



A7 Centre of Mission
St Peter's, St John's & St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal
Churches



29th November 2020, First Sunday of Advent Newsletter

Collect First Sunday of Advent

Stir up your power, Lord, and come: that, with you as our protector, we may be rescued from our sins; and with you as our deliverer, we may be set free; for you live and reign with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9 New International Version

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Mark 13:24-37 New International Version

“But in those days, following that distress, “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

“At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

Tim's sermon for Advent Sunday

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord our rock and our redeemer.

Good morning everyone and welcome to St Cuthbert's, those of you who are here in person and those of you watching on Zoom at home. It's great to see you all.

Happy New Year folks. No, seriously, today marks the beginning of the Christian Liturgical Year. From now on we look forward, as we wait for the coming of the Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Of course, we are waiting in two senses at the same time. 1) for the second coming of Jesus and, 2), as we prepare to celebrate his first arrival, born in a Stable in the city of David. There were many prophecies that the long awaited Messiah would be born in David's Royal line. In 700BC, the prophet Isaiah said that “a shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots”. This made me smile and I had to look it up, to be reminded that Jesse was David's father. A little later, about 600BC, the prophet Jeremiah said “In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.”

So, the Jews were waiting for the Messiah. Children of all ages are waiting for Christmas. Christians everywhere are waiting for the second coming of Jesus. Oh my, there has been so much waiting this year, hasn't there? We've been waiting for news, waiting for jobs, waiting to hold loved ones close, waiting for a vaccine, waiting for the end of lockdown, waiting and watching for the new normal. All of this waiting has been very hard.

But this Advent I would like us to try and set aside all that, and embark on a different quality of waiting. An active type of waiting that is confident and expectant, for waiting on God does not mean doing nothing but rolling up our sleeves and taking action. In amongst the busyness of the season, wrapping presents, writing cards, ordering the turkey and putting up the decorations, we need to set aside time and effort to draw closer to God. In so doing, come Christmas Day, we will appreciate all the more the wonderful gift that is Jesus.

How might we do that I hear you ask. Tim have you got any suggestions? Well OK then, if you insist. If we seek to draw near to God, in a deliberate and penitential fashion we could do worse than consider how we spend our time, our talents and our treasure.

Haha, time. The season of Advent is well known for its Advent Calendars, which measure time in days, counting down the 24 days of December often with a piece of chocolate behind each window. All good fun, especially for little ones. But how about this for a twist. Why not make a Reverse Advent Calendar? By using a box or a basket put something **in** every day throughout Advent. You could collect items of food for the Foodbank; or you could collect toys or books for the charity shop; or you could collect knitted hats for the Mission to Seafarers, or pencils crayons and colouring books for children. The choice is endless really. But by Christmas Day you will have a box of goodies that will help those who are less fortunate at Christmastime.

Or how about this: you could spend a little extra time in prayer. Why not go to the Advent Retreat being held at Whitchester? There you will consider the theme of Emmanuel: God with us and I am sure that you will come home richer for the experience.

Or you could apply your talent for studying the Bible. Here in the A7 our weekly Bible Study on Zoom, led by John Marsden, is going to follow a new workbook for the season. Advent for Everyone: a journey with the apostles, by Tom Wright. I anticipate meaningful discussions that will help us be better prepared for the coming of Jesus.

Mind you, if that doesn't float your boat, there are plenty of other resources available online to guide us closer to God through Advent. Nearly all of the Christian charities have a fund-raising campaign leading up to Christmas. USPG are 'Giving the Promise of Hope this Christmas; Tearfund are running 'Our present: hope with daily emails. Christian Aid have produced an excellent resource that highlights the impact of climate change on the people of Ethiopia.

But hey I must mention the Church Army campaign called 'Imagine a world...' Let's have a quick look at the introductory video: Church Army video.

So there you have it. These are my ideas for drawing us closer to God this Advent. Now I pray that when Jesus comes we may be found seriously seeking God, not hiding our talent, nor asleep but alert; waiting and longing for our Lord. Amen



Intercessions for 29th November 2020

Everlasting God, as we come before you at the start of the Season of Advent we ask you to prepare us for the coming, of your son Jesus Christ and to hear us when we pray in faith for the needs of the Church and the world and to thank you for your goodness.

Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Mighty God, we pray for your church today, gathering worldwide in churches, chapels and cathedrals, to praise you and to hear your holy word. Give us a sense of expectation as we come and inspiration as we go. We pray for your blessing on all those who lead, preach and teach and we pray especially for our A7 leaders as they seek to do your will and guide us through our spiritual and worldly journey through Advent, until the day when we celebrate together the birth of your Son on Christmas Day.

Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Creator God, drive away despair from our politics, revive our dreams of justice and truth, and restore our passion for what is good and right. Establish your just and gentle rule throughout the world especially where there is conflict; where peace seems so far away and so many have lost everything, even the faint hope of a peaceful future. Govern the hearts and minds of all world leaders and those in authority that they may act justly, honestly and according to your will especially at this time of the global pandemic.
Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Father God, we pray for those amongst our families, friends and neighbours who will only see in Advent a hectic and worrying run-up to the excesses of a secular Christmas. Help us as we try to set an example of a true spirit of preparation for that incredibly precious gift of the Christ-child. May they see in our Services our Carols and Christingles, whether in church or online, the true meaning of Christmas and experience your love for them through the giving of your Son, Jesus Christ
Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Merciful God, we pray for those for whom this day will be long and painful, for those in hospital or ill at home, those struggling with despair or depression and for all who care for them. Comfort and heal all who suffer, especially at this time of the Covid 19 pandemic, give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.
Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Loving God, we pray for those who have recently died and for those for whom this day will be their last. Be near to all who mourn and comfort them with the knowledge that in the coming of your son Jesus the gates of heaven will be opened wide for all who accept him as Lord and Saviour.
Lord in your mercy: hear our prayer

Advent Lord, as we move into the new liturgical year, draw near to us, strengthen our faith, deepen our love for you and for our neighbours and open our eyes to the wonder of your creation, so that when our Saviour comes he may find our hearts ready to receive him.
Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility: that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.



As part of the ongoing response to the Coronavirus pandemic the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) will be broadcasting video coverage of Eucharistic services via its website, social media channels and YouTube channel. The web page is located at www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship
For those who are not online the Archbishop of Canterbury has set up a Freephone Daily Hope service of hymns, prayers and readings. It is available 24 hours a day on 0800 8048044

TV and Radio Sunday Worship: BBC RADIO SCOTLAND – 7.30am Acts of Worship BBC RADIO 4 - 08:10am Morning Worship BBC 1 TV –1.15pm Songs of Praise BBC Radio 4 Longwave – 9.45am Morning Service (Mon-Fri)

Join Pip this week at Holy Trinity at <https://www.holytrinitymelrose.org/> and click on the link - Holy Trinity YouTube channel. 11.00am <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJkxEqnglnze4SeN4I54Ecw>
St John's Selkirk now has their weekly Sunday services on their YouTube channel, with several (different) familiar voices each week, music, inspirational quotes and images
at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9ITNAH6VHZkqM0NiH6Vt9w> available from 10am each Sunday morning..



11am to 11:30 every Wednesday morning.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87979280424?pwd=UEJzRXk0UFpVcnJuaUVZTzJvaE92UT09>
Meeting ID: 879 7928 0424 Password: 023545 Host: Tim Hatton



Bible Studies hosted on Zoom - all are welcome. Wednesday 7:30pm & Thursday 10:30am hosted by John Marsden Follow this link <https://zoom.us/j/7538094986?pwd=Q0x4YVvk2b3Y5eEt0VkoXs0ZlVWVWxGUT09> or use this information to open a Zoom meeting: Meeting ID: 753 809 4986 Password: 751474



Communion for the Homebound
Home Communion is only available to those people can't come out or get to church for self-isolation reasons. Please book through Sheena then Simon will contact to arrange a time.

Reserved Sacrament is still suspended until further notice due to corona virus restrictions.



The Greening of The Church

Advent Flowers

Last year, we did something different during advent and had flowers church. I did a little bit of investigation and found that the beginning of Advent is a time for the "hanging of the greens", where we can decorate the church with evergreens, plants and trees that keep their leaves all year round. This helps to symbolise the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus. The Advent wreath is a symbol of the beginning of the Church year. The circle of the wreath reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life.



I build the arrangements up over the 4 Sundays of Advent and I intend to do the same this year. Doing the Advent flowers this way helps me personally. Over the years the number of people available to help decorate the church for Christmas has reduced which means that the few people able to help spend several hours doing the arrangements.

On the first Sunday in Advent there will be alter flowers as well as the Advent wreath. The alter flowers will be dark to start with to reflect the darkness before Christ and will get lighter each Sunday. Dark blues, purple and dark green will be used.

For the second Sunday, additional evergreen arrangements will be added with lighter blue, purple flowers and lighter green leaves.

The third week, pink and white flowers will be introduced as well as Poinsettias as the leaves are sometimes thought as a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red coloured leaves symbolise the blood of Christ and also symbolises remembrance. The fourth Sunday is ramped up for Christmas day and the number of arrangements will be increased.

If anyone would like to do a green leafy display, it would be very much appreciated. If you need a container and oasis that can be organised, just let me know. Thanks Karen

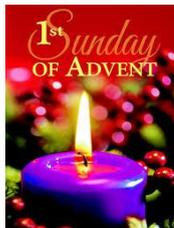
Home From Hospital

Enid Hogley is now in Waverly Care Home after her discharge from BGH
Duncan is home from ERI after his heart attack



Sad News

Drew Tulley died in hospital last weekend. His Cremation will be private.



This year the First Sunday of Advent fall on a 5th Sunday, 29th November and will be held live from St Cuthbert's. 5 members from each congregation of St John's and St Peter's can be there in person too. If you wish to attend it will be on a first come first served basis and you need to book with Sheena 01896 751694. Everyone else can attend via Zoom.

Timothy Hatton is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: A7 Joint Service: Advent Sunday, 2020 (10:30 actual start) Time: Nov 29, 2020 10:00 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 815 5324 6006 Passcode: 765109

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81553246006?pwd=ZmgrLzJ2Z0VXRDYwQIRXZHJtekg1dz09>



Opening for communal worship from September.

St John's are overjoyed their first service in church will be in Sunday 6th December at 10.30 am.

St Peter's 10.30am services on 1st and 4th Sundays will be Communion with Simon or other clergy. 2nd & 3rd Sundays will be Service of the Word. Thursday mornings will be a Said Communion service.

St Cuthbert's 10.30am services on 2nd & 3rd Sundays will be Communion, 1st & 4th Sundays Service of the Word. Wednesdays at 11.00am will be Said Holy Communion. Please remember to bring a face covering

to wear unless you have health issues and the service booklet and newsletter which contains the readings etc for the week.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE FOR THE SERVICE AT ANY OF THE A7 CHURCHES PLEASE BE READY TO FILL IN THE FORM FOR GOVERNMENT TRACK AND PROTECT.



Simon is on a Mental Health zoom course 3rd & 4th December but can be reached on 07710523856

Tim will also be away at home on his Scottish Episcopal Institute Course.

He will not be contactable and will not be back at work until Tues 8th of Dec.



There will be no service in St Peter's on Thursday 3rd December

Spiritual Communion

Here is a prayer that can be used at 10.30 on Sundays when Simon will be celebrating the Eucharist
For an Act of spiritual Communion, the following prayer -

My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.



Postage stamps

The 2020 World Mission Postage Stamp Appeal is on behalf of the Women's Development Centre at Kandy, Sri Lanka. This provides support and training for women and girls who have experienced abuse or domestic violence, enabling them to lead safe and productive lives. Our stamps are collected through a local Church of Scotland and are greatly appreciated. As we approach Christmas and cards start arriving don't forget to save the stamps, leaving a small margin around each, and drop them into the recycling box in the porch of Holy Trinity Church, Melrose (preferably in an envelope).



As we can't have our usual greetings banner at the back of St Peter's this year we are planning a hand delivery to our congregation in Galashiels. If you would like to have cards collected and delivered please let Al or Sheena know and we will see what can be arranged.



Saint Andrew – patron Saint of Cyprus, Georgia, Malta, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Spain and Ukraine

Andrew the Apostle was born between AD 5 and AD 10^[6] in Bethsaida, in Galilee. The New Testament states that Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter, and likewise a son of John, or Jonah. He was born in the village of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee. "The first striking characteristic of Andrew is his name: it is not Hebrew, as might have been expected, but Greek, indicative of a certain cultural openness in his family that cannot be ignored. We are in Galilee, where the Greek language and culture are quite present."

Both he and his brother Peter were fishermen by trade, hence the tradition that Jesus called them to be his disciples by saying that he will make them "fishers of men" At the beginning of Jesus' public life, they were said to have occupied the same house at Capernaum.

In the Gospel of Matthew (Matt 4:18–22) and in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 1:16–20) Simon Peter and Andrew were both called together to become disciples of Jesus and "fishers of men". These narratives record that Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, observed Simon and Andrew fishing, and called them to discipleship.

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

Priest in charge of St Peter's, St John's & St Cuthbert's Rev Simon Cake 07710523856

cakekands@btinternet.com

St Peter's pastoral support contact Monica Reynolds 01896 757114 monica@tempelstowe.com

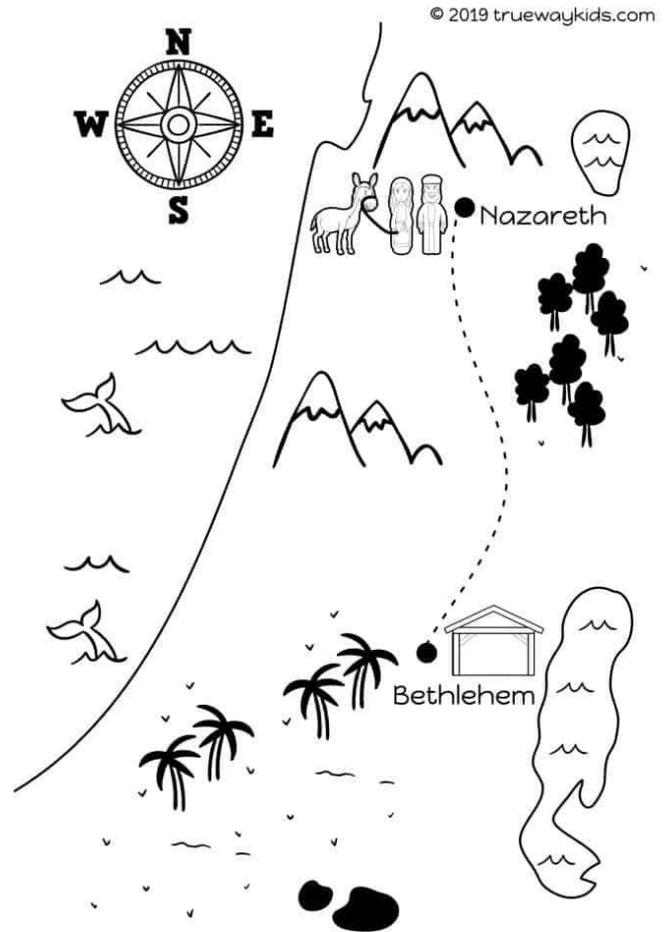
St Peter's prayer support Muriel Lounsbach 01896 831418 gordon.lounsbach@btinternet.com

Tim Hatton (A7 Church Army) 07784872307 tim.w.hatton@gmail.com

St Cuthbert's pastoral and prayer contact Sue Crozier 01450 376499 susancrozier17@yahoo.co.uk

St John's pastoral and prayer contact Margaret Moyes mmoyes2@gmail.com

The Journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem
 Children from Messy Church and Sunday Squad will receive a sheet with the story of the journey and a small lamb so that they can follow Mary and Joseph on their journey.



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The Five W's Of Life

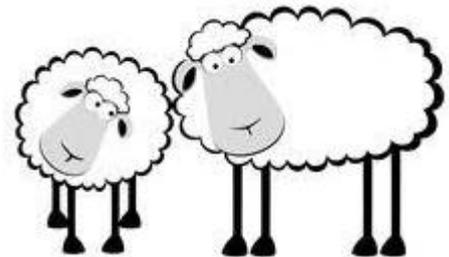
Who you are is what makes you special. Do not change for anyone.

What lies ahead will always be a mystery. Do not be afraid to explore.

When life pushes you over, you push back harder.

Where there are choices to make, make the one you won't regret.

Why things happen will never be certain. Take it in stride and move forward.



The Messy Sheep Trail in Galashiels
 Shop windows begins on 1st December

How many can you find?

