



Minister:
Rev. Martin Knight
07392 463961 minister1@stpaulsurc.org.uk

Church Secretaries:
Sue Eardley
07971 068887 eardleys@virginmedia.com
Bea Pollard
020 8657 0162 ronandbea@btinternet.com

Order of Service

Sunday 4th December 2022

Prophetic Voices



Welcome to St Paul's!

This morning's service is being led by: **Rev'd Martin Knight**
The Organ is played by: **Mr Richard Pilliner**

It is a joy to welcome you to this service!

If you do not attend a church elsewhere, we invite you to join regularly with us in our Sunday worship and other activities – see

www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

Feel free to spend time before worship for quiet preparation, especially once the music begins. We light a candle at the start of the service to remind us of Christ's message of peace.

The Reformed Church recognises God's Word as its supreme authority and **you are asked to stand as the Bible is brought in** at the start of worship, **and again as the Bible is taken out after the blessing.**

Please use 'T' on your hearing aid if you need to use the Hearing Loop.

Church Notices

Call to Worship

Lighting our Peace Candle to mark World Aids Day



Left: Among the poor,
Right: among the proud,
Left: among the persecuted,
Right: among the privileged,
Leader: Christ is coming,
ALL: HE IS COMING TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.

Left: In the private house,
Right: in the rented flat,
Left: in the wedding feast,
Right: in the criminal courts,
Leader: Christ is coming,
ALL: HE IS COMING TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.

*Left: With a gentle touch,
Right: with an angry word,
Left: with a silent prayer,
Right: with burning love,*

Leader: *Christ is coming,*

ALL: **HE IS COMING TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.**

*Left: That the kingdom might come,
Right: that the world might believe,
Left: that the wolf live with the lamb,
Right: that a little child will lead them,*

Leader: *Christ is coming,*

ALL: **HE IS COMING TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.**

*Left: Within us,
Right: without us,
Left: among us,
Right: before us,
Left: in this place,
Right: in every place,
Left: for this time,
Right: for all time,*

Leader: *Christ is coming,*

ALL: **HE IS COMING TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.**

**WE SING: 134 ON JORDAN'S BANK
THE BAPTIST'S CRY**
(Tune: 209 'Winchester New')

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord's Prayer

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
Forever and ever. Amen

Lighting the 2nd Advent Candle

The Prophets

(Two candles are lit)

Leader: *We light this candle for all God's prophets,
confronting injustice and restoring the dream
of a world of freedom and peace.*

All: **GOD, AS WE WAIT FOR YOUR PROMISE,
GIVE LIGHT, GIVE HOPE**

Sing: **Prophet voices loudly crying,
making pathways clear,
glimpsing glory, self-denying,
calling all to hear.
Through their message – challenged, shaken –
hearts awaken:
God is near!**
(Tune: 'Angel Voices')

Advent-ure!

WE SING: LONG AGO, PROPHETS KNEW

Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew,
come to make all things new;
bear his People's burden,
freely love and pardon:

*Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes, when he comes,
who will make him welcome?*

God in time, God as man,
this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely human:

Ring, bells, ring...

Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry!

Ring, bells, ring...

Words© Fred Pratt Green

The Grace

**THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
THE LOVE OF GOD
AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
BE WITH US ALL, NOW AND FOREVER, AMEN**

Readings: Isaiah 11: 1-10 (pg. 558))

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear;

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's
den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to
the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his
dwelling shall be glorious.

Matthew 3: 1-12 (pg. 784)

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight." '

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

WE SING: WHEN LISTENING PROPHETS DARE TO SPEAK

(Tune: 69 'Ombertsey')

When listening prophets dare to speak,
love thunders like an ocean wave,
old wineskins burst, stone columns quake,
and dry bones rise up from the grave.

True prophets challenge us to change,
to wake and wonder, risk and grow,
and when the way ahead seems strange,
to name the fear and let it go.

God bid us rise to speak and move
like prophets on a lighted stage,
unmasking fear, revealing love,
and making peace from age to age.

Words: Daniel Charles Damon

Prophetic Voices

WE SING: PRAISE TO THE GOD WHO CLEARS THE WAY

(Tune: 129 'Dundee [French]')

Praise to the God who clears the way
preparing room and space;
for power and pride will lose their sway
as peace comes in their place.

Praise to the God who comes to judge
the truth of word and deed,
who calls our minds and wills to change,
rebuking wealth and greed.

Praise to the God who waits with us
for hope and joy to reign,
who shares our suffering and our loss,
embodied in our pain.

Praise to the God who comes to bring
comfort to all who mourn.
The whole creation 'Glory' sings
as Christ the light is born.

Words©: Jan Berry

Prayers for Others & Confession

Leader: *Before God,
with the people of God,
I confess to turning away from God
in the ways I wound my life,
the lives of others
and the life of the world.*

**All: MAY GOD FORGIVE YOU, CHRIST RENEW YOU,
AND THE SPIRIT ENABLE YOU TO GROW IN LOVE.**

Leader: Amen

**All: BEFORE GOD,
WITH THE PEOPLE OF GOD,
I CONFESS TO TURNING AWAY FROM GOD
IN THE WAYS I WOUND MY LIFE,
THE LIVES OF OTHERS
AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD.**

Leader: May God forgive you, Christ renew you,
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

All: AMEN

**Offering for the work of this church
and Communion Charity offering for:**

Christians Against Poverty

Debt and poverty drain hope from people's lives.

CAPUK want to put an end to UK poverty in partnership with local churches.

They run help and advice lines, job clubs and more....



ADVENT COMMUNION

(The bread is gluten free and non-alcoholic wine is available on each tray)

Invitation

God's Banquet is coming.

The time we await,

when all will gather from North, East, West and South.

**A BANQUET WHERE THE RICH AND POWERFUL
WILL SIT WITH THE WEAK AND POVERTY-STRICKEN.**

**A TABLE WHERE YOUNG AND OLD
WILL LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.**

**A TIME WHEN ALL WILL SIT TOGETHER IN PEACE,
"AND THE WOLF WILL LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB".**

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet.

This is indeed God's table, not the church's,

*and so all who seek to follow His Way
are welcome to eat and drink from it.*

**COME AND TASTE THE GRACE ETERNAL,
COME AND SEE THAT GOD IS GOOD.**

The Great Thanksgiving

God is with us

WE ARE NOT ALONE

Christ is present here

THE SPIRIT MOVES WITHIN US

Let us give thanks to God

IN MEMORY AND IN HOPE

Blessings be to you, Creator God,

who in the beginning brought light and life to the world

and who continues to bring it love and light everlasting.

YOUR SONG OF WISDOM ECHOES THROUGH THE AGES,

YOUR ANCIENT PROMISE STILL BRINGS US HOPE.

*Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope
and share your love. But even when they have closed their ears
to the song you did not stop singing. You sent prophets and
messengers to your people, reminding them of the promised
time of peace and justice that would surround the world.*

THEY CAME IN THE MIDST OF OUR DESPAIR

AND FILLED US WITH HOPE.

And then you came to a young woman named Mary

and laid out the promise in a new way

PROMISING HER A SON, WHO WOULD BE CALLED JESUS

PROMISING THAT IN HER SON

THE WORLD WOULD BE CHANGED

And now as we prepare for that child to be born,

we lift our voices in song,

singing together the praise of the ages:

(Tune: 205 'It came upon...')

O holy holy holy God,
O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your Grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes
and bears Your name always

The Story Remembered

*As we prepare to celebrate his birth,
we remember the life that this baby will live.*

WE REMEMBER

**HOW HE BROKE THE BONDS OF HUMAN TRADITION,
TO SHOW ALL WHAT THE BANQUET OF HOPE COULD BE,
AS HE ATE OPENLY WITH THE DESPISED AND THE
OUTCAST OF HIS WORLD.**

*And we remember one special meal,
foretaste of the banquet that is to come,
that he ate with his closest friends.*

**GATHERING THEM TOGETHER IN AN UPPER ROOM
TO SHARE THE STORY OF LIBERATION.**

*And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it,
then passed it to them saying:*

TAKE AND EAT.

**THIS BREAD IS THE BODY OF LIFE,
BROKEN BY THE WORLD.**

EAT IT IN REMEMBRANCE AND IN HOPE.

*After that he took the cup, blessed it,
and passed it to them saying:*

**THIS CUP IS THE SIGN OF THE NEW COVENANT.
WHENEVER YOU DRINK IT REMEMBER ME.**

*Remembering the birth of the child in the stable,
we remember also his life, his death and his resurrection.*

**WE REMEMBER HOW HE Poured HIS LOVE OUT
TO ALL HE MET
AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO HIS RETURN
AND THE COMING REIGN OF PEACE, LOVE, AND JUSTICE.**

And in our remembering, we sing the mystery of faith:

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!
His kingdom reigns forever more
Wherever love is known!**

(repeat)

The Spirit Transforms

*God, you poured your Spirit on Mary
and she sang words of defiance and hope.
Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here.
As we eat and drink may we know your presence.
As we eat and drink may we be filled with hope
and strengthened, in this time of waiting for peace and justice.
And the people all sang:*

**Amen, amen, O Holy One!
Hosanna and amen!
Sing all the people of the earth
Hosanna and amen!**

(repeat)

The Sharing

Prayer after the feast

*God of pregnant expectations,
God of Christmas promise,
God of child-like hope, we have shared at your table.*

**MAY THE EATING AND THE DRINKING
FILL US WITH HOPE IN A WORLD OF DESPAIR.
MAY WE BE BEACONS OF HOPE
AS WE WAIT FOR THE DAY
WHEN THE WORLD WILL BE CHANGED.**

*Grant that this taste of your banquet which is to come,
will give us the hunger for peace and justice
in our community and around the world.*

AMEN

**WE SING: 131 THE VOICE OF GOD
GOES OUT TO ALL THE WORLD**

(Tune: 740 'Woodlands')

Sending Forth & Blessing

Coming up...

Tuesday Guild

*'Weather Lore' with Ian Currie
Small Hall*

Tuesday 6th December, 10:15am

Prayers for Peace

The Sanctuary

Every Tuesday, 12-1pm

Maintenance & Resources Team

Vestry/Meeting Room

Tuesday 6th December, 8pm

Elders' Meeting

Vestry/Meeting Room

Wednesday 7th December, 8pm

WarmSpace

Open to all!

Every Thursday 3:30-6:30pm

United Prayer Time - Zoom

for St Paul's and South Croydon United Church

'Zoom' Meeting ID: 845 5391 2820

Every Friday, 6pm

Bible Study Breakfast

at South Croydon United Church

Sunday 11th December 2022, 9-10am

Next Sunday Worship – Christmas Gift Service

led by Rev'd Martin Knight

We show love for our neighbours and those in need in Croydon by supporting the Purley Food Hub and Croydon Nightwatch. Please bring gifts of non-perishable food and toiletries (including Christmas treats) or money to support the charities in distribution.

Sunday 11th December 2022, 10:30am

Christmas Party – 'bringing the Nativity to Life'

All welcome for this live tour of nativity scenes and a bouncy castle, craft, food and fun activities.

Saturday 17th December 2022, 4-6pm

For all future events and activities please see our website



Croham Park Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 7HF www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

All words and music used with permission - CCLI: 212639 / CCL Streaming Licence: 199867