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**Evening Prayer from The Book of Common Prayer
The Fourth Sunday of Advent 20th Dec 2020**

God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God in him. *1 John 4.16*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1.8,9*

Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalms 143.2*

Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:

All 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, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu 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.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins: he pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit, that

those things may please him which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that 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.**

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Hymn

**Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,
Once for favored sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.**

Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, (x3)
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, (x3)
gaze we on those glorious scars!

**Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.**

Psalm 104 *Benedic, anima mea*

1. PRAISE the Lord, O my soul: O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious; thou art clothed with majesty and honour.
2. **Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment: and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.**
3. Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.
4. **He maketh his angels spirits: and his ministers a flaming fire.**
5. He laid the foundations of the earth: that it never should move at any time.
6. **Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment: the waters stand in the hills.**
7. At thy rebuke they flee: at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.
8. **They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath: even unto the place which thou hast appointed for them.**
9. Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass: neither turn again to cover the earth.
10. **He sendeth the springs into the rivers: which run among the hills.**
11. All beasts of the field drink thereof: and the wild asses quench their thirst.
12. **Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation: and sing among the branches.**
13. He watereth the hills from above: the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.
14. **He bringeth forth grass for the cattle: and green herb for the service of men;**
15. That he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man: and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.
16. **The trees of the Lord also are full of sap: even the cedars of Libanus which he hath planted;**
17. Wherein the birds make their nests: and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork.
18. **The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats: and so are the stony rocks for the conies.**
19. He appointed the moon for certain seasons: and the sun knoweth his going down.

20. **Thou makest darkness that it may be night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do move.**
21. The lions roaring after their prey: do seek their meat from God.
22. **The sun ariseth, and they get them away together: and lay them down in their dens.**
23. Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour: until the evening.
24. **O Lord, how manifold are thy works: in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Old Testament Reading **Isaiah 35 KJV**

35 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

² It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

³ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

⁶ Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

⁷ And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

⁸ And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

⁹ No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Magnificat

1 My soul doth magnify the Lord : * and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

2 For he hath regarded : *the lowliness of his handmaiden.

3 For behold, from henceforth : * all generations shall call me blessed.

4 For he that is mighty hath magnified me : * and holy is his Name.

5 And his mercy is on them that fear him : * throughout all generations.

6 He hath shewed strength with his arm : * he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

7 He hath put down the mighty from their seat : * and hath exalted the humble and meek.

8 He hath filled the hungry with good things: * and the rich he hath sent empty away.

9 He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel : * as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : * and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : * world without end. Amen.

New Testament Reading Matthew 25:33 – 46 KJV

³¹ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

³² And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

³³ And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵ For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

³⁶ Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

³⁸ When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

³⁹ Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

⁴² For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

⁴³ I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

⁴⁴ Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

⁴⁵ Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Nunc dimittis

1 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : *according to thy word.

2 For mine eyes have seen : * thy salvation;

3 Which thou hast prepared : * before the face of all people;

4 To be a light to lighten the Gentiles : * and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : *and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : * world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

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.

Prayers

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect of the fourth Sunday in Advent.

O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen..

The Collect of Advent.

A L M I G H T Y God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

The Collect for Peace

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both, our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that, by thee, we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour . **Amen**

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. . **Amen**

Prayers

The Grace

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

Homily

Hymn

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion;
And everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion;
And everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

They shall obtain gladness and joy;
And sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return,
And come with singing unto Zion;
And everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

The Blessing

The love of the Lord Jesus draw you to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen you in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill your hearts;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**