

Advent 3 Sunday — December 13th 2020

A Service for all the Church Family

For All

Preparing for Christmas 2020

'Comfort and Joy'

From the Church of England

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTtYrCgBnhg>



The online services are a combination

the service sheet with links to readers, hymns and music etc. (This can be activated directly from the document sent to you by email, or on the internet at <https://e-voice.org.uk/bradwellchurch/>) and used as normal or 'save' the service document, open it afresh and the links can be activated with the service sheet remaining in place). Alternatively, you can open two browsers on your screen, one to keep the service sheet visible and the other to activate the links.

Playlist for all the hymns and readings at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-v3HHJqZACy2Esm-HBcj0BWDJa7CdlqD>

Advent 3 Sunday

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming (adventus) of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement:

The **Advent Wreath** has four red in a ring around a white candle. Alternatively, there may be three purple candles, reflecting the liturgical colour for Advent, with a pink candle for the Third Sunday, when rose-pink vestments are traditionally worn. The first candle is lit on Advent Sunday; additional ones are lit, one on each Sunday, and the white one on Christmas Day.

There are several traditions about the meaning or theme of each candle. The scheme that accords best with the Common Worship Principal Service Lectionary is:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Advent 1 | The Patriarchs | |
| Advent 2 | The Prophets | |
| Advent 3 | John the Baptist | This Sunday |
| Advent 4 | The Virgin Mary | |
| Christmas Day | The Christ | |

Each of the four Sundays then reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ. 'The Patriarchs' naturally focus on Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. 'The Prophets' gives an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was 'foretold'. John, who proclaimed the Saviour, and Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the picture.

For Children and Families

The Church of England Advent and Christmas #FaithAtHome Collective Worship episode for schools explains the meaning of Advent by exploring how Christians prepare for Christmas, click below for this excellent film.

[Collective Worship for Primary Schools - Advent & Christmas | The Church of England](#)

Advent 3 Sunday Service

Hymn 1: Like A Candle Flame

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxSXXKC6nuf0>

We say together the words printed in bold.

Gathering to worship God

Greeting

Let us worship God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

All We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Welcome to our all age this All Saints Sunday Service.

Opening Prayer

All Lord, direct our thoughts, and teach us to pray.

Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn 2: She comes sailing on the wind

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmDyANpyDHM>

Silence is kept and the Collect, the prayer of the day, is said.

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.

All **Amen.**

*Lighting of the Advent Ring: by Pupils
from St Cedds School*

<https://youtu.be/YWX7B6vUe7I>

We have this Advent Ring to remind
us of the coming of Jesus, the light
of the world:



We light this candle to remind us of John the Baptist who passes on
God's message "Get ready for your King".

The Third Candle is lit:

The candle of love:
Lord Jesus, light of the world,
born in David's city of Bethlehem,
born like him to be a king:
be born in our hearts at Christmas,
be King of our lives today. **Amen.**

Saying sorry to God

Confession

When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Turn to us again, O God our saviour,
and let your anger cease from us:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Show us your compassion, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your salvation is near for those that fear you,
that glory may dwell in our land:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

God's forgiveness.

May the God of love and power forgive *us* and free *us* from *our* sins,
heal and strengthen *us* by his Spirit,
and raise *us* to new life in Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Praise

Blessed is the Lord

All for he has heard the voice of our prayer;

therefore shall our hearts dance for joy
All and in our song we will praise our God.

Hymn 3: Hark, the Glad Sound! The Saviour Comes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeBRYhG86x0>

Hearing and responding to the Word of God

Readings

The First Reading is by Children from St Cedds School.

https://youtu.be/midMDb2_Lek

From Isaiah 61:1-4 'The Message'

Announce Freedom to All Captives

61 ¹⁻⁴ The Spirit of GOD, the Master, is on me
because GOD anointed me.
He sent me to preach good news to the poor,
heal the heartbroken,
Announce freedom to all captives,
pardon all prisoners.
GOD sent me to announce the year of his grace—
a celebration of God's destruction of our enemies—
and to comfort all who mourn,
To care for the needs of all who mourn in Zion,
give them bouquets of roses instead of ashes,
Messages of joy instead of news of doom,
a praising heart instead of a languid spirit.
Rename them "Oaks of Righteousness"
planted by GOD to display his glory.
They'll rebuild the old ruins,
raise a new city out of the wreckage.
They'll start over on the ruined cities,
take the rubble left behind and make it new.

This is the word of the Lord.



All Thanks be to God

**The Second Reading is read by
Children from St Cedds
School** <https://youtu.be/dGXAmq2FNIY>



John 1:6-8 & 19-28 The Message

6-8 There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in. John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light.

19-20 When Jews from Jerusalem sent a group of priests and officials to ask John who he was, he was completely honest. He didn't evade the question. He told the plain truth: "I am not the Messiah."

21 They pressed him, "Who, then? Elijah?"

"I am not."

"The Prophet?"

"No."

22 Exasperated, they said, "Who, then? We need an answer for those who sent us. Tell us something—anything!—about yourself."

23 "I'm thunder in the desert: 'Make the road straight for God!' I'm doing what the prophet Isaiah preached."

24-25 Those sent to question him were from the Pharisee party. Now they had a question of their own: "If you're neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?"

26-27 John answered, "I only baptize using water. A person you don't recognize has taken his stand in your midst. He comes after me, but he is not in second place to me. I'm not even worthy to hold his coat for him."

28 These conversations took place in Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing at the time.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God

Anthem: Pour Down, O Heavens, From Above

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctqDOXTLgHc>

Talk: By Revd Brigid Main <https://youtu.be/TpM1cgNkvgs>

Sermon 3rd Sunday in Advent 2020

On this the third Sunday of Advent we light the candle of love and reflect on the message of John the Baptist. After several weeks of readings with powerful warnings, we find a different look today. We have the beginnings of some excitement and anticipation. Maybe it reflects the year, how do you reflect on 2020?

It has been a time of darkness, the darkness of Covid and now in these last few days we have the glimmer of the light of hope, the hope of a vaccine. In the speed with which it was developed it feels like a miracle. We have something to look forward to, something that will bring us back to normal?! One thing this year is teaching us is that we need to look again at what is 'normal'.

The Old Testament prophets gave dire warnings about what would happen if we didn't take care of ourselves and the planet. But there was always the promise that if Israel would just turn back to God, then God would act. Now, as we come to the New Testament we know that God has acted to save us, in sending Jesus his Son to live among us and show us something of God.

We have the good news of a vaccine and in the gospel today John the Baptist comes thundering in with the real Good News.

'Make ready the Messiah is coming'. He is saying 'make yourselves ready'. And that is what we are doing in Advent, we are making ourselves ready, moving ourselves out of the centre of our lives so that there is room for Jesus.

The words in the reading from Isaiah today are good news for us, for the poor. They are words which speak of healing, freedom, pardon, care for the mourners

They are messages of joy instead of doom.

Do we not, in this year 2020, need to counter the negativity of the daily news with our message of the Good News of Jesus?

Can we see the connections with the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and the world today?

Is God asking us to consider how we run our lives, how we live with the earth.

Dealing with climate change is all about what we are doing to the planet.

The pandemic has forced us to look again at our lives and our world. Maybe in 2021 the hope is that we can begin to make sense of a new world order.

At this moment in time, we might feel in a desert or a wilderness but we read that when God breathes on the desert it is transformed, there are paths through empty wastes.

Life springs up.

I read an article the other day written in the wake of the failure of the large shopping conglomerates.

‘We were a management generation that were part of a cohort that cloned every town centre. Monoculture in town centres must change. We created 400 clone towns that nobody loves. Reform will mean that the measure of a towns’ success will no longer be whether they have a particular brand or shop on the high street.’

The writer sees the need to reform attitudes away from financial profit towards people and community values. So, if we pray and call on God to breathe on our high streets what transformation would we see?

And what should be the measure of success? Surely it should be the values that Jesus gives us, the values that we see in the Isaiah reading today. And above all the values at the heart have care and concern for each other and for our community.

There is an urgency in the message thundered out by John the Baptist

There is an urgency in our lives today

There is an urgent need not just for our individual repentance but for a corporate repentance of our turning away from God. Repentance, where as a

nation as well as individually we have turned to the gods of greed, self-satisfaction and individualism.

In the bible there is no concept of the individual. In fact the word did not come into use until the 17th century. Everything Jesus talks about is not 'I' but I in community. 'I' cannot exist without community. That's the urgent message that we need to share and act out in our lives.

We must listen to Paul's words to the people of Thessalonica

'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing.

We are urged to pray for our nation.

Lord we are in a dry land

Hear our cries not for ourselves but for our nation, for our communities.

Where is our John the Baptist shouting in the wilderness? Now is the time to heed his message, coming to us down the centuries, his message that we must turn back to God.

It is daunting, I know, but God's promise is with us, in the coming of a tiny baby.

So, in these days before Christmas – Christ Mass - we are preparing to celebrate not just the birth of a special baby but the coming of a victorious God among us, weak, helpless and depending on us to prepare a world where he, the God of mercy and justice and compassion, will feel at home.

Let us in these weeks of Advent respond to the call of John the Baptist with our urgent prayers to the Lord.

O God, you speak through your prophets

Your words hold us and challenge us and keep us right,

Come and tell us the truths that we need to know and write them in our hearts and lives. **Amen.**

Hymn 4: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plr21lGfPg>

Affirmation of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

We believe and trust in one God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession: Revd Steven Poss

Let us Pray

This week we are told to rejoice, it's Gaudete Sunday, the word "gaudete" is derived from the Latin words "gaudium," joy, and "gaudeo," to rejoice or be glad. It is a rejoicing Mary, one that reflects the words she speaks on hearing that she is blessed with the Child of God (Luke 1:46b-55).

'My soul magnifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.'

As we rejoice with the coming of God our saviour, we pray for the Church and the needs of the world.

We pray for our Archbishops Justin and Stephen as they lead the Anglican Communion. We pray for their ministries in leading the Church, that they will lead with integrity and truth and rejoice and proclaim the good news of the coming of our saviour.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for our Church's here on the Dengie. Bless and guide us we pray, as we continue to live and witness in these challenging times. We pray for our communities, our schools, our care homes, our businesses and we ask for your blessing and protection on us all.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for the leaders of the world as they lead in challenging circumstances with the Covid-19 virus. We pray for wisdom and grace in the decisions they make and we pray that they may work for peace and justice with other nations. We especially pray for those nations where there is conflict and we pray for your peace in these places.

Come Lord, come again.

We give thanks for the vaccines that have become available and we pray for the people responsible for the distribution of them to the world. We pray for the medical profession that they may have rest and peace in this challenging time and we pray for your healing power for those who have affected by the virus.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for ourselves. Father, just as You sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus, help me to clear the path in my heart, too. Show me the distractions in my life that block me from all-out worship of You this Advent. Lord, I await Your coming! As I celebrate the first Advent—the first coming—I look toward the day where I will see You face to face. I imagine what it will be like. Give me a heart, Lord, that looks for Your coming on a daily basis. Help me to live my life where I'm constantly seeking Your presence. My offering to You today is my righteous life for I know I am only clean because of Jesus. Show me today how I need to be refined, purified, forgiven. Give me the strength to ask for forgiveness and to then change my ways.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for our families and friends. We pray that you will be them and that they will know your peace and joy this Christmas time.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for our sister and brothers in Christ who are persecuted for their faith. We pray for you to be with them Lord and give them the strength and guidance they need in their witness.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for those who are homeless and for the refugees in the world. We pray for the many organisations who seek to help them.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for those who are facing any kind of adversity at this time and we pray Lord that you will help them in their troubles. We remember.....

Rick Embling

Ernest Norman

Barry Jaycock

Molly Garwood

Matt Batt

Irene Johnson

Beryl Dixon

Sarah Maher

David Garlick

Tony Gibson

Jean Webber

Jean Winn

Cally Thorpe

Josh Pitman

Georgia

Andy Smith

We pray for the continuing recovery of Carol, Margaret daughter and Kath Bellingham.

We also pray for all the Staff and residents of Down Hall and The Swan care homes.

Come Lord, come again.

We pray for those who have died and we pray for their family and friends at this time.

We pray and give thanks for the life of Robert Kent, who died recently and pray for Diana his dear wife of over 60 years, they were absolutely sole mates, and cared for each other, and she misses him very much, we pray to give her strength at this time.

We also prayers for the family of Jane Blaxhall who sadly died last week, we pray for the Blaxhall and Raven family at this sad time.

Come Lord, come again.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen. Merciful Father

**Accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

**All Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Going out to serve God

Hymn 5: Hail to the Lord's Anointed

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkrepBvrLI4>

A blessing for Advent

May you hear the gentle voice of the One who speaks to you saying,
'well done, good and faithful servant'.

May you feel the loving arms of the One who assures you that
'I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

May you see the light that shines in the darkness,
that the darkness cannot overcome.

In this time of uncertainty, confusion, pain and waiting,
may you experience the hope that comes from knowing that

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

All Amen.

Blessing, honour and glory be yours,
here and everywhere,
now and for ever.

All Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Advent Music: *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udIKV_Zt3Vo

A service from New Patterns for Worship. Compilation copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2002. Closing prayer Ray Simpson, painting by kind permission of Jen Norton, photo David Thorpe.

Next Week

9am Zoom Communion

10am Morning worship at the Church Centre

10:30am Morning Communion at St Thomas' Church

Online All Age Service with the lighting of the Advent 4 Candle

Notices

1. These **Online Services** will continue for those wanting to continue worshipping at home.

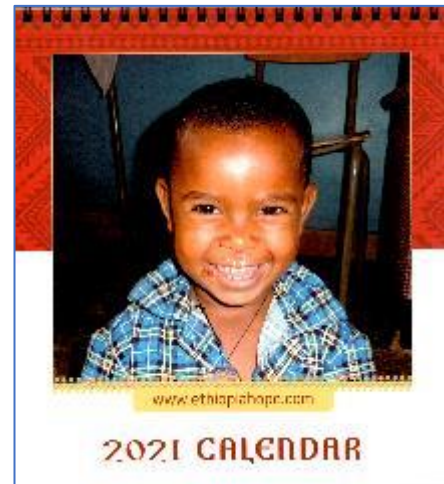
(To view this service playlist, click below, come back to this sheet for the sermon and the prayers for today)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-v3HHJqZACy2Esm-HBcj0BWDJa7CdIqD>

Ethiopia Hope Calendars

<http://www.ethiopiahope.com/>

Mike and Angie have produced these 2021 calendars in aid of the charity we support at St Thomas'. If anyone would like a wall or desktop calendar for £3 each please contact **Theresa Reed** on 776247 or Mike and Angie:



Christmas Toy Present

Normally this time of the year we collect toys for the Salvation Army to distribute at Christmas to families going through difficult times. Last year our toys went to families in East London and were much appreciated.

If you would like to donate a toy, (with a piece of wrapping paper separate), please give them to the **Steven** or the **Churchwardens** for **Theresa Reed** to collect and take them to the Salvation Army.



Christmas PRESENT appeal

Could you help us make Christmas special for families who would have little or nothing under the tree on Christmas Morning?

If so we have the following ways to donate new, unwrapped gifts in a COVID secure way:

- in store at Tesco, Maldon or Morrisons, Maldon
- Choose a gift from our Amazon Wish List with United in Kind
- Give directly to our appeal on our Just Giving site

For more information find us on Facebook, email: Maldon@salvationarmy.org.uk or call 01521 840 008

With your help we can make this Christmas as safe and special for more families in the Maldon District.

 In Maldon,
Working with 

Registered Charity No. 234715 and in Scotland SC235588 - Thank You! Registered Charity No. 232714 and in Scotland SC232389 - Thanks all round! Registered Charity No. 234628

National Christingle Event – Sunday 13th December 2020

An online national Christingle service with The Children's Society can be accessed in the link below:

[The Church of England - YouTube](#)

Diocese resources to support worship at home during Advent and Christmas

These resources for families can be found here:

[Worshipping at home with Comfort and Joy this Christmas | Chelmsford Diocese \(anglican.org\)](#)



Pastoral Care Course

If anyone is interested in joining a course on pastoral care, an online 10 week course via zoom, will begin in January. Please contact Revd Steven if you are interested.

New Worship Leaders Course

The Revd Asa Humphreys at Heybridge and Langford is looking to run a 6 week course over zoom starting in January, for those who are interested in leading worship services. If you are interested in this, please let Revd Steven know.

Spiritual Communion – Live via zoom at 9am on Sunday 13th December

Steven Poss is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Spiritual Communion

Time: Dec 13, 2020 09:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71768190260?pwd=NVNCOHBNS1YzeGhWSIE0blZwWXNYdz09>

Meeting ID: 717 6819 0260

Passcode: QMGC6J

Bible Study - Ezekiel Chapters 29 and 30 / Time: Monday December 14, 2020 07:30 PM London

Steven Poss is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Bible Study - Ezekiel Chapters 29 and 30

Time: Dec 14, 2020 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79684606136?pwd=T0svTDVBcEM3eEVLY1hvaGlyRTY4UT09>

Meeting ID: 796 8460 6136

Passcode: 7GZTh5

A reflection for Advent, featuring the poetry of R. S. Thomas. First broadcast as part of the Church Times and Canterbury Press Advent Retreat in November 2020

[‘Let me go there’: R. S. Thomas’ Advent God \(churchtimes.co.uk\)](#)