



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 29th November 2020 First Sunday of Advent

Today we come to the first Sunday in Advent. It brings with it a sense of excitement and urgency. Christmas is near, though not yet. Despite all the media exuberance and the lights and decorations all around us, the celebration of our Lord's birth is still four weeks away. We know of course things won't be quite the same as in previous years. Nevertheless, we don't like waiting!

Neither did the disciples, nor even the prophets of centuries past, as the appointed readings for this Sunday show. The prophet Isaiah is impatient for God to intervene: he sees the state of the country, and knows God must be displeased, so why does he delay, why does he not "tear open the heavens and come down?" We know there was a long wait before that plea was answered.

In the Gospel reading Jesus has been giving his disciples some insights into what lies ahead. The apocalyptic imagery used here makes for disturbing reading: definitely not the kind of passage you want to use as bedtime reading for children! Naturally the disciples want to know when all these things will take place; but Jesus quells such pointless speculation: "about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father". That rather confounds those self-appointed "prophets" who regularly announce a date for the "end of the world". Instead it is much more useful for disciples to learn to understand the significance of the signs which are all around them, and to wait, work, and watch faithfully and with patience until Christ's return.

If this all seems too daunting a challenge, then Paul in 1st Corinthians has some encouragement for us. God has given us in Christ all the spiritual strength and grace we need to keep us going in his service until the Master returns.



Readings: Isaiah 64.1-9
1 Corinthians 1.3-9

Mark 13.24-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.



Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in clouds” with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

‘From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

‘But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.’

Prayer

God of light and light,
give us hope as we wait for your coming again
when we are tempted to be grateful to have found you, while others are lost,
send us out into the darkness in search of those who need you most,
we pray to the Lord.
Amen



NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE LINK – below is the link for today's live streamed 9:30am service. Rev'd Ray Devenney is our preacher. <https://bit.ly/FirstofAdvent29Nov>

CHURCH SERVICES – from today church is open again for our socially distanced 9:30am Sunday service, and the 8am service on the first Sunday of the month, the next being Sunday 6th December.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY - the total for the year from the collection box holders was £800.34 – thank you to everyone for your contributions.

CHRISTINGLE – we will be holding our virtual service on the 13th of December. The guides are preparing some DIY bags which will be ready for collection from church next Saturday, 5th December between 9am and 3pm – the only thing you need to provide is an orange. Information on how the Christingle is made will be given during the virtual service. More information about the work of the Children's society can be found here <https://vimeo.com/454777439> and details on how to donate can be found later in this newsletter.

FAREWELL TO PETER – due to current restrictions we are not able to meet to say the appropriate farewell to Peter. We have set December 13th as the date to celebrate Peter's time with us.

ADVENT – our Christmas cards will arrive very soon, giving full details of our advent services and events. If you are able to post a few through doors near to where you live, or during your walks please let us know.

CHILDREN'S ADVENT ACTIVITY – the youth team have put together the first of their four Youtube videos which will be made available each Sunday at 10am during Advent. The videos will include a story, craft, prayer and song. The link to the first video is below. Please share this video with any children you know. <https://bit.ly/Advent-ure1>

COFFEE AND CHAT – will meet via Zoom at 11:15am, please come along and join us. It's lovely to see a few new faces. The Zoom code is 827 3638 8986, or you can click on this link [coffee and chat](#)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT – is every Sunday evening at 5pm via Zoom using code <https://zoom.us/j/499784569?pwd=MWR5SC9JR0J6dVVkNFVGVWZyNFVlZz09>

OUR CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISING

Although our ability to gather together in church for special Christmas services will be severely restricted this year, the DCC has agreed that we should still raise money for good causes as we would normally do through collections at those services.

Christingle. If you would like to support the Children's Society, you can donate directly to them by clicking on this link thyg.uk/CUS024732.

Christmas Appeal. As last year, our Christmas appeal will be split between two nominated charities, one local and one international:

The Great North Air Ambulance Service, to add to the money raised by Vikki Henderson following the death of her daughter in September.

Water Aid, which provides sustainable water, toilet and hygiene facilities to people who don't yet have access to them (the government will double the amount raised up to the end of January).

You can contribute online by debit or credit card using the following link <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65> Just click/control click and follow the instructions. Any donations to St Aidan's made using this link during December will be split equally between the two charities. Alternatively you can make a transfer direct to the church's bank account with the reference Christmas Appeal – contact Ken Newitt (01434 606900, kmnewitt@outlook.com) for details of the church's bank account if you need them.

Or you can leave a donation in a sealed envelope in the collection plate at the back of church, either at a service or when the church is open for private prayer on Saturday mornings. Please mark the envelope Christingle or Christmas Appeal.

TREASURER'S NOTES - Audio Visual System. Thank you again to all who contributed towards the cost of the new AV system. I am pleased to report that we have been successful in obtaining two grants towards the cost – £1200 from the Allchurches Trust (part of Ecclesiastical Insurance) and £1000 from the Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, for which we are extremely grateful. This means that with gift aid on congregational donations we have fully covered the cost.

Legacy. We have also been pleased to receive a legacy from the estate of Sheila Jones.

Please remember. If you are doing Christmas shopping online, you can raise **FREE** donations for St Aidan's when you shop with over 4,000 retailers, including John Lewis, M&S and Argos. All you have to do is go to the easyfundraising website (or click on the link below <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/staidanschurchbruntonpark/>), sign up, and find the retailer you want to shop with. Easyfundraising will redirect you to the retailer, you then shop as usual and the retailer will donate a percentage to us – at no cost to you! If you register with easyfundraising, they will automatically remind you about donations when you visit a participating retailer. It's a no-brainer!

For Our Prayers...

We give thanks for our church family here at St Aidan's and pray for our Team Parish - for God's upholding in all that lies ahead.

We pray for God's world – in times of upheaval and conflict we pray for peace- for resolutions to tensions between nations and peoples, for all caught up in tragedy, disaster and despair.

In our St Aidan's cycle of prayer we pray for Christ the King Team Parish, PCC members and officers.

Within our church we pray for our readers Moira and Kathryn, and all who enhance our services by their playing or singing. Within the wider community we pray for the West End Refugee Service.

We remember in our prayers Don Wright, Joyce Richardson and Ian Jamieson along with all others who are unwell at home or in hospital.

We pray for those who have died in recent days.

We remember with thanksgiving and joy our loved ones who are now with Our Father in the heavenly kingdom – Eric Ball, Lillian Futers, Thomas Gill, Mabel Wyatt, Jean Thorpe

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