



St Anne with Holy Trinity, Brondesbury

Confidently sharing the love of Christ

Readings and Notice Sheet **Sunday 20 December 2020** **Advent 4**

While some of us will return to Church this week, many will not! We will still worship though, and do so in different settings and contexts. This Newsletter provides common prayers and readings which we might share together.



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 us to consider the expectation that Christ will come again, and we will be held accountable. This Sunday we remember

the role of Mary and her strength and courage.

The Collect

Eternal God,
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,
so we wait for his coming in glory;
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age
to see, with her, our great salvation
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading from the Book of Second Samuel

First and 2 Samuel speak to Israel's transition period from "a loose federation of tribes" to "an emerging monarchy." In this section, King David is coming off of a high note in chapter 6: the return of the ark of God to Jerusalem under his leadership. This event marks the beginning of a theologically legitimized Davidic monarchy. Saul's reign is over. The people have a centre of power, both political and theological. God's presence, symbolized by the ark, returns and remains through this Davidic dynasty.

2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet

Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.'

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Our Second reading from the letter to the Romans

The doxology of Romans 16:25-27, as well as the past sixteen chapters of the epistle centre on the project of bringing all humanity to the obedience of faith in the Gospel in order to bring great glory to God. In contemporary culture, the idea of God receiving glory might be interpreted as something that makes God seem needy, or even arrogant. Who is this God who constantly requires this sort of affirmation and recognition; indeed, this sort of glorification, and that from the entire world? Rather, God's glory is a direct result of the paradox of divine love. God is glorious, not because he is infinitely arrogant; but because he is infinitely humble. This is most profoundly expressed by the others-centred, self-giving love of Jesus on the cross for the sins of the world. God's glory, then, must be defined by the glory of his love, which is his very essence (see also 1 John 4:8). The obedience of faith is considered to be the pinnacle of God's glory not because God is after "big salvation numbers" but because faith in the God who is love transforms us into the image of his love.

Romans 16: 25 – end

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel is today taken from Luke

Luke 1: 26 – 38 as the angel Gabriel appears to Mary and responds to God’s call on her life. This Advent season, the Gospel of Luke’s version of the birth story is our focus. Because of the busy and image-rich Christmas holidays full of nativity plays and orations -- many of which combine Matthew’s wise men with Luke’s shepherds -- it is easy to miss Luke’s distinctive theological voice and contribution to the season of Advent. Harmonizing the stories into a single, easily digestible account bespeaks a long interpretative tradition in Christianity. The message Gabriel provides Mary makes several points. First, he tells Mary twice that she is favoured by the Lord (Luke 1:28, 30) and declares the Lord is with her (Luke 1:28). Moreover, Gabriel tells her the news, that she will conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear the Son of God (Luke 1:35) who will reign as the divine King and ancestor of David (Luke 1:32-33). Mary is a young woman who lacks all of the power, positioning, and prestige associated with Zechariah’s position. Mary is not only a young woman of puberty age (ages 12-14 years old) and is in the period of betrothal (Luke 1:27). Whereas Zechariah is an elder, head of household, and powerful, Mary is one who is young, inexperienced, in between households, and vulnerable. Despite this she has the courage to stand boldly and not be afraid. In what situations may we need to do the same? (An excerpt from a commentary written by Shively Smith, Assistant Professor of New Testament, Wesley Theological Seminary Washington, D.C.)

Luke 1: 26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a

son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ The angel said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ Then Mary said, ‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of our Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Take some time to reflect on the readings set for today—what might they be saying to you? What might they be saying to us as a community?

Intercessions

In joyful expectation, let us bring our prayers before God

Holy God in this time of Advent,
we give thanks for all who give us hope
For those who like Mary who are a voice for justice
and inspire us to respond to God’s call.
We pray for our Bishops Sarah and Pete,
and for all who continue to guide and inspire us to live in love and peace.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Loving God,
we give thanks for those who have responded to your invitation to serve;
for all who are selfless in the pursuit of justice.
We pray for all who face persecution at this time;
for those who are silenced, for those all who face exclusion or exile.
May they find justice in the days ahead.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

God of Hope,
we give thanks for all who like Mary inspire our actions.
We pray for all helping us to care for the earth,
for those who call for an end to oppression and war
for those who work for an end to the pandemic.
Help us to hear and to act,
in ways that honour the glory of your creation.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

God, help us to see each other as you see us.
We pray for this nation, for all making decisions that affect our lives,
for teachers, and medical staff
for carers and business owners
for all who work in sustaining and supporting community.
We pray for all who work for those who most vulnerable
for foodbanks and debt advice programs
for support groups and advocates.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer

God who binds up the broken hearted, restores the sick
and embraces all who have fallen.
Touch and heal all those whose lives are in pain or face sorrow.
We pray for those who seek you healing and comfort at this time
including Peter, Pearl, Yvonne, Rute, Patience, Ron, Evelyn, Linda,
John, Josephine, John, Cecilia and Ruth....

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have died, including those who have died recently
including Mifley and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time
amongst them Lionel Patrick Salmon, Ed Anderson, Albert Beauchamp,
Richard Killick and Gerry Clist.

Rest Eternal, Grant unto them O Lord
And may light perpetual shine upon them.
May they rest in peace **And rise in Glory**

In this stillness we bring our own prayers before God...

Hear our prayers, O God, and
fill us with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will,
as pray saying:

**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**

Notices

Tier Three

As you know we are now living under Tier Three restrictions This means we must not socialise with anybody outside of our household or support bubble in any indoor setting, whether at home or in a public place. Despite this places of worship are allowed to remain open provided that they limit mixing of households AND we follow Covid Safety Guidance. We must:

- wear a mask at all times inside;
- sanitise or wash you hands as you enter;
- enter separately;
- not mingle while in church but rather move straight to our seat;
- keep our distance when receiving communion and
- leave carefully with a 2 meter gap between each person or household.
- While there is some heating, windows need to be open for ventilation so please wear warm clothes!
- Sign in on the Track and Trace Ap and sign- sheet

Once outside please keep a safe distance. We are not allowed congregational singing, you might hum along under your mask.

Even if you do not agree with the guidance PLEASE follow it so that we can respect each other and do the best we can for the whole of our community. *Please follow the guidance of the stewards. If you are using the NHS Track and Trace App—please use the code adjacent. We also ask that you ‘sign in’ as you enter the building for church. Please do not come to church if you have any symptoms.*

Holiday Closure

From the 26th December until the 2nd January 2021 the Church will be closed. There will no services on Sunday 27th December at St Anne's. Please make use of the services on the Church of England Website which has good links to what will be available on that day.



Christmas is not cancelled!!!!

While Advent is drawing to a close, some of our Advent Activities continue.

See the 2020 Advent Flyer for more details or Or the website <http://st-annes-brondesbury.org.uk/advent-2020/>

Advent Calendar

Our Advent Calendar is in the rotunda windows. This week it becomes 3-D and by Christmas will have a large homemade nativity scene installed.

Please tell your neighbours and friends what we are doing and encourage them to come and watching the changing picture in the windows. There will be a link on the church website explain the story behind each window.
<http://st-annes-brondesbury.org.uk/giant-advent-calendar/>

The Church of England also has a weekly online Advent Calendar see https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/COFE_02977_AdventCalendar-ComfortandJoy_v4.pdf

Advent Study

Our final session is tomorrow Monday 21st December at 7pm on Zoom

This year we are exploring '**Stations' of the Nativity.**

There will be a 20min guided meditation on a different image of the nativity followed by some time for reflection and discussion. Each session will be stand alone, so you can join for on or for all the Monday's during Advent.

Advent Appeals—the Giving Tree!

As with the past few years we have three ways you might help this Advent and Christmas.

Laurence's Larder you can donate food or money—see details of their Christmas Appeal <https://www.laurenceslarder.org.uk>

Gift Box for St Mungo's—Fill a shoe box with items that would be useful for a homeless man. Warm socks, hats, gloves, toiletries, tea bags, cup of soups. *(must be at church by Sunday 20th December)*

Gift to St Anne's for its ministry—give a gift to St Anne's to help us continue our work in this place. Simply place your gift to St Anne's in the envelope provided.

Jane Cox shared the good experience she has had being part of the NHS Volunteer Responder scheme. This allows you to volunteer from home. They really need more! See <https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/> **We have some wonderful volunteers from St Anne's supporting both Laurence's Larder and Sufra.**

Daily Hope 24hour phonline

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**.



For our prayers Peter, Pearl, Yvonne, Rute, Patience, Ron, Evelyn, Linda, John, Josephine, John, Cecilia and Ruth and for those who have died recently including Mifley; and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time including Lionel Patrick Salmon, Ed Anderson, Albert Beauchamp, Richard Killick and Gerry Clist.

Services this coming week starting 20th December

Monday 21st December 2pm— Christian Contemplation on Zoom
7pm—**Advent Study 4 on Zoom**

Tuesday 22nd December 8.30am— Morning Prayer in chapel and on Zoom
Thursday 24th—Christmas Eve

3pm—5.30pm Church open to view crib

11pm Midnight Mass (please book or on Facebook)

Friday 25th—Christmas Day

10am—Eucharist

There is then NO Services at St Anne's until Sunday 3rd January 2021.

