**Morning Prayer - Gaudete Sunday - The Third Sunday of Advent**

Sunday 15th December 2024 at 9.30 (call in from 9.15)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85649430168?pwd=QzFzNytXM01TQTc5cTROaHc2aElvZz09

Meeting ID: 856 4943 0168

Passcode: 336782

**Telephone instructions:**

\* Dial: 0131 460 1196  
  
\* You are then welcomed to Zoom and asked to type in the meeting ID ie. 856 4943 0168  
  
\* If the next instruction is to add your personal ID just press # to ignore  
  
\* When passcode requested type numbers i.e. 336782 plus #.  
  
\* At this point you should be admitted to the call.

**Preparation**

O Lord, open our lips.

*All* **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Reveal among us the light of your presence.

*All* **That we may behold your power and glory.**

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Description automatically generated**

Blessed are you, Sovereign God of all, to you be praise and glory for ever. In your tender compassion the dawn from on high is breaking upon us to dispel the lingering shadows of night. As we look for your coming among us this day, open our eyes to behold your presence and strengthen our hands to do your will, that the world may rejoice and give you praise.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*All*  **Blessed be God for ever.**

**Act of Penitence**

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

*All* **Lord our God,**

**in our sin we have avoided your call.**

**Our love for you is like a morning cloud,**

**Like the dew that goes away early.**

**Have mercy on us;**

**deliver us from judgement;**

**bind up our wounds and revive us;**

**in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Absolution*

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

**The Word of God**

*First reading:* Zephaniah 3: 14-20

**14**Sing, Daughter Zion;  
    shout aloud, Israel!  
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  
    Daughter Jerusalem!  
**15**The Lord has taken away your punishment,  
    he has turned back your enemy.  
The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you;  
    never again will you fear any harm.  
**16**On that day  
    they will say to Jerusalem,  
“Do not fear, Zion;  
    do not let your hands hang limp.  
**17**The Lord your God is with you,  
    the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
He will take great delight in you;  
    in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
    but will rejoice over you with singing.”

**18**“I will remove from you  
    all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals,  
    which is a burden and reproach for you.  
**19**At that time I will deal  
    with all who oppressed you.  
I will rescue the lame;  
    I will gather the exiles.  
I will give them praise and honour  
    in every land where they have suffered shame.  
**20**At that time I will gather you;  
    at that time I will bring you home.  
I will give you honour and praise  
    among all the peoples of the earth  
when I restore your fortunes[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Zephaniah%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22841e)]  
    before your very eyes,”  
says the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

*All*  **Thanks be to God.**

**Canticle**

*All* **Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,**

**and see the glory that is coming from God.**

1    Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,

who has come to his people and set them free.

2    He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,

born of the house of his servant David.

3    Through his holy prophets God promised of old

to save us from our enemies,

    from the hands of all that hate us,

4    To show mercy to our ancestors,

and to remember his holy covenant.

5    This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

6    Free to worship him without fear,

holy and righteous in his sight

    all the days of our life.

7     And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the

Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

8    To give his people knowledge of salvation

by the forgiveness of all their sins.

9    In the tender compassion of our God

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

10  To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

*All :* **Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**All**  **Lift up your voice with strength,**

**O herald of good tidings.**

### *Second reading* Luke 3: 7-18

### 7 When the crowds came to John for baptism, he said “you brood of snakes! Who warned you to flee gods coming wrath? 8 Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. Don’t just say to each other, “We are safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.” That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones.

### 9 Even now the axe of God’s judgement is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

### 10 The crowds asked, “What should we do?”

### 11 John replied, “If you have two shirts give one to the poor.

### If you have food, share it with those who are hungry.”

### 12 Even corrupt tax collectors came to be baptised and asked, “Teacher, what should we do?”

### 13 He replied, “Collect no more taxes than the government requires.”

### 14 “What should we do?” Asked some soldiers.

### John replied, “Don’t extort money or make false accusations. And be content with your pay.”

### 15 Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. 16 John answered their questions by saying, “I baptise you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am so much greater that I’m not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

### 17 He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never ending fire.”

### 18 John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

This is the word of the Lord.

*All*  **Thanks be to God**

*We pause to reflect on the readings before turning to prayer.*

*“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”*

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**Intercessions**

Let us pray to Jesus our Lord,

who forever lives making intercession for us.

I**n the midst of our rejoicing, we remember that your Good News comes with responsibility**

Heavenly Father, we pray today for your Church here and everywhere as we seek to do outreach. We pray for a hospitable spirit to welcome people coming through our doors during this sparkling season of Advent, and to encourage them to stay when the trappings of Christmas have been tidied away. We pray for those involved in outreach in local communities, going where the need is, living the Gospel message in generous and practical ways; remembering always that Christ gave of himself every day, and that with the joy given by God comes the responsibility to share it.

**In the midst of our rejoicing, we remember that your Good News comes with responsibility.**

Lord, we have witnessed the restoration of that great cathedral in Paris, Notre Dame, and it reminds us of our need to be renewed and restored. As you restored your people in the days of Zephaniah and brought them home, so remind us of our spiritual home in you; and as John the Baptist foretold the coming of Christ, the Messiah for all peoples, so may we be renewed and restored in order to share in the unfolding of his Good News to the world.

**In the midst of our rejoicing, we remember that your Good News comes with responsibility.**

Father, we pray today for those whose hearts are heavy as we prepare to celebrate the joyful news of Jesus’ birth. We think of those who are sick in hospital or at home, and for all who have been bereaved; we ask a blessing of peace upon them, and guidance from your Holy Spirit as to how best we might reach out in empathy and love. We remember also those who continue to experience the effects of recent storms long after the news coverage has ceased, and we ask how your Church might offer help and support.

**In the midst of our rejoicing, we remember that your Good News comes with responsibility.**

Lord, as we gaze at romantic depictions of Bethlehem on our Christmas cards, we remember the truth : that the Holy Family were homeless that night, and soon became refugees; that Jesus was born in an occupied country which was a tinder box. So, Father, as we have seen the overturn of the ruling regime in Syria this week, we pray for the Middle East and its complex conflicts – let there be stability, Lord, and peace among Christians, Jews and Muslims.

We pray for peaceful solutions to be found in other conflicts around the world, too, and for all leaders who profess faith to remember their responsibilities to the teachings of their religions.

We pray for the sick and the suffering, *especially we pray for..…* and those known to you alone who we lift to you now in a moment of silence. We pray for them, and all who care for them.

We give you thanks for the lives of the recently departed, and all those we remember with love and thanksgiving. *especially we remember…*… May they rest in peace, and may your peace rest upon all who grieve, that they may know the hope, comfort and love of Jesus Christ.

**In the midst of our rejoicing, we remember that your Good News comes with responsibility.**

May we all, using the various gifts given us, discharge our responsibility to share the gospel tidings; in Jesus’ name, and for his sake, Amen.

*Collect for the day*

Oh Lord Jesus Christ,

who at your first coming sent to 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 in the reign with the Father in the unity of the holy spirit,

one God, now and forever.

*All* **Amen.**

*The Lord’s Prayer*

*All* **Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

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

**Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power**

**and the glory are yours**

**now and for ever. Amen.**

*Blessing*

May God the Father,

who loved the world so much he sent his only Son,

to come among us in great humility,

open your eyes to look for his coming again.

*All* **Amen**.

May God the Son,

give you grace to live in the light of his coming as redeemer and judge.

*All* **Amen**.

May God the Spirit,

free you from sin, make you holy and bring you to eternal life.

*All* **Amen**.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst us and remain with us, and those we love and pray for, today and always.

*All* **Amen**.

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***What’s On This Week***

**Bishop Jackie's Farewell Service & Thank You Gift**  
You are warmly invited to Bishop Jackie's Farewell Eucharist Service at Exeter Cathedral on Saturday 18 January at 3pm, followed by refreshments. Please feel free to share this invitation to others in your Mission Community. Please contact the office if you would like to go. Tel: 01884 250417.

**Advent Compline**

Please join Steph for Advent Compline via Zoom on 5th, 12th and 19th December at 6.30pm

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86218583364?pwd=TVozS1VxRDllQUJkWVpQVzY0MXllUT09

Meeting ID: 862 1858 3364

Passcode: 090381

**Contacting Church Office**

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10.00am -12 noon

Email: [office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org](mailto:office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org) Tel:01884 250417 or 07733949295

**Giving**

**Giving to the Exe Valley Mission Community**

If you would like to make a contribution to the work of The Exe Valley Mission Community please make a gift using the Exe Valley Group of Churches BACS details. Please use the reference EVMC Services.

**Account Name:** Exe Valley Group of Churches

**Sort Code:**60-21-27

**Account No:** 54731690

Cheques should be made payable to: 'Exe Valley Group of Churches'

To give to St Peter’s Church, please go to [www.stpeterstiverton.org.uk](http://www.stpeterstiverton.org.uk) and follow the donations link on the front page of the website.