,  
according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord;  
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,  
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,  
to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

*¶ The Officiant alone stands and says*

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution ✠ and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit.  
‡ *People Amen.*

‡ *All stand*

## The Invitatory and Psalter

*Officiant* O Lord, open thou our lips.  
*People* And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

*All* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

‡ *All say the Invitatory Canticle together, as follows*

### Invitatory Canticle

*Venite, exultemus*

PSALM 95:1-7, 96:9, 13

O come, let us sing unto the Lord; \*  
let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.  
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, \*  
and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, \*  
and a great King above all gods.  
In his hand are all the corners of the earth, \*  
and the strength of the hills is his also.  
The sea is his and he made it, \*  
and his hands prepared the dry land.  
O come, let us worship and fall down \*  
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.  
For he is the Lord our God, \*  
and we are the people of his pasture  
and the sheep of his hand.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; \*  
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.  
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth, \*  
and with righteousness to judge the world  
and the peoples with his truth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

‡ *All are then seated for the Psalm appointed for the day*

Lord, thou art become gracious unto thy land; \*  
thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.

Thou hast forgiven the offence of thy people, \*  
and covered all their sins.

I will hearken what the Lord God will say; \*  
for he shall speak peace unto his people, and to his saints,  
that they turn not again unto foolishness.

For his salvation is nigh them that fear him; \*  
that glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together: \*  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall flourish out of the earth, \*  
and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

Yea, the Lord shall show loving-kindness; \*  
and our land shall give her increase.

Righteousness shall go before him, \*  
and shall direct his going in the way.

*¶ At the conclusion of the Psalmody the Gloria Patri is said by all*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

## The Lessons

### The First Lesson

ISAIAH 40:1-11

**C**OMFORT, COMFORT MY PEOPLE, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of

our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

*¶ Following the Lesson, all stand for the Canticle*

**Canticle**

*Surge, illuminare*

ISAIAH 60:1-3, 11a, 14c, 18-19

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, \*  
and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.  
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, \*  
and gross darkness the people:  
But the Lord shall arise upon thee, \*  
and his glory shall be seen upon thee.  
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, \*  
and kings to the brightness of thy rising.  
Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; \*  
they shall not be shut day nor night.  
They shall call thee, The city of the Lord, \*  
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.  
Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, \*  
wasting nor destruction within thy borders;  
But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, \*  
and thy gates Praise.  
The sun shall be no more thy light by day; \*  
neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee:  
But the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, \*  
and thy God thy glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

*¶ All are seated*

**The Second Lesson**

MARK 1:1-8

**T**HE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's

hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

¶ *Following the Lesson, all stand for the Canticle*

**Canticle**      *Benedictus Dominus Deus*

LUKE 1:68-79

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, \*  
for he hath visited and redeemed his people;  
And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us \*  
in the house of his servant David,  
As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, \*  
which have been since the world began:  
That we should be saved from our enemies, \*  
and from the hand of all that hate us;  
To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, \*  
and to remember his holy covenant;  
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, \*  
that he would give us,  
That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies \*  
might serve him without fear,  
In holiness and righteousness before him, \*  
all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, \*  
for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord  
to prepare his ways;  
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people \*  
for the remission of their sins,  
Through the tender mercy of our God, \*  
whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us;  
To give light to them that sit in darkness  
and in the shadow of death, \*  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

¶ *All remain standing for the Apostles' Creed*

## The Apostles' Creed

*¶ Said by the Officiant and People together, all standing*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;  
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Ghost,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, ✠  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## The Prayers

*¶ The Officiant and People say the following*

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.

*People* And with thy spirit.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

*¶ Then the short form of the Lord's Prayer is said by all, kneeling*

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.  
Amen.

¶ *Then follow these Suffrages, said by the Officiant and People*

*Officiant* O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

*People* And grant us thy salvation.

*Officiant* Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

*People* And make thy chosen people joyful.

*Officiant* Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

*People* For only in thee can we live in safety.

*Officiant* Lord, keep this nation under thy care;

*People* And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

*Officiant* Let thy way be known upon earth;

*People* Thy saving health among all nations.

*Officiant* Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

*People* Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

*Officiant* Create in us clean hearts, O God;

*People* And sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

## The Collects

**M**ERCIFUL GOD, WHO SENT THY MESSENGERS the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ¶ *People Amen.*

**O** GOD, WHO ART THE AUTHOR OF PEACE and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. ¶ *People Amen.*

**O** GOD, WHO HAST MADE of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after thee and find thee; bring the nations into thy fold; pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of thy kingdom; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. ¶ *People Amen.*

## The General Thanksgiving

¶ *Said by the Officiant and People together*

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, Father of all mercies,  
we thine unworthy servants do give  
thee most humble and hearty thanks  
for all thy goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all men.

We bless thee for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for thine inestimable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ,  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we beseech thee,  
give us that due sense of all thy mercies,  
that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful;  
and that we show forth thy praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to thy service,  
and by walking before thee  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost,  
be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

## A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

¶ *Said by the Officiant*

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make  
our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved  
Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the  
midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be  
best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life  
everlasting. ¶ *People Amen.*

¶ *All stand*

## Benedicamus Domino

*Officiant* Let us bless the Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

# The Grace

*¶ Officiant*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *¶ People Amen.*

## Hymn



1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus  
2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth in the des - ert  
3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er



saith our God; com - fort those who sit in dark - ness  
far and near, call - ing us to new re - pent - ance  
pla - ces plain; let your hearts be true and hum - ble,



mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je -  
since the king - dom now is here. Oh, that warn - ing  
as be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry



ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;  
cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;  
of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



tell her that her sins I cov - er,  
let the val - leys rise to meet him  
and all flesh shall see the to - ken



and her war - fare now is o - ver.  
and the hills bow down to greet him.  
that the word is nev - er bro - ken.

*Words: Johann G. Olearius (1611-1684)*  
*Music: PSALM 42: Claude Goudimel (1514-1572)*

Anthem

This is the truth sent from above,  
The truth of God, the God of love;  
Therefore don't turn me from the door,  
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will 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 that '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 our posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes  
Till God the Lord did interpose;  
And so a promise soon did run:  
That he'd redeem us by his Son.

*Words: English traditional; A Good Christmas Box, 1847*

*Music: Traditional English Carol; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)*

## Closing Prayers

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.

*People* And with thy spirit.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

‡ *All kneel*

‡ *Then Prayers and Intercessions are offered*

**O** GOD, THE CREATOR and preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are in any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. ‡ *People Amen.*

**A**LMIGHTY AND EVERLIVING GOD, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, we beseech thee hear our prayers for this church family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ‡ *People Amen.*

**A**LMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD, whose will it is to restore all things in thy well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ‡ *People Amen.*

**O**LORD OUR GOVERNOR, whose glory is in all the world: We commend this nation to thy merciful care, that, being guided by thy Providence, we may dwell secure in thy peace. Grant to the President of the United States, the President-Elect, the Governor of this State, and to all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do thy will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness, and make them ever mindful of their calling to serve this people in thy fear; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ‡ *People Amen.*

**O**MERCIFUL CREATOR, whose hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us, we beseech thee, ever thankful for thy loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, for ever and ever. *☩ People Amen.*

**O**LORD OUR GOD, accept the fervent prayers of thy people; in the multitude of thy mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to thee for help; for thou art gracious, O lover of souls, and to thee we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *☩ People Amen.*

### The Advent Blessing

**M**AY ALMIGHTY GOD, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. *☩ People Amen.*

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. *☩ People Amen.*

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. *☩ People Amen.*

And the blessing  of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *☩ People Amen.*

## *Liturgical Music*

This morning's liturgy opens with a chorale prelude on today's hymn, *Psalm 42*, by the German composer Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933). A prolific composer of music for the organ, this short, simple Advent work offers but a brief introduction to the composer's extremely complex and colorful harmonic language. It is here arranged for chamber orchestra.

This morning's hymn, *Comfort, comfort ye my people*, is based on Isaiah 40:1-5 and it echoes the cry of John the Baptist. The hymn's author served on the philosophy faculty at Wittenberg, birthplace of the Lutheran Reformation. The dancing, irregular rhythm suggests joy at the coming of the Savior.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was a champion of English folk melodies and he made a practice of traveling the countryside to collect folk melodies he heard being sung by the rural population of England. One such melody, sung this morning, is one of the best known since its publication in the magisterial *Oxford Book of Carols*.

The setting of *Gottes Sohn ist kommen* (*Once he came in blessing*), which closes today's liturgy, is drawn from Johann Sebastian Bach's (1685-1750) *Orgelbüchlein*, a set of forty-five hymn-tune preludes for the liturgical year. Here it is arranged for two double-reed instruments with viola and cello.







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