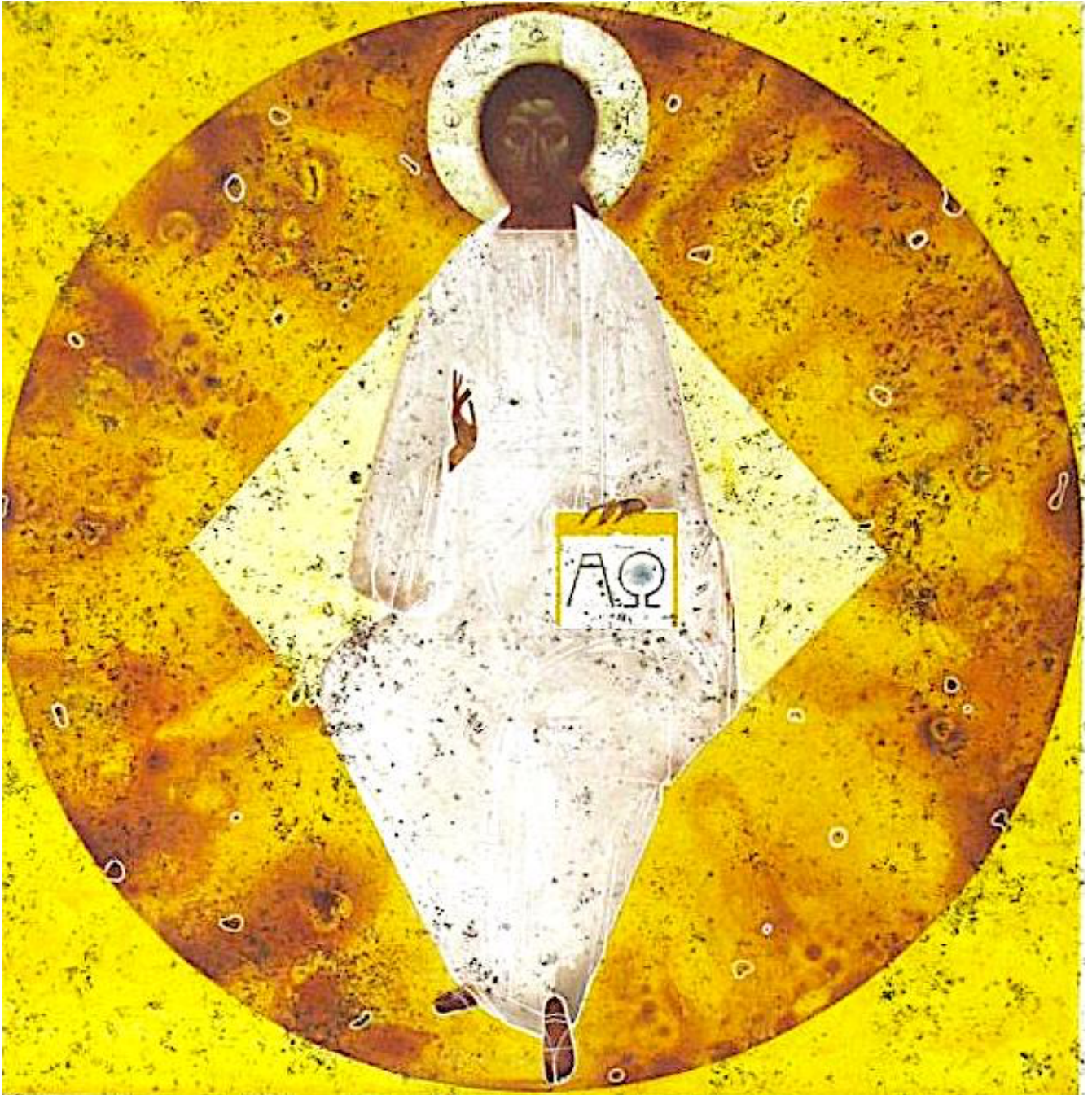


CHURCHES TOGETHER in BARNES



ADVENT PRAYERS

Sunday 29th November 2020

Online via Zoom

'By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope'

1 Peter 1.3

WELCOME

Sometimes we might wonder what is the purpose of Advent in the rush towards Christmas. This year many of us feel a need for the comfort and joy of Christmas more than ever and there is great temptation to bypass the season altogether. At the same time, the Advent themes of watching and waiting for deliverance also seem more resonant, as we await with expectation some kind of freedom from the restrictions currently imposed upon us because of the pandemic. This longing for restoration of our lives, can be spiritually useful as a reflection of the Christian longing for salvation in Christ which is fulfilment of all our hopes.

With these thoughts in mind, our readings this evenings are themed around the virtue of hope. the first reading from the Lamentations attributed to Jeremiah is believed to have been written in the wake of the Babylonian exile. At a time when all hope seemed to have disappeared, the prophet reaffirms his faith in God saying 'I will hope in him'. The second reading is Psalm 130 which is sometimes given the title 'Waiting for Divine Redemption' and speaks of waiting for the deliverance of God. The third reading from the first letter of Saint Peter is an emotional outburst of praise to the God who has given us a 'living hope' in Jesus Christ that sustains us in our current trials and looks forward to its final fulfilment in the future. This completion is found in the fourth and final reading from the book of Revelation and Saint John's vision of glory of heaven. In its midst is a tree whose 'leaves are for the healing of the nations'. It is for this healing that our world longs for more than ever in our current sufferings.

Although we cannot meet together as usual for our Advent Carol service, it is particularly important as Christians in Barnes that we should express our essential unity in faith by still coming together to pray. We cannot replicate the usual service online, but we can still watch and wait in prayer, and listen and reflect on Holy Scripture together. It is our hope that in this short and meditative service you may begin the season of Advent and receive the blessings it has to give. As we pray together but each in our own individual homes, let us remember that the Lord Jesus came to us in the intimacy of a human family who dwelt in Nazareth. Let us also remember that if our hearts are prepared to receive him, he will also come to dwell in our hearts and homes when Christmas comes.

When he comes may the Lord Jesus find us watching and waiting. Amen.



A few notes for the service:

- ✠ *The host will put everyone on mute as they arrive.*
- ✠ *It is recommended that you have your screen on 'speaker view' for the service.*
- ✠ *If it is safe to do so, you are encouraged to light a candle at home in a place that is visible.*

Before the service begins Father Stephen Stavron, Vicar of Saint Michael & All Angels, welcomes the people.

PREPARATION and INTRODUCTION

O Lord open our lips.
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Reveal among us the light of your presence.
that we may behold your power and glory.

The Officiant introduces the service and leads the people in THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.



VERSICLE and RESPONSE

Look towards the east O Jerusalem.
and see the glory that is coming from God.

FIRST READING Lamentations 3.19-24, 31-33

Read by Jane Thomas, Barnes Baptist Church

A reading from the book of Lamentations.

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!
My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul,
‘therefore I will hope in him.’
For the Lord will not
reject for ever.

Although he causes grief, he will have compassion
according to the abundance of his steadfast love;

for he does not willingly afflict
or grieve anyone.

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

Followed by a silence for reflection as the first Advent candle is lit.

PRAYER *Monsignor James Cronin, Saint Osmund's Church*

Let us pray.

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 is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

A piece of Advent music is played.



VERSICLE and RESPONSE

Look towards the east O Jerusalem
and see the glory that is coming from God.

SECOND READING Psalm 130

Reader: Fouki Heller, St Mary's Church

A reading from the book of Psalms.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,

so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

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

Followed by a silence for reflection as the second Advent candle is lit.

PRAYER *The Rev'd David Cooke, Holy Trinity*

Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

A piece of Advent music is played.



VERSICLE and RESPONSE

Look towards the east O Jerusalem
and see the glory that is coming from God.

THIRD READING 1 Peter 1.3-9

Read by Ian Haddon, Barnes Methodist Church

A reading from the first letter of Saint Peter.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you

love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Followed by a silence for reflection as the third Advent candle is lit.

PRAYER *Father Martin Calderbank, St Michael & All Angels*

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

A piece of Advent music is played.



VERSICLE and RESPONSE

Look towards the east O Jerusalem
and see the glory that is coming from God.

FOURTH READING

Revelation 22.1-7

Reader: Rob Knight, St Osmund's Church

A reading from the book of Revelation.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

And he said to me, 'These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.' 'See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Followed by a silence for reflection as the fourth Advent candle is lit.

PRAYER *The Rev'd James Hutchings, St Mary's.*

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A piece of Advent music is played.



ADVENT CANTICLE Revelation 22.12–14,16,17

Led by the Rev'd Graham Pulham, Barnes Baptist Church

Behold, I am coming soon', says the Lord,
'and bringing my reward with me,
to give to everyone according to their deeds.

**'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last,
the beginning and the end.'**

Blessed are those who do God's commandments,
that they may have the right to the tree of life,
and may enter into the city through the gates.

**'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you,
with this testimony for all the churches.'**

'I am the root and the offspring of David,
I am the bright morning star.'

**'Come!' say the Spirit and the Bride;
'Come!' let each hearer reply.**

Come forward, you who are thirsty,
let those who desire take the water of life as a gift.

**To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honour and glory and might,
for ever and ever. Amen!**

PRAYERS

Let us turn our eyes to the Lord of glory saying,
come Lord Jesus.

Jesus, Son and servant, you bring justice to the nations,
come Lord Jesus.

You love your people with a faithful love,
come Lord Jesus.

You bring comfort and joy to all people,
come Lord Jesus.

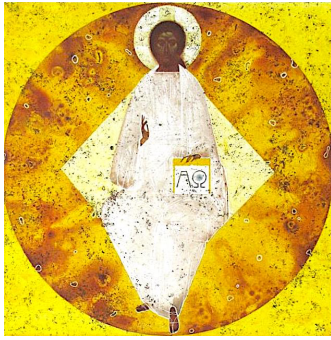
You have liberated us so that we might be free for ever,
come Lord Jesus.

You, O Christ are our peace and our redemption,
come Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.



May you have a blessed Advent and a joyful Christmas



The image on the front cover is 'Christ in glory' by the artist Ivanka Demchuk