

*The Benefice of St Mary the Virgin,
Higham Ferrers with St John the Baptist,
Chelveston-cum-Caldecott*



MEETING POINT

Third Sunday of Advent
12th December 2021

***PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY
JOHN THE BAPTIST***

Online Worship



***Welcome to our Online Worship –
Meeting Point***

*As Sunday Services now take place in our churches,
our Online Worship continues in 'Meeting Point' –
we are joined together as one worshipping family through
our services at home and in church through the seasons
of the Church Year and the themes of the Gospel.
Sunday Meeting Point helps us deepen our faith as we
explore readings from scripture and experiences from our
day to day lives.*

*This week's Advent service is when we learn more about John
the Baptist and his ministry preparing the way for Jesus, the
Messiah and how preachers in the church continued to pass on
his message*

It is led by members of our Ministry Team and congregations

In many churches and homes we have an Advent candle ring during these four weeks. There is a candle for each Sunday with a special central candle to be lit on Christmas Day. You may wish to use your handicraft skills to make your own ring or perhaps to have a small single candle or tea-light to mark each week as you listen to and share in this service.



The Welcome

Fr. Paul introduces today's service

Hymn

**Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding;
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day.'**

**Wakened by the solemn warning,
let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all ill dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.**

**Lo, the Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all to be forgiven;**

**That when next he comes with glory,
and the world is wrapped in fear,
with his mercy he may shield us,
and with words of love draw near.**

**Honour, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit,
while eternal ages run.**

*Words: Edward Caswall (1814-1878) based on Vox clama ecce
intonate, Latin, 5th or 6th C*

Music: William Henry Monk (1823-1889)

Acclamation - Brenda

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World:
eternal light, shine in our hearts.

Lord, open our eyes to your presence.
Come, Lord of light.

Lord, open our ears to your call.
Come, Lord of light.

Lord, open our hearts to your love.
Come, Lord of light.

Lord, open our lives to your guiding.
Come, Lord of light.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

You may like to light three candles at home, as today, we light the first candle on the Advent Wreath, the first, the candle of hope, for all of God's faithful people, the second, the candle of peace, for all the prophets, and the women and men of vision. The third candle which is often pink, The Shepherd's Candle, represents the joy that the birth of Christ brought to the world.joy

Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness
but will have the light of life.'
Jesus Christ is the light of the world:
a light no darkness can quench.

People of God: return!
You are called to be God's own.
From the mountains announce the
good news.
God comes in justice and peace,
to all who follow his ways.
You are God's children.

**Lord, make us one in the peace of Christ today and for ever.
Amen.**



The Collect for Advent 3

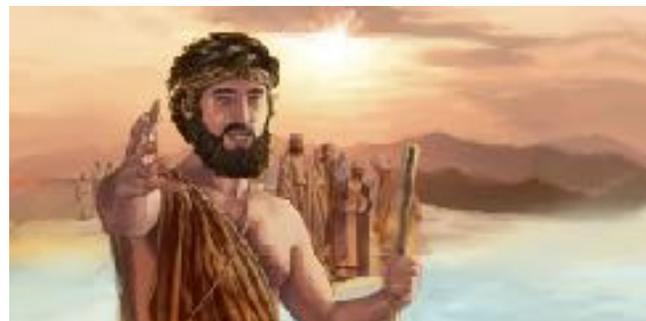
God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bible Reading— Luke 3: 7 - 18 — *read by Alison Oberman*

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear



good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people

Hymn

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings from the King of kings.**

**Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
prepare we in our hearts a home,
where such a mighty guest may come.**

**For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge, and our great reward;
without thy grace our souls must fade
and wither like a flower decayed.**



**I Baptize With Water
But One Mightier
Is Coming**

**Stretch forth thine hand, to heal our sore,
and make us rise and fall no more;
once more upon thy people shine,
and fill the world with love divine.**

**All praise, eternal Son, to thee
whose advent sets thy people free,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Ghost for evermore.**

Words: Charles Coffin (1676-1749)

*Music: Adapted from a chorale in 'Musicalisches Hand-Buch,
Hamburg, 1690*

Reflection from Paul–



*Inspired by the fervent preaching of John the Baptist we
ask members of the church family which preachers have
inspired them in their faith.*

*And we hear about a fiery Vicar in Bradford who followed
John's example*

Hymn

- 1 People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.**

- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though the earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there:
give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.**

**People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.**

**3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
he for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.**

**4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.**

**5 Angels, announce to man and beast
him who cometh from the East.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965).

Prayers of Intercession – led by Michelle & Chris

Come, Holy Lord, come to us,
that you may send us out in your power.
Fill us with your grace and goodness,
that we may be able to bring the Good News to the oppressed,
to comfort the broken-hearted,
and to bring liberty and freedom to your people.

Holy Lord, you come to inspire us;
may we proclaim your loving presence
and show your saving power.
May your church work for justice and righteousness,
for liberty and peace, and, like John the Baptist,
declare the way of the Lord and prepare the world for your coming again in
glory.

Holy Lord, you come to us to set us free;
we pray for nations oppressed by violence and tyranny,
for all peoples burdened with debt and injustice.
May we set one another free through your love and grace.

Holy Lord, you come to bring us peace;
peace in our relationships and homes,
peace in our minds and hearts.
May our homes be places of holiness and goodness,
our minds and hearts always open to others,
and may we continue to take great care of one another
in the coming weeks and days.

Holy Lord, you come to bind up broken hearts,
to heal those who are hurting;
we pray for those who suffer in any way,
those ill with coronavirus, those in need of medical care and support,
and for all friends and loved ones in their troubles.

Holy Lord, you promise us greater joys in the life to come;
we pray for those who have recently departed from us,
and those whose passing we remember at this time of year.
May they be numbered with your saints,
and know the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Holy Lord, sanctify us, and keep us,
and all for whom we have prayed
in your safety, in your peace and in your love.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

And so we pray for the coming of God's kingdom in the words that Jesus himself taught us, 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.**

The Peace - Paul

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you;
And also with you.



cf Luke 1.78,79

Choir of St. Mary's Church

**Wait for the Lord,
whose day is near;
wait for the Lord,
be strong, take heart.**

Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)

The Advent Collect – (The special prayer for this season) - Linda

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Hymn

**Lord, the light of your love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness shining:
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us;
set us free by the truth you now bring us:
shine on me, shine on me.**

***Shine, Jesus, shine,
fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze,
set our hearts on fire.***



***Flow, river, flow,
flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord,
and let there be light!***

**Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
from the shadows into your radiance;
by the blood I may enter your brightness:
search me, try me, consume all my darkness:
shine on me, shine on me.**

**As we gaze on your kingly brightness
so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory:
mirrored here, may our lives tell your story:
shine on me, shine on me.**

Words & Music: Graham Kendrick (b.1950)



The Blessing - Linda

The love of the Father strengthen you,
the love of Jesus surround you,
the love of the Spirit guide you,

and the
Almighty,
the Father,
Holy Spirit,
be upon you
ones this day
Amen

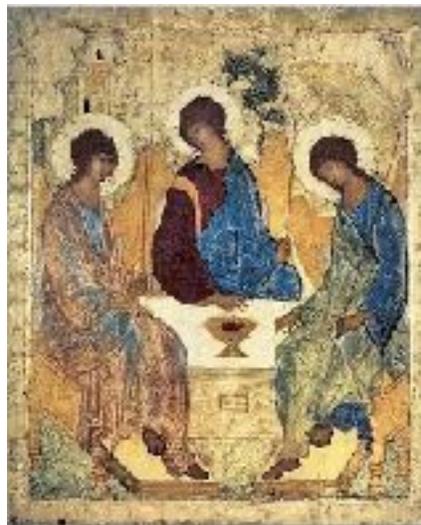


blessing of God
the Son, and the
and your loved
and for always.

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