

Reflection for 2nd Sunday before Advent

Telling our Stories

If you were asked to tell the story of this church, I wonder where you would start? Would you go right back to the first foundation stone or tell something from more recent history? What are the key factual events? I've heard stories of fire, flood, a hurricane and a bomb blast. What about the characters who have worshipped here, and the steady heartbeat of Christian faith in this place?

From the first Sunday of Advent (3rd December), we'll be gathering our memories and creating a display together. We're calling it 'Telling Our Stories', with a focus on God's story, my story and our story. A long strip of paper, divided into centuries, decades and years will be rolled out during church coffee for everyone to write on – just like the Bayeux tapestry but with fewer arrows and more words!

Telling our story is important to establish where we have come from; looking back to our roots and having the courage to unfurl new growth towards the future. Whether that future looks challenging or exciting, we know that Jesus came to 'make us children of God and heirs of eternal life' (today's Collect). So we can have faith that the closing pages of our story will reveal our place in God's glorious kingdom.

Rev'd Sarah



**** WINTER MARKET ****

Saturday 18th November

We are having a table in the Hall to sell baking, jam, chutney etc. Donations would be wonderful. We will also be selling coffee and tea in the Hall. Volunteers to help in any way would be appreciated.

NEXT SUNDAY 19.11.2023 Christ the King

10.30 in the Church

READINGS: OT Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24

NT Ephesians 1: 15-23

GOSPEL Matthew 25: 31-46



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St Thomas, Exeter

19th November 2023

2nd before Advent

10.30am in Church

Today

10.30am in Church

Hymn Numbers

242 Immortal, invisible, God only wise

56 Be thou my vision

449 Soldiers of Christ arise

Wednesday 22nd November

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

2-4pm Young at Hearts

Thursday 23rd November

9.30—11am St Thomas Tots

10.30am-12noon Knit & Natter, 19 Maple Rd

Details from Jenny on 01392 498725

3-5pm Warm Space in the Hall

Friday 24th November

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting

Saturday 25th November

12.30pm Ladies Lunch at the Royal Oak



Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm.' Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of

Matthew 25: 14-30

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take

Post Communion

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope: bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen

The **Warm Space** is starting on 23rd November.
Thanks you to all who volunteered to help.

Community Larder There will be a collection box in church on Sundays for food donations. The need remains great so please be mindful of our wider community.

House Group will run a weekly Advent Course beginning on 28th November and finishing on 19th December. More information to follow. Meetings will be held at Perridge Close at 7.30pm. Please ring Helen on 410400 for details.

We will be moving into the Hall sometime after Remembrance Sunday. The Rector heard all the comments made last week!

Today is **Safeguarding Sunday**. The Safeguarding prayer will be used in the Intercessions. Thank you to Jane Vowles who wrote this prayer for us. The initial letter of each bidding spells the word SAFEGUARDING.

