

The Churches of St Bartholomew and St Chad Thurstaston and Irby 13th December 2020 – Third Sunday of Advent



Collect

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way
of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Post-Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly
gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.
Amen

FOR OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

For our Community:

Please pray for local businesses as they adapt to the new Tier system of restrictions.
Please pray for the hospital chaplain (Revd Malcolm Cowan) as he unceasingly supports patients
who can't have visitors.
Please pray for our schools as they prepare for Christmas Online Nativity and Carol Services

For our Church:

Please pray for those participating in Advent groups and using Advent Resources, that they may
encounter afresh the Comfort and Joy which God provides

For the world:

Please continue to pray for countries struggling to reduce the number of Coronavirus infections and
deaths.

For the Sick:

Please continue to pray for Molly (aged 2), Anna Drysdale, Audrey Fernyhough, Julie Davies, Mary
Wishart, Rebecca Crone (Judith Hodgson's granddaughter) and all those who are sick at home or in
hospital.

For the Bereaved:

Please pray for family and friends of Sheila Denton.

From the Anglican Prayer Cycle:

Pray for the Falkland Islands (Extra-Provincial to Canterbury). Bishop Timothy Thornton - Bishop to
the Forces and Bishop to the Falkland Islands.



**Comfort
and Joy**

#ComfortAndJoy
is the Church of England's 2020
Christmas campaign.
To find out more and to sign up
for daily reflections, visit:
churchofengland.org/comfortandjoy



0800 804 8044
DailyHOPE

A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

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Revd Jane Turner 648 1816 (Day off Tuesday). E-Mail: rector@thurstaston.org.uk

OLD TESTAMENT READING:

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11

⁶¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.
⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.
⁸ "For I, the Lord, love justice;
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹ Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the Lord has blessed."
¹⁰ I delight greatly in the Lord;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.

Psalm 126

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of
Zion, ♦
then were we like those who dream.
2 Then was our mouth filled with
laughter ♦
and our tongue with songs of joy.
3 Then said they among the nations, ♦
'The Lord has done great things for them.'
4 The Lord has indeed done great things
for us, ♦
and therefore we rejoiced.
5 Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, ♦
as the river beds of the desert.
6 Those who sow in tears ♦
shall reap with songs of joy.
7 Those who go out weeping, bearing the
seed, ♦
will come back with shouts of joy,
bearing their sheaves with them.

The Magnificat (The Song of Mary) is said or sung

1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in | God my | Saviour; "
he has looked with | favour on his | lowly | servant.

2 From this day all generations will | call me | blessed; "
the Almighty has done great things for me
and | holy | is his | name.

3 He has mercy on | those who | fear him, "
from gene | ration to | gene | ration.

4 He has shown strength | with his | arm "
and has scattered the | proud in | their con | ceit,

5 Casting down the mighty | from their | thrones "
and | lifting | up the | lowly.

6 He has filled the hungry with | good | things "
and sent the | rich a | way | empty.

7 He has come to the aid of his | servant | Israel, "
to re | member his | promise of | mercy,

8 The promise | made to our | ancestors, "
to Abraham | and his | children for | ever.

Luke 1.46-55

Glory to the Father and | to the | Son
and | to the | Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be | ginning is | now
and shall be for | ever. | A | men.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: 1 Thessalonians 5 :16-24

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹ but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²² reject every kind of evil.

²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

GOSPEL READING: John 1:6-8,19-28**All: Glory to you, O Lord**

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

¹⁹ Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹ They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

²² Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³ John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

²⁴ Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

²⁸ This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

All: Praise to you, O Christ

Our Christingle Zoom service last Sunday evening was joined by 22 households, which equated to approximately 37 adults and 21 children. Normally the Christingle consists of an Orange representing the world, a red ribbon representing the love and blood of Jesus, a candle representing Jesus as the light of the world and some cocktail sticks with sweets representing all the good things that God gives us in creation. During the service we had a Christingle Scavenger Hunt to see what alternative things we could



A special thank you to those who continue to remember to collect their used stamps for RDA (Riding for the Disabled) and a reminder, with Christmas not too far off, to save all those Royal Mail stamps.



Leprosy Boxes—Thankyou

Many, many thanks to those who have sent cheques for the Leprosy Mission. Such generosity at a time when all charities are asking for donations, is outstanding. To date I've been able to send cheques totalling £280.

I am unable to give individual receipts, I trust when your cheque is cashed will be sufficient acknowledgment, if not, please contact me and I will send you a personal receipt.

Pat Hulme.

Children's Society Boxes: Thankyou

This year despite being unable to collect in all of the boxes, we had a **record total** of £1020.07. Many thanks to all who donated.

Jean Heath.

Plus £70.00 donated to Christingle Church Page - Thank You



The Jesse Tree takes its name from a passage in the book of the prophet Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots." It is, in short, the family tree of Jesus illustrating his descent from Jesse of Bethlehem, the father of David.

Revd Jane will be creating a Jesse Tree outside the Rectory, so feel free to stop and take a look - if you need to walk up the drive to do so that's fine.

The symbols which will appear this week will be:-

The THIRD week of ADVENT

Elijah (Elijah 18:21, 30-37)

Symbol: Stone Altar

Elijah was a prophet who told people to stop worshipping other gods and only to worship the One True God. A prophet is someone who speaks for God to his people.

God our Father,

you call us to worship and adore you

and to turn our hearts to your law of love.

Help us to reject all the things that spoil our worship of you so that we may worship you, and you alone!

Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:1-19; 19:32-37)

Symbol: Tent

Hezekiah was a great King of Judah and helped to make sure that people were worshipping God properly. He removed from the Temple anything that wasn't to do with God. He destroyed the shrines and focussed the worship of God at Jerusalem, and restored the Passover pilgrimage.

Father,

as Hezekiah cleared the Temple

of everything that stood in the way of worshipping you,

so may our lives be cleared of all the clutter

that stops us from serving you, the One True God.

Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-13)

Symbol: Burning Coals

Isaiah was a prophet chosen by God to call his people to be holy. In the opening chapters of the book of the prophet Isaiah we hear how he was called by God, and how his lips were touched by burning coals, enabling him to speak for God to his people. 'Then one of the seraphs flew to me holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs...' (Isaiah 6:1-8)

Holy Father,

Isaiah spoke boldly to your people.

Help us to speak to others about your wonderful love

and the good news of Jesus who has come into the world.

Jeremiah

Symbol: Tears

Jeremiah was chosen by God to explain to the people why bad things were happening to them: it was because they had broken the covenant (promise) that God had made with them. They were worshipping other gods, and so they were exiled to a foreign land. 'O that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears,' says Jeremiah (8:22)

God our Father,

Jeremiah spoke your word

to the people exiled from the promised land.

Help us to know your presence wherever we are,

and to long for the promised land of heaven.

Habbakuk (Habbakuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4)

Symbol: Stone Watchtower

Habbakuk was a prophet. He complained to God and even questioned him. However, he learned that we should trust in God, no matter what happens around us. In Chapter 2 of the book of the prophet Habbakuk we read, 'I will stand at my watch post, and station myself...I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint.'

God our Father,

Habbakuk waited and watched for an answer to his prayers.

Help us to wait on you,

to listen to your voice

and to follow wherever you lead us.

Nehemiah

Symbol: City Wall

Nehemiah had heard about the terrible condition that the city of Jerusalem had fallen into, and it made him very sad. When he arrived in Jerusalem he looked over the city under cover of darkness, drawing up plans to restore it. Nehemiah restored the city wall within 52 days.

Father,

we live in a world broken by selfishness and sin.

Help us to work together to make the world a better place

and to build up your kingdom here on earth.

Zechariah (Luke 1:5-22)

Symbol: Pencil and Tablet

Elizabeth and Zechariah were the parents of John the Baptist. They thought that they were too old to have a child. When Zechariah was told the news he couldn't believe it! The angel who visited him said that because he didn't believe the news he would be unable to speak until the child was born! When he was asked by people what the child's name was he had to write it on a tablet of stone. They thought he would be named after his father. But the angel had told Zechariah to call him John.

Father of Old,

Zechariah couldn't believe his ears

when he heard that he would have a son.

Help us to be open to your plans

and to be ready for all the wonderful things

you have in store for us.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

All services subject to Government permission for churches to be open!

| | 8.00am St Bart's | 9.30am St Chad's | 11.15am St Bart's | *ZOOM ONLINE | Wed 10.15am St Chad's (following the Sunday) |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Dec 20 th | BCP Holy Communion | Morning Worship | | 6.30pm Service including some Carols | NO SERVICE on 23rd |
| Thursday Dec 24th Christmas Eve | | | | 4.00pm Crib Service | |
| Friday Dec 25th Christmas Day | | Holy Communion | Holy Communion | | |
| Dec 27 th | | | | | Holy Communion (30th) |
| Jan 3 rd | BCP Holy Communion | Morning Worship | | | Holy Communion (6th Jan) |

You need to book a seat for these services:-

Details on front page of our website www.thurstaston.org.uk

In summary: Book by email from Monday morning for the service the following Sunday, or Thursday morning for the service on the following Wednesday. You cannot book before bookings open at 9am.

**You may book for Christmas Day services
from 9am on Friday 18th December**

***To join a ZOOM service, please contact Revd Jane
who will give you the details.**

We are very grateful for the one-off donations that many of you usually make when you come to church over the Christmas period. Could you make a one-off Christmas donation on line this year? Or could you drop your gift to the Rectory in an envelope for the attention of Mr K. Marley - PCC Treasurer.

If you would like to make a donation to support the ongoing work of our church, you can do so by visiting the treasurers page of the website:-

<https://www.thurstaston.org.uk/treasurers-pages/welcome-from-the-hon-treasurer/>

We now have an Amazon smile account. The Link can be found on the website at www.thurstaston.org.uk, on the first page, scroll down until you see the amazon smile banner (towards the bottom on the right hand side). If you click on the banner it will take you directly to amazon, any purchases you then make Amazon will donate money to the church with no cost to you.