

# **Advent Processional Service**

**Advent Sunday  
28<sup>th</sup> November 2004  
St. Peter's - Sowerby**

**St. Mary's Singers**

## Processional Services

PROCESSIONS are akin to religious drama: they re-enact events in the history of the world's creation and salvation.

ADVENT is a time of expectation: the word itself means 'coming'. It both recalls ancient Israel's hope for the advent of the Messiah, and also expresses the Christian hope for the fulfilment of God's Kingdom. It celebrates Christ's coming to lead the world from darkness to light.

The service is based on the Great Advent Antiphons. 'Antiphon' originally meant something sung alternately by two choirs: it came also to mean a sentence, appropriate to the season of the Church's year, sung before and after the psalms and canticles. The service begins in darkness, representing the darkness before creation as well as the darkness of sin, which is underlined by the singing of Psalm 51 - *Miserere mei, Domine* - by the Choir. The procession begins at the west end. The candlelight, symbolizing Christ the true Light, moves from east (the altar, the direction of the dawn) to west; the procession then moves gradually from west to east, symbolizing our journey of faith towards Christ.

The words and music seek to enable us to worship God, who calls us to do his will and make the world what He created it to be - full of His Glory.

The music is sung by the St. Mary's Singers. All join in the prayers, and in the singing of hymns.

## ORDER OF SERVICE

*Before the Service, there is an introduction by the Minister. The lights are extinguished, and the Choir move to the west end of the Church. The Service begins as the Cantor and Choir sing the opening prayer, followed by the Advent Matin Responsory beginning at the west end, and moving eastwards.*

God our Father, source of all beauty and inspiration, you have no need of our praise yet our desire to thank you is in itself your gift. You give us earthly music as the echo of the song of praise † which angels sing for ever in your presence. \* Grant us minds that are eager for the vision of your glory, and hearts that long for your beauty, that learning the song of the blessed here on earth, we may praise you forever in your kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*All stand as the Minister and Choir enter the Church. When the Minister reaches the sanctuary, candles are lit as the Choir sings:*

PSALM 51 – MISERERE MEI, DEUS

*Music: Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652).*  
*Words: Vulgate, Psalm 50 (51).*

*The Minister says:*

## THE BIDDING

Dear friends, in this season of Advent, let us hear how God promised to visit and redeem His people, and let us look forward to the fulfilment of all his purposes through Christ. Let us pray for the whole world, and especially for people who live in darkness, evil and fear; and let us re-affirm our determination to reflect in our own lives the light and love of God. We offer our prayers and praises in the words Jesus taught us, saying:

*All say:*

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

*The Choir sings the First Advent Antiphon: O SAPIENTIA*

O Wisdom, which camest out of the mouth of the Most High, and reachest from one end to another, mightily and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

**The First Reading:** Proverbs 8: 1-4 and 10-11  
*Divine Wisdom makes its appeal.*

*The Choir sings:*

ALLELUIA! REJOICE GREATLY

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, alleluia.

Behold, the Lord our God shall come, and all his Saints with him, and in that day there shall be a great light, alleluia.

Lo! there cometh a mighty Prophet, and he shall build up a new Jerusalem, alleluia.

*Words from Antiphons for Lauds of Advent Sunday*

*Music by Roland Mumford*

*The Choir sings the Second Advent Antiphon: O ADONAI*

O Adonai, and Leader of the house of Israel, who appearedst in the bush to Moses in a flame of fire, and gavest him the Law in Sinai: Come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

**The Second Reading:** Exodus 2:23b-3:6a

*Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush.*

**ALL SING THE HYMN: 'Thou whose almighty word'.**

*The Choir sing the Third Advent Antiphon: O RADIX JESSE*

O Root of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom kings shall shut their mouths, to whom the Gentiles shall seek: Come and deliver us, and tarry not.

**The Third Reading:** Isaiah 11:1-4a and 10

*God's Spirit will be upon the One who is to come from the root of Jesse, that is, the royal house of David.*

*The Choir sings:*

**A SPOTLESS ROSE**

A spotless Rose is blowing,  
Sprung from a tender root,  
Of ancient seers' foreshowing,  
Of Jesse promised fruit;  
Its fairest bud unfolds to light  
Amid the cold, cold winter,  
And in the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,  
Whereof Isaiah said,  
Is from its sweet root springing,  
In Mary, purest Maid;  
For, through our God's great love and might,  
The blessèd Babe she bare us  
In a cold, cold winter's night.

*Music Herbert Howells*

*The Choir sings the Fourth Advent Antiphon: O CLAVIS DAVID*

O Key of David, and Sceptre of the house of Israel; that openest, and no man shutteth, and shuttest, and no man openeth: Come and bring the prisoner out of the prison-house, and him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

**The Fourth Reading:** Micah 4:1-5

*The promise of an age of peace.*

*All sing the Hymn: 'Hills of the North rejoice'.*

*The Choir sing the Fifth Advent Antiphon: O ORIENS*

O Day-spring, Brightness of Light Everlasting, and Son of Righteousness: Come and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

**The Fifth Reading:** St. Luke 1:57-68

*The birth of John the Baptist, the great forerunner of Christ.*

*The choir sings:*

**BENEDICTUS**

**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 swore 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 day-spring 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 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.

*Music: Thomas Tallis*

*The Choir sing the Sixth Advent Antiphon: O REX GENTIUM*

O King of the nations, and their desire; the Corner-stone,  
who makest both one: Come and save mankind, whom  
thou formedst of clay.

**The Sixth Reading:** St. Mark 1:4-8

*The testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus.*

*The Choir sing:*

*THE COVENTRY CAROL*

Lully, lulla, Thou little tiny Child,

By, by, lully, lullay.

Lully, Thou little tiny Child,

By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do,

For to preserve this day.

This poor youngling for whom we sing

By, by, lully, lullay.

Herod the king, in his raging,

Charged he hath this day.

His men of might, in his own sight,

All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor Child for Thee!

And ever morn and day,

For thy parting neither say nor sing,

By, by, lully, lullay.

*Music: Kenneth Leighton; Words: C 15<sup>th</sup> Tailor's Pageant.*

*The Choir sing the Seventh Advent Antiphon: O EMMANUEL*

O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of all nations, and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

**The Seventh Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-5

*The prophet brings God's promise of comfort and peace.*

*The Choir sing:*

LONG, LONG AGO

*Long, long ago,  
O so long ago,  
Christ was born in Bethlehem  
To heal the World's woe.*

His mother in a stable  
Watched Him where he lay,  
And knew for all His frailty  
He was the World's stay.

*Long, long ago, etc.*

While He lay there sleeping,  
In the quiet night,  
She listened to His breathing,  
And O! her heart was light!

*Long, long ago, etc.*

She tendered Him and nursed Him,  
Giving Him her breast,  
And knew that it was God's Son,  
In her crooked arm at rest.

*Long, long ago, etc.*

Shepherd at the sheepfolds  
Knew him for their King;  
And gold and myrrh and frankincense,  
Three wise men did bring.

*Long, long ago, etc.*

For He should be their saviour,  
Making wars to cease,  
Who gives His Joy to all men,  
And brings to them Peace.

*Long, long ago, etc.*

*Music: Herbert Howells*

*Words: John Suchandsuch*

THE PRAYERS

THE ADVENT COLLECT

SENDING OUT OF THE NATIVITY SCENE

*All sing the Hymn: 'Lo! He comes with clouds descending',  
during which a collection is taken.*

THE BLESSING

*The Minister and Choir recess, as the Advent Prose is sung:*

**Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour  
down righteousness.**

Be not very angry, O Lord, neither remember our iniquity for ever:  
thy holy cities are a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation:  
our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee.

**Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour  
down righteousness.**

We have sinned, and are as an unclean thing,  
and we all do fade as a leaf:  
our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away;  
thou hast hid thy face from us:  
and has consumed us, because of our iniquities.

**Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour  
down righteousness.**

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have  
chosen; that ye may know me and believe me:  
and there is nothing that can deliver out of my hand.

**Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour  
down righteousness.**

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, my salvation shall not tarry:  
I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions:  
fear not for I will save thee:  
for I am the Lord thy god, the holy one of Israel, thy Redeemer.

**Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour  
down righteousness.**

*Music: Rorate cœli (Plainsong).*