

**St Andrew's and St George's West
Order of Service, 12 December 2021
Third Sunday of Advent**

The Dreaming Place



Gathering music

Claude-Bénigne Balbastre, Gavotte
John Ireland, The Holy Boy

Welcome

Call to worship

Christ of the cosmos, living Word,
come to heal and save
Incognito, in our streets,
beneath the concrete,
between the cracks,
behind the curtains, within the dreams,
in ageing memories, in childhood wonder,
in secret ponds, in broken hearts,
in Bethlehem stable, still small voice,
Word of God, amongst us.

Hymn Let us build a house

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive ;
built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace ;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions :
All are welcome,
all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace ;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus :

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face ;
let us bring an end to fear and danger :

Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter :

Opening prayer and Lord's prayer

**Our Father in heaven.
Hallowed be your name
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen.**

Advent candle lighting

In this the third week of Advent we allow ourselves to dream dreams;
we look to the new horizons of God's promises and love;
we align ourselves with the visions of God's reign.

Lord, our pilgrimage is born of a dream,
a dream of a world where justice is lived
and peace is ever present.

Third Advent candle is lit

Prayer

**May the candle we light today
light the way on our journey
and may you be
our companion and guide
as we travel. Amen.**

Sharing a sign of Christ's peace

Peace be with you
and also with you.

Dreams and visions

Hymn

Hope is a candle (verses 1, 2 and 3)

Hope is a candle, once lit by the prophets,
never consumed, though it burns through the years;
dim in the daylight of power and privilege –
when they are gone, hope will shine on.

Peace is a candle to show us a pathway
threatened by gusts from our rage and our greed,
friend, feel no envy for those in the shadows -
violence and force their dead-end course.

Love is a candle whose light makes a circle,
where every face us the face of a friend.
widen the circle by sharing and giving –
God's holy date: love everywhere,

Scripture reading Matthew 1:18-24

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do

not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife.

Joseph speaks

Solo When Joseph was a bridegroom (verses 3,4)

In touch with an angel, inspired by a dream,
aware that things sometimes are more than they seem,
confronted by God in sound, silence and sight,
all Joseph desired was to do what was right.

O God who called Joseph to father your son,
and see as a tradesman, your will being done,
teach us, when reluctant to stay on your side
like Joseph, though doubting, to dream then decide.

Scripture reading Acts 2:16-18

This is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:
'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

Reflection **Any dream will do?**

Hymn 'I have a dream', a man once said

'I have a dream', a man once said,
'where all is perfect peace ;
where men and women, black and white,
stand hand in hand, and all unite
in freedom and in love.'

But in this world of bitter strife
the dream can often fade ;
reality seems dark as night,
we catch but glimpses of the light
Christ sheds on humankind.

Fierce persecution, war, and hate
are raging everywhere ;
God calls us now to pay the price
through struggles and through sacrifice
of standing for the right.

So dream the dreams and sing the songs,
but never be content ;
for thoughts and words don't ease the pain :
unless there's action, all is vain ;
faith proves itself in deeds.

Lord, give us vision, make us strong,
help us to do your will ;
don't let us rest until we see
your love throughout humanity
uniting us in peace.

Prayers of the People

Hymn Tell out my soul

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!

Sending and blessing

May the blessing of God surround us
May angels and friends share our journey
May we be nurtured, loved and cherished
May we walk on holy ground.

May people of faith inspire us
May wisdom and vision empower us
May we be wise and creative
All the days of our journey home.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
abide with you this day, and evermore.

Sung Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.

Sending Music

Claude-Bénigne Balbastre, Prélude and final Allegro
(from Concerto in D)

Worship Leaders: Rev. Rosie Magee, Pam and George Russell

Organist and pianist: Alasdair Grant

Readers: Hannelore Gormley and Yousouf Gooljary

Advent candle: Rosemary Watson

Soloist: Frances Cooper

Technical team: Alison Bruce, Amy Marcham, Philippa Burgess, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott

Sources:

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Call to worship by Brian Woodcock

Scripture readings: New Revised Standard Version

'Joseph speaks' adapted from 'Joseph' in *Walking Backwards to Christmas* by Stephen Cottrell, www.spckpublishing.co.uk, 2014

'When Joseph was a bridegroom' from *Known Unknowns* by John L Bell and Graham Maule, Wild Goose Publications, 2018

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