

News and Prayer Update for 13th December

Rostherne with Bollington, St John High Legh and St Paul Over Tabley

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Do You Need to Talk To Someone? Call any of the above, we have other people who are also experienced in listening who are willing to help, so **please do call, we are here for you.** All conversations are in strict confidence.



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Link for this week's Service: <https://youtu.be/jhlRSu6hls0>

HYMN: Hills of the North Rejoice (Charles Edward Oakley (1832-1865) adapted)

Hills of the North, rejoice,
Echoing songs arise
Hail with united voice
Him who made earth and skies,
He comes in righteousness and love,
he brings salvation from above.

Isles of the Southern seas,
sing to the listening earth,
carry on every breeze
hope of a world's new birth:
In Christ shall all be made anew,
his word is sure, his promise true.

Lands of the East, arise,
he is your brightest morn,
greet him with joyous eyes,
praise shall his path adorn:
the God whom you have longed to know
in Christ draws near, and calls you now.

Shores of the utmost West,
lands of the setting sun,
welcome the heavenly guest
in whom the dawn has come:
he brings a never-ending light
who triumphed o'er our darkest night.

Shout, as you journey home,
Songs be in every mouth,
Lo, from the North they come,
From East and West and South:
in Jesus all shall find their rest,
in him the universe be blest.

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Collect for 3rd Sunday of Advent:

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;

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for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm: Psalm 126

- 1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, ♦
then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter ♦
and our tongue with songs of joy.
- 3 Then said they among the nations, ♦
'The Lord has done great things for them.'
- 4 The Lord has indeed done great things for us, ♦
and therefore we rejoiced.
- 5 Restore again our fortunes, O Lord, ♦
as the river beds of the desert.
- 6 Those who sow in tears ♦
shall reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed, ♦
will come back with shouts of joy, bearing their sheaves with them.

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First reading: Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-end

- 1 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
- 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
- 3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
- 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
- 8 For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- 9 Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge

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that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'

²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.'

²¹ And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.'

²² Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?'

²³ He said,

'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
"Make straight the way of the Lord",
as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

²⁵ They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'

²⁶ John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,

²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'

²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READING: Revd Trish

Last week our reading took us to the banks of the River Jordan, to a distant cousin of Jesus, who was living wild wearing camels' hair and eating locusts and honey. It is, of course, John the Baptist. Today's reading takes us to the small village of Bethany where we find John being questioned about his role / his function / his responsibility. We know that like the prophets of old, John was communicating the will of God to the people.

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Like the prophets he was calling the people of God to repentance, to adopt God's ways of justice, mercy, generosity ways of righteousness and through baptism to a new life. There had been no prophets for centuries and the religious leaders are keen to know whether John is a prophet or even the Messiah. He is neither Messiah nor Prophet. His role is that predicted by Isaiah as we heard in last week's reading. "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"".

If you are out driving along the road and you hear a siren, you will look out for the source of the siren – what is coming, where and when and then prepare to take appropriate, enabling action. John is a siren for the Lord; he is making the road ready for the Lord; he is heralding his arrival and ensuring that the people are aware of his coming. John is preparing the way for the Lord by calling the people of God to repentance and baptism – washing away their old ways and being ready for a clean new start with God. But John knows that what he is doing is not the same as the prophets; he is not simply telling them what God is saying or going to do:
No...

He is telling them to be ready because they are about to meet God face-to-face. He is there amongst them.

John's role is to point to God incarnate who stands amongst them; one of whom John says "I am not worthy to unite the thong of his sandal", because this person is the Holy One of God.

John recognises God's presence in the world, amongst those around him and he points towards that presence, towards Jesus Christ.

From the start John knows that this is not about him, it is about Jesus.

It is not about John's presence in this world but about the presence of God in Jesus Christ.

Do you, like John – recognise God's presence in the world – in the actions that Isaiah describes – in those who bind up the broken-hearted, who proclaim liberty to captives, who comfort those who mourn, those who love justice.

Do you like John point to the one who is Lord by reflecting those same Godly attributes to the world.

John knows from the start that he has a particular role in God's story and we know that WE ALL have a role in God's story.

John has been sent by God to prepare the way and in turn we are sent by Jesus into the world to continue recognising and pointing to God.

John confesses that he is NOT the light but is a witness to the light. We in our turn are also called to witness to the light of Christ, and to share the light of his love with all whom we see.

What is your part in God's story and how will you ensure that you play your part?

Let us pray

Live in us Lord, work through us, shine from us, so that who and what we are may, in some small way help to prepare the way for you to enter the hearts and lives of others

Amen

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HYMN: Hark the Glad Sound the Saviour Comes (Philip Doddridge 1702 – 1751)

Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long;
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

He comes, the prisoners to release,
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim,
and Heaven's eternal arches ring
with thy beloved Name.

PRAYER in the coming week – 3rd week of Advent:



Advent candle prayers:

First Candle – The Candle of Hope

We speak of hope – because God keeps his promises to us.

We focus on the Patriarchs, Abraham, the Old Testament Ancestors of Jesus

God of Abraham and Sarah,
and all the patriarchs of old,
you are our Father too.

Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ,
Son of God and Son of David.

Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth
to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit
to make his home among us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

Second Candle – The Candle of Peace

We work for peace – because Jesus is the 'Prince of Peace' and he calls his children
to work for peace in his name.

We focus on the prophets who foretold the birth of Jesus

God our Father,
you spoke to the prophets of old
of a Saviour who would bring peace.

You helped them to spread the joyful message
of his coming kingdom.

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Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
to share with those around us
the good news of your power and love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.
Amen.

Third Candle - The Candle of Love

We show love - because Jesus gave everything for us and led us to know the forgiveness of God.

We focus on John the Baptist

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.

Comfort and Joy activity for 3rd week of Advent (from Church of England website)

What brings joy today? *Access to water*

Count the number of taps in your home. Pour yourself a glass of water and give thanks for access to clean water for washing, cooking, drinking, and cleaning.

Who needs comfort today? *Children of the world*

Pour a glass of water. Add a teaspoon of mud to it, stir and place it in your kitchen. In some parts of the world children only have access to water like this. Each time you see your glass today, pray for agencies like Water Aid, trying to bring clean water to children across the world.

Prayer for the Month:

Father in heaven,
our hearts desire the warmth of your love
and our minds are searching for the light of your Word.

Increase our longing for Christ our Saviour
and give us strength to grow in love,
that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence
and welcoming the light of his truth.

The Roman Missal

NOTICES

❖ **Services have now resumed!**

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FACE COVERINGS – These are still mandatory in places of worship. Please come prepared. (Please inform the clergy if you are exempt from wearing a face covering and do let the service leader know if you lip read).

Sunday 13th December: 3rd Sunday in Advent:

10.00 Holy Communion St John High Legh

15.00 Lantern Carols and Readings (Outdoor) at Holy Trinity Little Bollington

16.00 Christingle Service at St Mary Rostherne ***(Booking Essential – see below)**

Sunday 20 December:

10.00 Holy Communion at St John High Legh

10.30 Holy Communion at St Mary Rostherne

11.00 Christmas Holy Communion at St Paul Over Tabley

16.00 Christingle Service at St John High Legh *****(Booking Essential – see below)**

18.30 Carol Service at St Mary Rostherne ***(Booking Essential – see below)**

This service will be live-streamed and The Mereside Brass Band will play carols outside as people arrive.

Wednesday Mornings

09.00 Celtic Morning Prayer at St John High Legh (9th, 16th and 23rd December)

It is important that no one feels they must come to services if they are reluctant to.

We will continue to stream a service each Sunday

❖ **Coffee and Chat Wednesday 16th December:** We are having a Zoom Coffee and Chat meeting every Wednesday morning from 11.00 am to 12.00 noon (9th, 16th and 30th December). Just click on the link below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82025663924?pwd=RkZSeERyZEdyTE1maVBmbG9JSTVLUT09>

If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Patricia.
Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com or Tel: 01565 830 595

❖ **Christingle Services in the United Benefice:**



These are planned for the following dates:
Sunday 13 December at St Mary Rostherne
Sunday 20 December at St John High Legh
Sunday 24 January at St Paul Over Tabley.

Details of Christingle Service on 13 December 2020 at St Mary Rostherne:

It is now too late to book for this service.

An **online Christingle Service** will be available from 4.00pm on Sunday 13th. Please use this link <https://youtu.be/1CHlvU77fAg>

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❖ **Christmas Services** (additional services which are specifically for Christmas)

Sunday 13 December:

15.00 Lantern Carols and Readings (Outdoor) at Holy Trinity Little Bollington

16.00 Christingle Service at St Mary Rostherne ***(Booking Essential – see above)**

Sunday 20 December:

11.00 Christmas Holy Communion at St Paul Over Tabley

16.00 Christingle Service at St John High Legh **** (Booking Essential – see below)**

18.30 Carol Service at St Mary Rostherne ***(Booking Essential – see below)**

This service will be live-streamed and The Mereside Brass Band will play carols outside as people arrive.

Christmas Eve Thursday 24 December

16.00 Service in the Stable at St John High Legh **(Booking Essential) ****

(A reflective service listening to the voices of those who were there in the stable when Jesus was born.)

11.30 Midnight Communion at St Mary Rostherne **(Booking Essential)***

Christmas Day Friday 25 December

09.00 Family Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Little Bollington

10.00: Family Holy Communion St John High Legh **(Booking Essential)****

10.30 Holy Communion St Mary Rostherne **(Booking Essential)***

Booking for Services

To ensure we maintain social distancing and support the effort to reduce transmission of Covid-19 you **MUST**:

***If you wish to attend any of these services at St Mary Rostherne contact Revd Patricia Robinson and ensure that you have places reserved for you.**

Phone: 01565 830 595; Text: 07854 418 488

Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

****If you wish to attend any of these services at St John High Legh contact Revd Trish Cope and ensure that you have places reserved for you.**

Phone: 01925 754787; Text: 07703 470101

Email: trishcope2012@btinternet.com

❖ **Advent study group**

Living in Hope a York Course by Catherine Fox 'This course is a chance to have a think about what it means to live well, and to die well. We are people of history and people of hope. We look back to the Bible to see where we've come from, and we look forward in hope to what lies ahead'. We plan to follow this course online over the weeks leading up to Christmas. Please let us know (Revd Patricia email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com or telephone 01565 830 595; Chris Stanisstreet: 01925 755559) if you would like to join us daytime or evening. We have the option to use virtual breakout rooms so we can have smaller discussion groups where necessary. You can use hard copies of the course booklet; or digital copies which you would pay for and download yourself. We have some hard copies (£3.80 each) already on order.

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❖ A REAL Advent Calendar

To help us journey through Advent during our Covid 19 Restrictions St Philip and St James at Alderley Edge has created an Advent Calendar to take everyone on a Christian journey through Advent.

Simply click on the link below and then choose the date on the Advent Calendar.

There you will find a "Thought for the Day" along with music and craft ideas.

<https://www.stphilipandstjames.co.uk/advent/>

❖ **Advent Musical Reflection online**

Lymm Baptist have put together an Advent Musical Meditation which can be viewed online. Its whole purpose is to provide a space to think and meditate and pray about the true cause for celebration at Christmas. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shcx5XVYC-c>

❖ **Join the Prayer Chain:**

Our Reader, Chris Stanisstreet has organised a **Prayer Chain** which is done by email and telephone. The idea behind this, is that when a specific prayer request is made, it is passed on by group e-mail to the people on the list who then pray for the particular situation.

If you would like to receive prayer requests or would like to make a prayer request, please let Chris Stanisstreet know:

Tel: 01925 755559; Mob 07918 981 723; stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

❖ **The Hideaway – Hope Centre in Partington**

Partington is just a few miles away – about 15 minutes in the car. Yet the lives of many people there are very different than the lives of most of us here in High Legh and Little Bollington. Approximately 1/3 of the residents live below the poverty line and it is in the lowest 5% of deprived areas in the UK.

Churches Together in Lymm and District have supported The Hideaway – Hope Centre in Partington during the Covid 19 crisis. They are running a foodbank, providing hot meals daily, hosting a play-centre, giving family advice and counselling. An amazing beacon of hope in that deprived area.

They plan to open a shop selling surplus food and uniform at affordable prices but unfortunately one of the businesses that had offered money is not able to give and they are £3000 short and desperately need to begin this project by December.

Can you support them? Any amount will help and if possible, within the next two weeks.

Please use the Lymm Baptist Church giving website:
lyymbaptistchurch.com/giving

Any money you give will go directly to the Hope Centre.

If you cannot use online giving but would like to support them please contact Rev'd Trish for help.

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Thank you

We are all in need of hope in these difficult times. Please will you give a little hope to our neighbours.

❖ **Offering and Fund Raising** – Please continue to give if you can

❖ **Knutsford Food Bank – St Mary's and St Paul's**

During Advent and into the New Year please help us support the Knutsford Food Bank by bringing items for us to collect and take to The Welcome at the start of the New Year – a time when families and people in need can find themselves in difficulty.

❖ **Homemade Jams For Sale:**

There are various Jams and Marmalade available at prices between £2.00 / £3.00 per jar depending on size, either from St Mary's or by telephoning the Vicarage- we will deliver them to you.

St Paul's are offering: Strawberry, Gooseberry, Damson or Strawberry, Greengage and Gooseberry jams.

St Mary's are offering: Strawberry, Rhubarb & Ginger, Rhubarb Jelly, Redcurrant Jelly, Marmalade and Yellow Raspberry.

❖ **Rostherne Christmas Cards** sold in aid of St Mary's Church

These good quality cards feature the Christmas tree lit up at the bottom of School Hill. They measure approximately 19cm x 13cm and come with self-seal envelopes.

Prices are: single cards £1.50; 5 cards £6.50; 10 cards £12.00.

Order/ purchase from the Vicarage: 01565 830 595
or email pmrobinson@gmail.com.

❖ **Morning and Night Prayer**

If anyone does not yet have access to the "Worship at Home" booklet containing the Order of Service for Morning Prayer or Night Prayer, please contact the Vicarage, as there are large print copies and ordinary size ones that can be posted out or versions that can be e-mailed.

Bible Readings and Psalms for the Coming Week from the Lectionary.

Here are some suggestions for more Psalms and Bible readings to use with Morning and Night Prayer:

Readings for Morning Prayer: These readings usually follow on from each other so you get a bit more of the story each day (except on special Saints Days).

Monday 14th Dec – Psalm 40; Isaiah 49: 14-25; 1 Thess. 5: 1-11

Tuesday 15th Dec – Psalm 70; Isaiah Chapter 50; 1 Thess. 5: 12-end

Wed 16th Dec – Psalm 75; Isaiah 51: 1-8; 2 Thess. Chapter 1

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Thursday 17th Dec – Psalm 76; Isaiah 51: 9-16; 2 Thess. Chapter 2

Friday 18th Dec – Psalm 98; Isaiah 51: 17-end; 2 Thess. Chapter 3

Saturday 19th Dec – Psalm 146; Isaiah 52: 1-12; Jude

Readings for Night Prayer (for Advent)

Short Bible Reading: Mark 13.35-end.

Keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

You may also like to continue using the readings in the Worship at Home Booklet.

Psalm: Psalm 143

- 1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and in your faithfulness give ear to my supplications; ♦
answer me in your righteousness.
- 2 Enter not into judgement with your servant, ♦
for in your sight shall no one living be justified.
- 3 For the enemy has pursued me, crushing my life to the ground, ♦
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.
- 4 My spirit faints within me; ♦
my heart within me is desolate.
- 5 I remember the time past; I muse upon all your deeds; ♦
I consider the works of your hands.
- 6 I stretch out my hands to you; ♦
my soul gasps for you like a thirsty land.
- 7 O Lord, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; ♦
hide not your face from me lest I be like those who go down to the Pit.
- 8 Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning, for in you I put my trust; ♦
show me the way I should walk in, for I lift up my soul to you.
- 9 Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies, ♦
for I flee to you for refuge.
- 10 Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God; ♦
let your kindly spirit lead me on a level path.
- 11 Revive me, O Lord, for your name's sake; ♦
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.
- 12 In your faithfulness, slay my enemies, and destroy all the adversaries of my soul, ♦
for truly I am your servant.

Collect:

Sir up your power, O God,
and come among us.
Heal our wounds,
calm our fears
and give us peace;
through Jesus our Redeemer.

Blessing:

Restore us again, O God of hosts;
show us the light of your countenance
and we shall be saved.
Bless and keep us, this night and always.