

## Reflection for Advent Sunday 2021

Happy New Year!

This Sunday marks the beginning of a new 'Church' year. Throughout the liturgical (or church) year, we remember aspects of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Advent can be seen as a period of preparation as we remember Jesus' birth – God's appearance on earth as a human being just as we are – though both fully human, *and* fully divine. With a whole new year ahead of us, rather like a blank canvas, we have the opportunity of preparing and re-focusing our minds and hearts, ready to again welcome the Saviour.

This time of preparation involves waiting. As humans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we're not always good at waiting! Everything seems to have to be instant and immediate these days...food, communications, information....have we lost something, I wonder? As the poet RS Thomas wrote, rather profoundly 'The meaning is in the waiting'...

There are different types of waiting; anxious times before receiving medical results, or diagnoses, or exam results. Also expectant, joyful times as we anticipate a holiday; a reunion; a nice meal out! Although I believe that God is totally with us in both types, this second example truly adds something to the eagerly awaited event.

As I write this, the day before going on holiday, I remember the recent excitement of picturing myself being away, relaxing, exploring. It has definitely added joy and happiness to each day. But it has also given me the chance to plan and reflect what I need to take, and what I really don't need.

May this Advent be a time of reflection, preparation and refining, as we consider the things we need to take with us into the forthcoming year, and those things that we can lay down, so that with hearts as uncluttered as possible, we can welcome the Christ-child once again, into our lives.

Revd Alison

**Codes for the Zoom Evening Prayer & discussion for the 4 Sundays of Advent at 5pm.**

**Meeting ID:** 861 6577 7243

**Passcode:** 202677

**Telephone numbers:** 0203 481 5237,  
0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

**NEXT SUNDAY 05.12.2021 2nd Sunday of Advent Yr C**

**SERVICES:** 10.30am in Church. 5pm Zoom

**READINGS:** OT Malachi 3: 1-4  
NT Philippians 1: 3-11  
GOSPEL Luke 3: 1-6



### CONTACT US

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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 28th November 2021**

**First Sunday of Advent**

**10.30am in Church, 5pm Zoom Advent**

**Prayer and Discussion**

**Music for Advent** We're going to try and change gear musically for our Advent Sundays, firstly by singing the Kyries in place of the Gloria, and also by singing the offertory prayers as we have done previously in the following form:

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation.

Thanks to your goodness this bread we offer.

Fruit of the earth, work of your hands, it will become the bread of life.

*Blessed be God, blessed be God, blessed be God forever, Amen. (x2)*

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation.

Thanks to your goodness this wine we offer.

Fruit of the vine, work of your hands, it will become the cup of life. *Blessed be God, blessed be God ...*

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation.

Thanks to your goodness ourselves we offer.

Fruit of the womb, formed by your hands, we are your people for your world. *Blessed be God ...*

Fr David



## Collect

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**

## Jeremiah 33.14–16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

## 1 Thessalonians 3.9–13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

## Luke 21.25–36

'There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the

heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.' Then he told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

## Post Communion

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

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## NOTICES

For our services in Church, **mask wearing** is still advised by the Church of England. On most Sundays you can also be seated with some social distancing if you wish.

**Coffee and tea** will be offered after the 10.30am Mass. It will be served in the Hall. **There are a few gaps in the rota before Christmas. Volunteers are required for after Christmas. See Judith.**

**Knit and Natter November 2021** We shall be meeting every Thursday from 10.30 to midday at 19 Maple Road. Details from Jenny on 01392 498725.

**House Group. Tuesdays at 7.30pm.** We will be looking at themes of Advent. Zoom details from Ian Totterdell. Next **meeting on Tues 30th November**, new people very welcome!

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays** from 10am-12noon. The collecting point is in the Choir Vestry via the Tower door. Please continue to be generous.

**Please see** the middle column for the Zoom codes for the **Advent Evening Prayer and discussion** on the 4 Sundays of Advent at 5pm.

**2nd December St Thomas Tots & Adults** Charity Coffee Morning. 9.30-11am.

**16th December St Thomas Tots & Adults** Christmas Party 9.30-11am. Please leave a message if you would like your child to attend.

