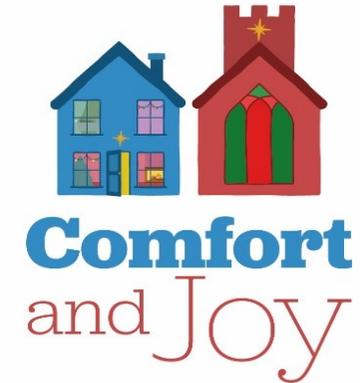


Parishes of Elstead,
Thursley, Shackleford
and Peper Harow



Advent Evening Service

We are in the season of Advent, a time of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (adventus) of Christ in his incarnation at Christmas, and also looks ahead to his final advent at the end of time when he will be revealed as Lord of creation.

The readings and prayers not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge us to look for and make real his coming in our midst and to pray with Christians of all times and places 'Come Lord Jesus'.

Welcome and lighting of the Advent Candle

People of God: be glad!
Your God delights in you,
giving you joy for sadness
and turning the dark to light.
Be strong in hope therefore;
for your God comes to save.
You are God's children.

**Lord, make us one in the love of Christ
today and for ever.**

Amen.

Taize chant The Lord is my light and salvation:

**The Lord is my light, my light and salvation
In God I trust, in God I trust.
The Lord is my light, my light and salvation
In God I trust, in God I trust.**

Chant:

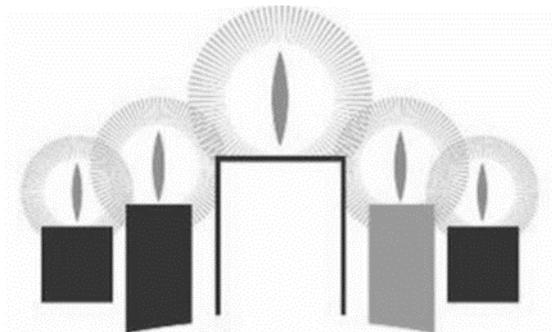
**Bless the Lord, my soul,
And bless God's Holy name.
Bless the Lord my soul,
Who leads me into life. Repeat**

Closing prayers:

God of the watching ones,
the waiting ones,
the slow and suffering ones,
the angels in heaven,
the child in the womb.

**Give us your benediction,
your good word for our souls,
that we might rest and rise
in the kindness of your company.
Amen.**

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us now evermore, Amen.**



what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Coming by R.S.Thomas

And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look he said.
The son looked. Far off,
As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, A river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.
On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The sky. many People
Held out their thin arms
To it, as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.

Intercessions

“AN ARTIST’S PRAYER

O Great Creator,
We are gathered together in your name
That we may be of greater service to you
And to our fellows.
We offer ourselves to you as instruments.
We open ourselves to your creativity in our lives.
We surrender to you our old ideas.
We welcome your new and more expansive ideas.
We trust that you will lead us.
We trust that it is safe to follow you.
We know you created us and that creativity
Is your nature and our own.
We ask you to unfold our lives
According to your plan, not our low self-worth.
Help us to believe that it is not too late
And that we are not too small or too flawed
To be healed—
By you and through each other—and made whole.
Help us to love one another,
To nurture each other’s unfolding,
To encourage each other’s growth,
And understand each other’s fears.
Help us to know that we are not alone,
That we are loved and lovable.
Help us to create as an act of worship to you.”

— **Julia Cameron, The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity**

**Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us.
Let not my doubts or my darkness speak to me.
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us.
Let my heart always welcome your love.**

Hymn

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here;
Come bow before him now with reverence and fear:
In him no sin is found - we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;
He burns with holy fire, with splendor he is crowned:
How awesome is the sight - our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place;
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace -
No work too hard for him. In faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

The Magnificat - a modern translation by Joy Cowley

The Magnificat

This is a translation of the words of Mary's Song from the birth narrative of the Gospel of Luke. That song, called "The Magnificat," can be found in Luke 1:46-55 The translator is Joy Cowley, a Roman Catholic Christian from Auckland, New Zealand,

My soul sings in gratitude.
I'm dancing in the mystery of God.
The light of the Holy One is within me
and I am blessed, so truly blessed.
This goes deeper than human thinking.
I am filled with awe
at Love whose only condition
is to be received.
The gift is not for the proud,
for they have no room for it.
The strong and self-sufficient ones
don't have this awareness.
But those who know their emptiness
can rejoice in Love's fullness.
It's the Love that we are made for,
the reason for our being.
It fills our inmost heart space
and brings to birth in us, the Holy One.

Reading:

Luke 12; 35-40

Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.
But know this: if the owner of the house had known at