



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

Sunday 19th December 2021 Fourth Sunday of Advent

A year ago most of us had yet to get vaccinated; events were very limited in scale, and we hadn't seen some family for a very long time. Now we are queuing for boosters, nightclubs and theatres as well as arenas have reopened – and most of us have caught up with family during this year. But this is our second Advent in a still persistent pandemic. Our world is gripped by anxiety, by sickness, and by divisions – not least on how to deal with COVID – and how to enjoy Christmas safely. How to see our families and the people we love. In today's gospel, Mary comes to see her relative, Elizabeth. She has just made her big decision – said yes to God's plan. But now she travels to see her relative. Elizabeth is older than her, a married woman, and perhaps someone she feels she could turn to to talk through any doubts or fears about what she has just said yes to. After all it seems huge and overwhelming! And Elizabeth – and her baby – immediately react to Mary's greeting. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and her baby John leaps with joy. They recognise that the Messiah is here with them, already. Elizabeth – filled with the Holy Spirit – passes on the good news from God. She says that Mary is blessed – holy – and that her child too will be holy. May we too be filled with the Holy Spirit to be transmitters of God's good news, and may we encourage one another on the journey of faithfulness.

*Eternal God,
as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,
so we wait for his coming in glory;
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see,
with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

First Reading: Micah 5.2-5a

The LORD says to his people:

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.

Gospel Reading: Luke 1.39-45[46-55]

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.'

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wed	10.00am, Church: BCP Midweek Eucharist
Wed	7.30pm: St Columba's: Advent series: Psalms in a Pandemic
Thurs	2.30pm: Church: Advent series: Psalms in a Pandemic
Thurs	3.30pm: Church in Park Nativity:Great Park Community Centre
Fri	4pm: Crib Service at St Aidan's
Fri	11.30pm: Midnight Mass at St Aidan's
Sat	9.30: Christmas Day Family Eucharist at St Aidan's
Sun 26th	9.30am, Parish Eucharist : St Stephen's Day Rev'd Gerard Rundell Presiding / Rev'd Jean Skinner Preaching Readings: Acts 7.51-end ; Matthew 10.17-22

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today, we have Rev'd Pauline Pearson presiding and preaching for us (Gerard is at St Cuthbert's so won't be at St Aidan's). The live link for those wishing to watch from home is <https://bit.ly/2021Advent4b>

CANCELLATION VICARAGE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE – Sadly with the current rise in infections and advice to be selective about our socializing over Christmas, Gerard will be putting off holding an Open House. He'll be keeping an eye on restrictions, and hopefully have a belated New Year/Epiphany/Candlemas/whatever-excuse-we-can-find, celebration in 2022 whenever that looks more safe.

HELP CHOOSE OUR NEXT BISHOP - Consultations are underway, and we have two opportunities to contribute our thoughts. Bill Lomas is a member of the Vacancy in See Committee so please speak to, or email Bill with your thoughts (avrillomas@aol.com), so they can be added to the role description. There is also a survey for anyone who wishes to contribute individually which closes at midnight, Friday 14 January 2022.

<https://www.surveymonkey.de/r/V9FGYVV> After Christmas the Crown Nominations Commission members will consult with us all.

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS – monies raised this year from our Christmas services will go to the RNLI and Children North-East. More information about these organisations are included in a separate document.

USED STAMPS – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church. The stamps will go to St Oswald's Hospice to raise funds. Thousands of pounds have been raised over the years from used stamps but due to emails and pre-paid enveloped funds are reducing.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09> Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS: if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

CHURCH OPENING – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

FOOD BANK – a little reminder that we still collect for the foodbank. There is a box at the back of church for donations.

CHURCH CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS – when attending a service, please wear a face mask (in Plan B this is now a legal requirement), sanitise your hands on entering church, and maintain at least a one metre distance.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link:
<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

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 Mark Edwards and St Cuthbert's and St Matthew's. Within our church we pray for Sunflower Groups, the Informal Service and all involved in our work with children and young people. Within the wider community we pray for West End Food Bank.

We remember in our prayers Gladys Johnston, Sheila Lonie, Margaret McMillan and all others who are unwell at home or in hospital. We pray for those who have died in recent days remembering especially Anne Havis.

We remember with thanksgiving and joy our loved ones who are now with Our Father in the heavenly kingdom – Joyce Audrey Boston, Jean Stephenson, Rhys Jones, William Gilchrist, Robert Michael Tiffin, Alice Bottomly, Hiram Williams

CONTACTS

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