

# Comfort and Joy



## PAROUSIA

Weekly News and Service Sheet  
**6<sup>th</sup> December 2020**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Welcome to St Mary's Church!** We are so glad you are here. If you are here for the first time or visiting, please say hello to the service leader or a member of the welcome team so we can welcome you personally. **Please take this sheet with you at the end of the service.** If you read this at home, please find a simple service on the inside pages, which you can use to guide your prayers. *Christopher Lindner, Rector*

## Christmas will not be cancelled this year!

Let's rediscover the **comfort and joy** of Christmas together.

**From Tuesday 1 Dec, online**

Online Denham **Advent Calendar**

Online **Advent Prayer** Mon-Sat 6pm

**From Sunday 6 Dec, St Mary's Christmas Trail** around St Mary's Church, Denham Village

**From Monday 7 Dec, out and about "Spot the Angel"** treasure hunt around Denham (hints online!)

**From Sunday 13 Dec, St Mary's Community Christmas Trees** around St Mary's Church

**Sat 19 – Wed 23 Dec**  
St Mary's, 3.00–3.30 pm

**Carols around St Mary's**

Pick up your **"Christingle in a Bag"**

**Donate a new toy** for RNIB  
Sunshine House School Northwood

For latest updates and all online links, go to our web page or Facebook page  
**[www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church](http://www.facebook.com/denhamparish.church)**  
St Mary's Church Office: 01895 832771 | [office@denhamparish.church](mailto:office@denhamparish.church)  
**[www.denhamparish.church/christmas](http://www.denhamparish.church/christmas)**

**Sunday 20 Dec**  
4.00 pm, online

**Online Community Carol Service**  
for all ages!

**5.00 pm & 6.30 pm, St Mary's**  
**Candle-lit Carols**

*Please register online beforehand!*

**Mon 21 to Wed 23 Dec, outdoors**  
**Carols in the Streets**

*Invite us to come and sing carols in your street! Email [rector@denhamparish.church](mailto:rector@denhamparish.church)*

**Thur 24 Dec: Christmas Eve**  
4.00 pm, online

**Online Christingle Crib Service**  
11.30pm, online

**Midnight Holy Communion**  
(Pre-recorded at St Mary's)

**Fri 25 Dec: Christmas Day**  
9.30 am, St Mary's

**Christmas Holy Communion**  
*Please register online beforehand!*

**10.30 am, online**  
**Christmas Family Service**

### Worship in the Waiting: Patience

In this Advent season not only do we anticipate the joys of Christmas and the baby in the manger but we also anticipate the coming of Christ, the King of glory. The church has been waiting for 2000 years for this final momentous event and it hasn't happened yet, but Peter reminds us that "God is not slow in keeping his promises, as we understand slowness but he is patient with you." (1 Peter 3:8) The truth is: the moment of his coming will arrive and we need to be ready. God's patience is good news for the world, as Peter puts it, "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation." (2 Peter 3: 15)

Patience is one of the fruits of the spirit and one we all need. I have a friend who is a pastor and like all those who seek to fulfil a task of Christian ministry he needs patience at times. He has a prayer of the wall of his study which says, "Give me patience Lord - but hurry!" In our waiting for our Lord's return we need to cultivate that stillness of heart and joyous trust that patiently and prayerfully waits for him. There is no point in frustration and agitation in the waiting - 'worship in the waiting' is not just a great Advent title, it is also a great plan. We are all waiting for this promised vaccination to lead us back to health and freedom for our own lives, our families and for our world, but irritation and agitation will not bring it any closer.

The question to ask ourselves during this advent season is "Am I ready to welcome him?" How do I know whether I am ready? Peter talks about making every effort to be "spotless, blameless and at peace with him."

Occasionally for inexplicable reasons my all boys class at school were left alone by our teacher, Mr Marsden. He trusted us to get on with some work but as soon as he disappeared, complete pandemonium broke out. However one boy would keep watch and suddenly announce, "He's coming!" Noise stopped; work resumed and we were ready for his coming. There will be no warning, he will come as a thief, says Peter. In others words: completely unannounced. Here is a little test of our readiness, can we say with all our hearts in the words of the penultimate verse of the Bible, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus"? *Ian Jennings*

email: [office@denhamparish.church](mailto:office@denhamparish.church)

phone: 01895 832771

## WELCOME

*If you have an advent wreath or candle at home, please light the second candle.*

## OPENING PRAYER (From Psalm 24)

Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty— he is the King of glory.

## HYMN

*(To the tune "God rest ye merry")*

We wait with great expectancy to see your Kingdom come. We trust your word to be fulfilled and pray your will be done. So in our world of ache and loss we're calling out, as one:

*Come Lord Jesus,  
we hunger and we yearn  
for your return.*

*Come Lord Jesus,  
oh we pray for your return.*

You came to us so long ago and you will come again. We long for heaven on the earth, an end to grief and pain. Lord, may our lives anticipate and usher in your reign.

*Come Lord Jesus,  
we long to know you here,  
come and draw near.*

*Come Lord Jesus,  
oh we long to know you here.*

So lead us in your patience, Lord, and help us match your pace, to walk the straight and narrow road in rhythms of your grace, and may this Advent way of life all hurriedness replace.

*Come Lord Jesus,  
and teach us how to wait,  
you are not late.*

*Come Lord Jesus,  
help us worship as we wait.*

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Jesus, Prince of Peace,  
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.**

Holy God, forgive our impatience with everyday life. We rush around, irritated at delays, frustrated with things and people which do not move at the pace we would like.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,  
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.**

Holy God, forgive our impatience with answers to prayer. Sometimes we treat you like a vending machine, or assume to know your will and your best for us. Help us to trust your timing and your kindness. Jesus, Prince of Peace,  
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.**

Holy God, forgive our impatience with your coming again. You are not slow, you are patient, and you long for all to come to you willingly. May we live in holy anticipation of your return.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,  
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace.**

Thank you that you are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. You are patient with our mistakes and forgive our sins. We receive your peace afresh today.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,  
**teach us to walk in your rhythms of grace. Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## COLLECT

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. **AMEN**

## BIBLE READING: 2 Peter 3.8-15a

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

*This is the word of the Lord.*  
**Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON (or read page 1)

## SONG

My heart is restless,  
Let peace wash over me  
Lost in distractions  
But You God I will seek

*I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
Let my heart be still for You are God*

You know my longing,  
You listen to my fears  
I'm not forgotten  
Your goodness draws me near

*I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
Let my heart be still for You are God  
You are always good, Lord forever kind  
I will trust and know that You are God*

## PRAYERS

### Our Father...

## HYMN

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,  
once for mortal sinners slain;  
thousand thousand saints attending  
swell the triumph of his train.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Christ appears on earth to reign.

Yea, amen, let all adore thee,  
high on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the pow'r and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

## SENDING

In Christ we are a new creation:  
**remade, renewed, restored.**

Jesus you will come again,  
perfecting all of creation:  
**remade, renewed, restored.**

Help us live in the light of your coming,  
lives of grace and peace:  
**remaking, renewing, restoring.**

Send us out, to bless the earth  
and bless all people:  
**remaking, renewing, restoring. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

*Songs and Hymns reproduced under CCLI  
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### Let's pray together ...

- For this time of advent: for patience and for boldness in being signposts to Christ.
- For medical experts, politicians and public leaders – for wisdom, compassion and integrity.
- For those who are sick and those suffering from bereavement, especially the families of Helen Brooks and Irene McLaughlin.