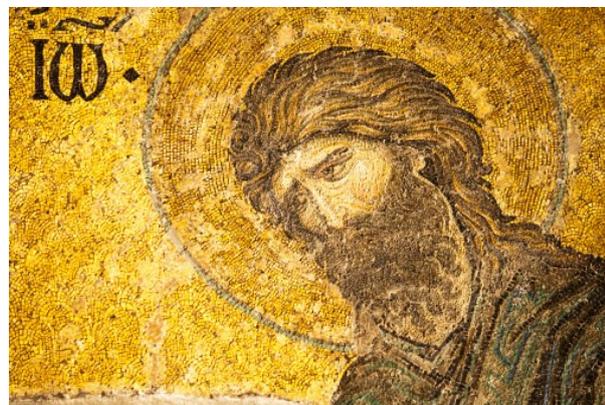


HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



Weekly devotions, prayers and news

Second Sunday of Advent

5th December 2021

The voice of one crying out in the wilderness

My dear friends,

We have a sense of the power of God working through individuals in each of the three readings this Sunday. Baruch's call to restoration, followed by the encouraging Paul, writing to the Philippians. Luke then introduces us to John the Baptist- linking him the Old Testament prophecies, although we shall have to wait until next week to hear John's voice.

What we can take away from these readings is the fact that as people of Faith in Jesus Christ, we are blessed to be part of each other's journeys; called to faithfully build one another up. Certainly, the blessings I have received from the people of our wonderful parish will always accompany me in the future. One of the great privileges of being a parish priest is to seek to be both servant and shepherd. Over these next three months I shall rejoice in our shared ministry, and, in the wonderful words of Paul in the Letter to the Philippians this week, 'I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.'

With love,

Michael

Church website www.holytrinitycuckfield.org

Second Sunday of Advent (5th December 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

Readers: Gerry Larner & Anthony Van der Willigen

9.45 Family Eucharist *(in church and online)*

Reader: Isobel Simmonds ; Intercessor: Mark Parker

11.15 Informal Family Worship

Services during the week:

Wednesday: 10.30 Holy Communion *(in church & online)* **Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Readings: Genesis 3: 9-15a; Ephesian 1: 3-6,11-12; Luke 1: 26-38

Wednesday 6.30 Space for Grace

Thursday: 9.00 Holy Communion *(Iona/Celtic)* *(in church & online)*

Readings: Isaiah 41: 13-20; Matthew 11: 11-15

Friday: 11.00 Holy Communion *(Book of Common Prayer)* *Readings: Advent 2* *(in church)*

Next Sunday: Third Sunday of Advent (12th December 2021)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

9.45 Family Eucharist *(in church and online)*

12noon Holy Baptism *Mirabelle Emmeline Heald*

For services live on Zoom: Click the blue link on the front page of the church website

The Collect for Second Sunday of Advent

Almighty God,
purify our hearts and minds,
that when your Son Jesus Christ
comes again as judge and saviour
we may be ready to receive him,
who is our Lord and our God.
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

The Post Communion Prayer:

Father in heaven,
who sent your Son to redeem the world
and will send him again to be our judge:
give us grace so to imitate him
in the humility and purity of his first coming
that, when he comes again,
we may be ready to greet him
with joyful love and firm faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Baruch 5

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting; for God will show your splendour everywhere under heaven. For God will give you evermore the name, "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory." Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them. For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne. For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Philippians 1: 3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Luke 3: 1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."'

A thought

We don't often read from Baruch, but here is a passage not just of great encouragement, but one that also points towards the figure of John the Baptist. It talks to us of restoration - the same idea which we hear of in the Book of Revelation—a new heaven and a new earth—and all this begins with the coming of the Lord. Thus Advent is not merely a season preparing for Christmas, but also a reminder that we are called to be signs of new creation. Is this too big a call? We have also kept hearing about divine judgement. This might make us feel uncomfortable – it seems to go against the strong sense of personal freedom which is so much a part of our modern Western society. It would be natural to pull away from this understanding of the Second Coming of Jesus and Divine Judgement, leaving behind the warm glow of the birth of a child in a stable and his growing into a great moral teacher. We might even call the rest of it the baggage of Christian history. This would be a mistake. We are always called to be challenged on our Christian journey - to respond day by day to the call of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ. We are people who always live in anticipation as we journey further towards the heart of God's love. Indeed, the major running theme through the Book of Baruch is God's love. In the Gospels, Jesus some times challenges us very strongly in terms we find very uncomfortable! Next week, we will hear the words of John himself, vital clues which enable us to reflect on how we respond to God's call within our own time. In responding to this call, just read the extraordinary words of Paul in the passage from Philippians. I can't think of many passages as encouraging as this. *For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.*

My dear friends be encouraged as we build each other up in grace. This is our call as brothers and sisters in Christ.

A prayer for this time of anxiety:

God of all compassion, your love never fails. Help us to listen to the tranquillity of your presence within our lives, so that we may grow in the knowledge that your Son, Jesus Christ, walks beside us, and your Holy Spirit comforts us at the heart of our being; for you are One God, world without end. Amen

Please remember those for whom we pray:

Immediate need: Barbara Booth, John Bernardi (priest), Maureen Griffiths, Paul Simpson, Tim Burrows, The Parker Family, Paul Somers, Eileen Knight, David Davidson, Carol Cox

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Young Joshua, Young Reggie, Anne Greenhill, Ros Ayling, Wendy, Ann Went, Dave Cox, Julie Sadler, Tony Burbidge, Christopher, Janet Card, George Snashall, Mary Todd, Carole Wooldridge, Kate Malby, Wendy Hibling, Yvonne Godsmark, Carla Spear, Pam Sagar, Wendy Boys

Those in Care Homes: Alan Prebble, Stephanie Gilpin, Jill Rockey, Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Ruth Baker, Keith Thompson,

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Sheila Mitchell, John Smith, Paul Wilcock, Paul Vander

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember: 5th Athalie Nye, Joan Pyle, Leonora Maguire, 6th Lady marie Loder, Winifred Wiseman, 7th George Smith, Frank James, Jean Notrums, 8th Eleanor Flux-Dundas, Victor Newnham, Honor Griffin, 9th Michael Batterbee, James Platt, 10th Gladys Defrates, Robert Tidmarsh