

## Reflection for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

Through Advent we have been thinking about the coming of Jesus, the Messiah, looking at how it was anticipated through the centuries by the Patriarchs, the Prophets and how John the Baptist was the first sign of the fulfilment of the prophecies. Now we have Mary, having been visited by the Angel Gabriel going to visit her cousin Elizabeth who is pregnant with John. When Jesus came and took on our humanity God was fulfilling his loving purpose for us. Mary was the amazing person through whom he chose to do this. Elizabeth says that when she heard Mary greet her the child in her womb leapt with joy. Not only did the two mothers recognise that something very special indeed was happening, but so did the unborn babies. The two women have accepted their unimaginable destinies that in many ways are beyond comprehension.

How do we, ourselves, fit into God's plan? No role can ever be greater than that of Mary, to bear God's Son. But how willing are we to put ourselves into God's hands and carry out the destiny he has for each of us?

*Phil Baker*



**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 26.12.2021 St Stephen**

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

**READINGS:** OT 2 Chronicles 24: 20-22  
NT Acts 7: 51-60  
GOSPEL Matthew 10: 17-22



### CONTACT US

**Fr David Nixon** 01392 667192. Day off: Mondays  
rev.dave@virgin.net

**Rev'd Sarah Cumming** Curate 07543604115  
rev.sarahcumming@gmail.com

**Rev'd Alison Whiting** Associate Priest  
rev.alisonwhiting@gmail.com

**Phil Baker**, Reader 07970 216740  
lionelbaker@outlook.com

**Rev'd Terry Litherland** 07594633195  
tlitherland36@gmail.com

**Ian Totterdell** Church Warden 01392 848674  
07961621001 ian.totterdell@cantab.net

**Email:** parishoffice@stthomaschurhexeter.co.uk

**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/sttexeter

**Website:** www.stthomaschurhexeter.co.uk

**Twitter:** @sttexeter

**Office Tel:** 01392 437486 Messages at any time.



# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 19th December 2021**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

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

**Prayer and Discussion**

For the final time this **Advent**, here is the offertory Response and the Verse we sing together:

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

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 ...*

Please note our timings for **Christmas services**, subject to any further restrictions:  
*Christmas Eve* 4pm Crib Service + Carols (Hall), 11.30 Midnight Mass in Church  
*Christmas Day* 9.30 Sung Eucharist in Church  
*26 December* (Sunday) 10.30 St Stephen Sung Eucharist in Church  
*2 January* 10.30 Epiphany Sung Eucharist in Church  
*9 January* 10.30 Baptism of Christ Sung Eucharist in Church

*Fr David*



## Collect

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Micah 5.2–5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

## Hebrews 10.5–10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).' When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

## Luke 1.39–55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.' And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly, he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

## Post Communion

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## NOTICES

For our services in Church, **mask wearing** is now compulsory. On most Sundays you can also be seated with some social distancing if you wish. Please don't be embarrassed to be safe. If you are coming to coffee, we also recommend wearing a mask until you are seated in the Hall.

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

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

**House Group. Begins again on Tuesday 11th January 2022.** We will be comparing other religions with Christianity, new people very welcome!

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will next be receiving donations on **Tuesday 4th January 2022** from 10am-12noon. Thanks to everyone for their generosity in 2021.

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

**Ian** will be decorating the Church on **Tuesday 21st December between 10am and 12 noon**, if anyone wishes to come along to help.

**Volunteers are needed to clean the Church nave.** The nave is divided up into small blocks for people to take on and clean about fortnightly. Please see Judith for details.

