



St. Luke's Church, Maidenhead

www.stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk

[This sheet is also available on the above website]

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Week Commencing: 10th December, Advent 2

It is Christmas Tree Festival weekend. Don't forget to come and see the trees (details below). On Sunday we have an 8.00am Holy Communion service, and a 10.00am Parish Communion, both in among the trees. Sunday is also the last day of our Christmas Tree festival for which we will have a closing service at 6.00pm. We hope to see many of you there to see all the wonderful trees and celebrate the end of a successful event.

Just a reminder that our midweek Holy Communion this week will take place on Tuesday at the usual time of 10.00 am to facilitate Claires Court Carol services on Wednesday.

On Wednesday evenings in Advent Compline (Night Prayer) will be said on zoom. Why not join in for a time of quiet in a busy season.

The Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray,
your power and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Post Communion

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.

First Reading

1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.' 6 A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. 9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' 10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep. *Isaiah 40.1-11*

The Gospel Reading

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight"', 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

Mark 1.1-8

Sunday's Hymns:

46	On Jordan's bank	30	Come, thou long expected Jesus
39	Hills of the north rejoice	319	Sing we praises of the great forerunner
38	Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding		

Thought for the week:

Sunday's reading from Isaiah is perhaps one of the most well known and beautiful passages in the 66 chapters of Isaiah's prophecy, brought to life by the composer Handel and used in so many ways.

But look carefully at it and we see that this is not passive waiting, this is energetic, active, exhausting waiting. It is anticipation with energy. There is active compassion from God to his people – commanding his prophets to get alongside them and speak tenderly to them.

It is noisy waiting – there are voices shouting out the message. And there are JCBs in the desert as it is levelled out to make an M25 type highway for God to come into his world with might.

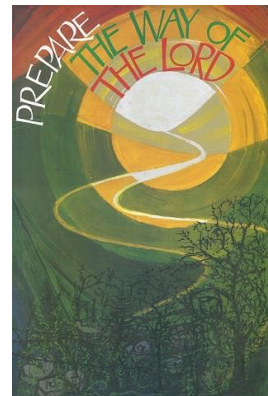
We read that this might is not that of a warrior – it is the gentleness of a busy shepherd, always alert to the needs of his flock and running around after them.

Isaiah speaks of an active, busy waiting for God to burst into his world in a new way.

This is not the busyness of shopping or gift wrapping or baking or carol singing (even socially distanced carol singing) – it is an open ended busyness which is centred wholly on God, deeply rooted in Him.

And John the Baptist takes up that theme as he echoes Isaiah's cry and himself literally calls out on the desert of Judea – calling people to repentance in readiness for the Messiah. They didn't sit around 'being quiet' 'waiting on God' - they flocked to John to be baptised – for repentance. The Greek word for repentance is also an active word: metanoia means turning round – 180 degrees. Not a little shift in the seat to get comfy, but a whoppingly active turning right round – radically from one way of being to another.

As we say at every baptism even today – turning TO Jesus. That's not just a conventional nicety – it is a huge active turning to follow the one who has already begun something deep inside each of us. Isaiah, John the Baptist, Godself call us to active waiting as we pursue God's kingdom. God did not just start a new thing off in the womb of Mary, God is doing a new thing in each one of us, God started that at the moment of our birth, God affirmed it at our baptism, and calls us now – particularly at the start of each new church year - to be alert, awake, alive, active, to what God is doing in his world and in us – and to participate with him in being more Christ like for the sake of his world.



Prayer suggestions for this week:

- For our keeping of a holy Advent and joyful Christmas
- For all that is involved in our Christmas Tree Festival – smooth practicalities, lots of volunteer help, stamina, and that those who visit might meet with God.
- For the people of Israel and Palestine, for an end to the violence there and for strength for all those who are suffering loss and fear. For our sisters and brothers in the Jewish and Muslim communities of our own town, especially those worried for loved ones.
- For peace in Ukraine and Russia, and of Sudan, and also in Armenia and Ethiopia.
- For our schools, that the nativity story might be told afresh. For stamina for staff as term draws to a close.
- For a new church music leader.
- For our growth in faith and for the developing Alpha team. For God to be moving guests to join the course next year.
- For all those whose anniversary of baptism falls in December: Herbie Prater, Lily Edmonds and Arlo Ridley.
- For all those who live and work in Clivemont road..
- The sick and their carers : Monica Olley, Ann Hockham, Valerie Bosley, Pat Botting, Phyllis Sigsworth, Jean Jackson.
- Those who have died recently, and those who mourn them: Dorothy (June) Stanley, Val Scott
- Those whose anniversary of death falls in December: John Sheppard, Denis Rayfield, Beryl Jenkins, Evelyn Rose, Roy Horsham, John Norris, Margaret Swanborough, Joan Parker, Dorothy Scott, Penelope Hutchings, Peter Brown, John Dickson, Anne Seagrove, Max Neale, Eileen Pond, David Sawyers, Robert Gardener, Peggy Harris, Colin Bowerman, Robert Gill, Sheila Mayers, Joyce Bryant, Isabella Monk, David Jones, Bernard Bowdery, Patricia Walker, Roy Goff, Jean Judd, David Jesson, Dorothy Chalk, Steven Robinson and Carol Kharas.

Readings for Morning Prayer for the week beginning Sunday 10th December 2023:

Sunday	Psalm 80	Isaiah 5	John 5.19-40
Monday	Psalm 44	Isaiah 30.1-18	Maththew 14.1-12
Tuesday	Psalm 56	Isaiah 30.19-end	Matthew 14.13-end
Wednesday	Psalm 62	Isaiah 31	Matthew 15.1-20
Thursday	Psalm 54	Isaiah 32	Matthew 15.21-28
Friday	Psalm 86	Isaiah 33.1-22	Matthew 15.29-end
Saturday	Psalm 145	Isaiah 35	Matthew 16.1-12

Rotas for next week:

Sunday the 17th December: Parish Communion

Read: Don Luff

Intercede: Dorothy Strack Hankey

Welcomers: Rachel, Helen, Carl

Coffee: Kate and Jeanette

Our church is floodlit at night.

The flood lighting has not been sponsored this week.

To sponsor the floodlighting please fill in the form at the back of church or email:

admin@stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk

Given rising fuel prices, it is suggested the minimum donation for weekly sponsorship is now £15. There are lots of weeks available.



What's on.... This week:

Sunday 10th	8.00am, Holy Communion 10.00am, Parish Communion 12.00-6.00pm, Christmas Tree Festival 6.00pm, Christmas Tree Festival Closing Service
Monday 11 th	9.00 am, CTF Clear up – all help appreciated
Tuesday 12th	8.30am, Morning Prayer, on zoom 10.00am, Holy Communion 12.30pm-4.00pm, Claires Court Carol Service rehearsals Time TBC, Carol service rehearsal, Choir
Wednesday 13th	8.30am, Morning Prayer, on zoom 9.00am-1.00pm, Claires Court Carol Service 9.00pm, Compline, zoom using morning link
Thursday 14th	8.30am, Morning Prayer, on Zoom 9.30am, Baby and Toddler group Christmas Party 2.00pm, Thursday Teas
Friday 15th	8.30am, Morning Prayer on zoom 9.30am, St Luke's School Carol service 5.00pm, Evening prayer, on zoom
Saturday 16th	9.00am, Morning prayer on zoom 9.30 am, Church decorating for Christmas, all welcome to help
Sunday 17th	10.00am, Parish Communion 6.00pm, Nine Lessons and Carols, by candlelight, followed by mulled wine/mince pies

Sundays at Six: All Services are at 6.00pm Zoom link: use Sunday morning or as specified above

10 th December	Christmas Tree Festival Service, at St. Luke's
17 th December	Carol Services at each church at 6.00 pm

Open Vicarage returns:

All members of the congregation are warmly invited to drop into the vicarage for mulled wine / mulled fruit juice and seasonal nibbles any time between 7 and 9.30 pm on Thursday 21st December. Revd. Sally



Coming up..

Messy Church our Messy church will re-start in the new year, dates are as follows: 5th January, 2nd February, 1st March, 30th March, 3rd May, 7th June, 5th July, 6th September, 4th October, 1st November, 29th November

Alpha course: we have committed to running an Alpha course next year and are now recruiting the team to run it. If you feel called to help in leading small group discussion, catering or prayer ministry please speak to Revd Sally asap. And, of course, we will all be able to pray for the Alpha course – team and guests. Our first training session will be on Wednesday 17th January at 7pm. The course will start on Wednesday 31st January. Please speak to Revd. Sally if you think you would like to join the course.

Wednesdays in Advent: 9pm, Compline on zoom. Everyone is warmly invited to join in this very short service offering space at a busy time. Use the Morning Prayer link.

The order of service can be found here (or download the daily prayer app): <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/daily-prayer/night-prayer-compline>

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL: 8th – 10th December TREE VOTING POTS – NO CASH PLEASE!

As many people no longer carry cash we are moving to a token system in the tree voting pots. Bags of tokens may be bought in advance from the parish office (Tue – Fri 9.30 – 11.30 am) or after church services using a card. Bags of 10 tokens cost £5 (ie tokens are worth 50p). They will also be available for purchase on the door – but buy in advance and save queuing! For this year cash will also be accepted in the voting pots (but not encouraged!).

Vigil for Peace - 16th December, 7:30pm

“It is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness”

As violence affects many parts of the world, people of goodwill of all faiths and none are invited to take part in a short vigil to demonstrate solidarity across our diverse community, and our shared wish for peace on earth. The vigil will take place at St Joseph’s Parish Centre, 36 Cookham Rd, Maidenhead, from 7:30pm, with introductory readings and an opportunity for silent reflection - you are invited to come along for as much time as you wish or can spare. The event will finish at 9pm.

Advent and Christmas at St. Luke’s Church

Christmas Tree Festival 8th – 10th December

Friday 8th December

10.00 am - 7.00 pm, Church open to view decorated trees;
stalls and refreshments

Saturday 9th December

10.00 am - 7.00 pm, Church open to view decorated trees;
stalls and refreshments

Sunday 10th December

midday – 6.00 pm, Church open to view decorated trees;
stalls and refreshments

6.00 pm ‘Christmas Tree’ Service

Sunday 17th December

6.00 pm, **Nine Lessons and Carols, by candlelight**
followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Thursday 21st December

3.00 pm, **Keeping Company**

Tea, cake and reflection for those bereaved at any time

Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th December

4.00 (younger families) and 5.00 (older families) pm, **Candlelit Crib Services**

10.00 pm **‘Midnight Mass’**

Christmas Day, Monday 25th December

10.00 am, All Age Christmas Holy Communion

Diocesan Bible study courses



The next group will be looking at Opening up the Bible. Our aim is to start people on the journey of making the most of biblical scholarship in an easy-to-relate-to and approachable way.

The pre-registration page (deadline 8 December) has all the information required. Please do consider being part of the group.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/study-group-opening-up-the-bible-tickets-758958905517>

Our Regular activities:

The 8.00 Holy Communion service will continue to be monthly, on the 2nd Sunday.

Midweek Holy Communion is at 10 am weekly, followed by coffee

Baby and Toddler group meets on Thursdays, 9.30 – 11.00 am term time only. We meet in church.

Messy Church continues on the first (usually) Friday, monthly, 4-5.30pm. Next is 5th January 2024
admin@stlukeschurchmaidenhead.org.uk to book a place.

Keeping Company is our monthly meeting for those bereaved (at any time). Third Thursday at 3pm, in church. The next is 21st December

Thursday Teas meets in the community hall offering tea, cake and conversation. Second Thursdays monthly. Next is 14th December

Gaynor's Gift is a prayer shawl knitting ministry that anyone can take part in at home. We meet together monthly to pray, knit and drink tea. 4th Thursdays monthly. Next is 26th January

Please note that for all Zoom services the links below are being used:

Sunday Morning Worship:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87358197400?pwd=MTFhVlNad1R6NEl6cVZ6TVJ5bGlzd09>

Meeting ID: 873 5819 7400 Passcode: 526076

Zoom Morning Prayer at 8.30 am Tuesday – Friday, 9 am Saturday

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81459090925?pwd=Y2hKZkFYZ04zbGZBd1BHcmllldU5Hdz09>

Meeting ID: 814 5909 0925 Passcode: 180609

Zoom Evening Prayer at 5pm on Fridays (except first Friday)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85378796960?pwd=dUNTnRZVFjBY2xiS3QyVHIYZ1BaZz09> Meeting ID:
853 7879 6960 Passcode: 386635