

# Service for Third Sunday of Advent



**St Laurence Church, Downton**

13 December 2020

# Preparation

## Call to Worship

Give thanks to the Lord,  
**call on his name;**

Make known his deeds among the nations;  
**proclaim that his name is exalted.**

*Isaiah 12:4*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
so may the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The Team Rector introduces the service*

Hymn: *On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry*  
(*St Martin's Voices*)

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh:  
come then and harken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be every Christian breast,  
and furnished for so great a guest!  
Yea, let us each our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without thy grace our souls must fade,  
and wither like a flower decayed.

Stretch forth thine hand, to heal our sore,  
and make us rise to fall no more;  
once more upon thy people shine,  
and fill the world with love divine.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee  
whose advent sets thy people free,  
whom, with the Father, we adore,  
and Spirit blessed, for evermore. Amen.

*Charles Coffin (1676-1749)  
translated by John Chandler (1806-1876)*

### Travelling Crib:

Jesus says: 'Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me'

*Revelation 3:20*

Just as Mary and Joseph look for a door that will open for them, so Jesus wants our lives to be open to him that he might come in and share with us.

May the blessings of God be upon us all, as we remember Mary and Joseph preparing for the coming of their son. So too may we prepare for the coming of Jesus into our own lives and into the world. **Amen.**

### Advent Wreath:

This Advent, we hope and pray for:  
Joy as we journey together,  
Sight for the blind and healing for the sick,  
Freedom for the prisoners and good news for the poor,  
Release for the oppressed with justice for all,  
love for each other.  
and the coming of God's Kingdom.

And as we pray,  
**So we light a candle proclaiming our hope.**

*We light the third candle on our Advent Wreath.*

God our Father,  
you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age  
a son called John.

He grew up strong in spirit,  
prepared the people for the coming of the Lord,  
and baptized them in the Jordan to wash away their sins.  
Help us, who have been baptized into Christ,  
to be ready to welcome him into our hearts,  
and to grow strong in faith by the power of the Spirit.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
the Light who is coming into the world. **Amen.**

### Confession:

The voice of one comes  
crying out in the wilderness:  
**prepare the way of the Lord.**

A messenger prepares the way,  
transforming us like the refiner's fire:  
**calling us to account.**

For the prophets of old have spoken,  
announcing the breaking open of the dawn:  
**guiding our feet in the way of peace.**

Merciful God forgive us:  
Forgive us when we are quick  
to point the finger at someone else.  
Forgive us when we put our heads down  
and ignore the cries of injustice.  
Forgive us when we presume to understand  
the complexity of issues that divide and distract  
the peoples of the land your feet once walked.

Merciful God,  
forgive us, heal us,  
encourage us and speak through us,  
that we may be transformed through the refiner's fire,  
and the offerings of our hands and our hearts  
may prepare the way for the Christ child  
to be welcomed among us in peace. **Amen.**

# *The Liturgy of the Word*

Readings:

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-end

John 1:6-8,19-28

*After each reading:*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Reflection

Music: *Gaude et Laetare (Rejoice and be glad)*  
(Oxford Choir)

## *Prayers*

*We are led in a time of prayer*

*This response is used:*

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said:*

Awaiting his coming in glory,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come;**

**thy will be done;**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;**

**but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## *Conclusion*

### The Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
who at your first coming sent your messenger  
to prepare your way before you:  
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries  
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way  
by turning the hearts of the disobedient  
to the wisdom of the just,  
that at your second coming to judge the world  
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;  
for you are alive and reign with the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### Blessing:

May God the Father,  
who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son,  
give you grace to prepare for life eternal;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ  
and make no provision for the flesh,  
**for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**

Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**