

Reflection for the Second Sunday of Advent

The second Sunday in Advent is traditionally all about peace. Peace is a beautiful Advent theme, summing up images of quiet contemplation, glowing candles, gentle Christmas carols, and maybe a few mince pies!

That peace that, in a busy house with 3 teenagers, I do feel is sometimes more elusive than I'd wish at this time of year. The peace that I try to grasp, but often feel too overwhelmed with 'stuff' to let it truly take root.

And bursting forth into our peaceful Sunday appears John the Baptist who, with his camel hair, locusts and wild honey, starts shouting at people in the wilderness to repent and sort themselves out.

It's not the classic image of peace that the Prince of Peace came to proclaim.

But I wonder if John is telling us something more in his message. I wonder if John is telling us that real peace means intentionally making room for God, clearing out some of the stuff that can overwhelm our lives at this time of year. Being intentional in our seeking of God and the real meaning of Christmas, despite shops and the media often persuading us otherwise.

Maybe John is saying, "if you want peace, you have to make room for it." And so despite the busyness and the 'stuff' that may be happening around us, let us be intentional about seeking God's peace through it all.

So as we light our second candle this morning, I pray that we will all have that sense of God's peace, in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church, as we continue to wait and prepare for what is to come. God Incarnate, the Prince of Peace.

Revd Sarah



NEXT SUNDAY 14.12.25 Third Sunday of Advent

10.30am in the Hall

READINGS: OT Isaiah 35: 1-10

NT James 5: 7-10

GOSPEL Matthew 11: 2-11



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St Thomas, Exeter

7th December 2025

Second Sunday of Advent

10.30am in the Hall

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

401 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry

98 Come, thou long-expected Jesus

219 How lovely on the mountains

209 Hills of the north, rejoice

Tuesday 9th December

7.30pm House Group at Helen's house.

Wednesday 10th December

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 11th December

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny Tuckett's house

Friday 12th December

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting

Saturday 13th December

9.30am Men's Breakfast at the Sawyers



Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen**

Isaiah 11: 1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fating together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Romans 15: 4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ

has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, 'Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name'; and again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people'; and again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him'; and again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 3: 1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." 'Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume 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. 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

Post Communion

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his

first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

The House Group Advent Course The next meeting is this Tuesday, 9th December and then weekly until the 16th December. See Ian for details.

We will be decorating the Church and hall for Christmas this **Sunday**. Please stay after the service and join us.

We had two lovely Advent window making sessions here last week. Many thanks to Liz for organising and to those of you who supported the events in person and through prayer. Those who came from the community really enjoyed their craft time and were grateful for the event. More next year!

As we increase our service offerings this Christmas, do please pray for all that is going on and come along to the extra Christmas services with your family and friends. We will need extra readers, welcomers and intercessors, so if this is something you would like to help with (even if you've never done it before), please speak to Sarah. We will be involved in 3 Primary School Christmas events in the coming weeks – a great opportunity to share with the children the real reason for Christmas.

Next Sunday afternoon, we will hold 2 Carol services with Grace Church – please come and support these festive services as we welcome our community into this church.

Advance Notice

Flyers are now available detailing our Christmas services. Please distribute them to family and friends.

Sunday 14th December 4pm & 6pm. Carol services with Grace Church.

Saturday 20th December 4pm. Blue Christmas service.

Sunday 21st December 3pm. Christingle Messier Church

Christmas Eve 4pm Family Crib Service.
11pm Midnight Mass.

Christmas Day 9.30am Family service.