**A Service of the Word for  
The Third Sunday in Advent**

**2015**

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Daily Prayer 2009 (comprising Additional Orders of Service entitled Morning and Evening Prayer 2009), material from which is included in this service is copyright © Church in Wales Publications 2009

The Introduction

**Minister**: Welcome to our service on the third Sunday in Advent. As we approach Christmas we are thinking today about Peace. We begin with Hymn 537 – “Peace, perfect peace”.

Hymn 537

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

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

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

and all that is within me bless his holy name.

The Ministry of the Word

**Psalm 146: 5-0**

Praise the Lord, O my soul : while I live • will I praise the Lord; as long as I have any being : I will sing praises to my God.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in any human power : for there is no help in them.

When their breath goes forth, they return to the earth : on that day all their thoughts perish.

Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help : whose hope is in the Lord their God;

Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them : who keeps his promise for ever;

Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong : and bread to those who hunger.

The Lord looses those that are bound : the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down : the Lord loves the righteous;

The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow : but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever : your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Alleluia.

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

Amen.

A Reading from Philippians, Chapter 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Let the word of Christ dwell with you in all its richness.

The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sermon

3 The Prayers

For the Peace of the World  
Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of true and peace proceed: kindle, we pray the, in the hearts of all men the true love of peace: and guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for th nations of the earth: that in tranquillity thy kindom may go forward, till the eart is filled with the knowledge of thy love: through Jesu Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For world leaders

Almighty God, who has blessed the earth that it should be fruitful and bring forth abundantly, we thank you for the work of the leaders gathered in Paris this weekend for the conference on global warming. We ask that you continue to guide them as they work towards an agreement that can mend and protect you’re your glorious creation.

Amen

**The collect for today**

Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

Give ear, Lord, to our prayers, and by thy gracious visitation lighten the darkness of our minds; through Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever.

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.

Hymn 308

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

Amen.

Commentary

Nigel Hardy

This congregation is small and aging and includes at least one member displaying increasing cognitive difficulties. They are experienced churchgoers, now used to 1984 forms. Services are held in a hall.

A single booklet has been produced: multiple books and searching for material is causing increasing problems (beyond those generally experienced), leading to disruption of the service flow and embarrassment. The booklet is an easily handled A5 and particularly large 14pt has been used to help aging eyes and, in fact, all worshippers, given that lighting is not good in the hall. The hall has projection facilities, but this would not be a familiar or comfortable to the congregation and might not be more visible. The font chosen is a traditional serif, intended to be comfortable and familiar, and layout it also traditional, following the familiar 1984 styles of indentation and emboldening. Pictures or other novel materials are likely to be a distraction to this congregation. Due to infirmities and to the nature of the seating, kneeling and standing are not specified. The congregation will stand for hymns.

The service structure is based on that provided for “Prayer During the Day” (BCP, 2009) and the theme is taken from the set reading: Philippians 4:4-7. “Peace”, a word widely used at the Christmas season, is taken from it and this is pointed out in the introduction to alert the congregation to it. A hymn is chosen to start the service, which is familiar for the congregation and one is chosen which is more able to able to introduce the theme of the service than any of the provided alternatives. The vesicles appear after the hymn, so as not to distract from the opening and since the words are particularly relevant to the service theme. Alleluias are omitted since it is not Easter.

The ministry of the word begins with the psalm as suggested, using the set psalm. It will be said in unison, due to the small numbers and it is presented without markings, to ease reading and natural delivery. Only the single reading is included, as per (BCP, 2009) and since the other set readings are not directly related. A sermon and creed are added, as suggested in (CW, 2000) . The single reading is small but can be expanded on usefully, considering the wider meanings of *shalom*, the breadth of the true peace brought by Christ, and the one aspect of it: the absence of war which will be the meaning placed on Christmas card quotes. The creed provides a response to the ministry by the congregation.

Prayers in the 1984 form are used. The first is very familiar and relevant to the theme. The second, partly extemporary, concerns a current event. The collect and the Lord’s Prayer follow.

To make a clear ending a hymn is used, book-casing with the start and again providing an opportunity for praise around the theme of peace. Grace is said together, appropriate for a small group and familiar to the congregation.

Bibliography

BCP, 2009. *The Book of Common Prayer for use in the Church in Wales 2009: Daily Prayer.* Norwich: Canterbury.

CW, 2000. *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England.* 1st ed. London: Church House Publishing.