




Live your faith 13-19 December 2020

Read, pray, reflect and live your faith this week



 This week's Bible readings Isaiah 61.1-4,8-11 · Psalm 126 or Luke 1.46b-55 · 1 Thess 5.16-24 · John 1.6-8,19-28

Mystery of the Messiah

Notes on the Gospel reading

- John the Baptist is repeatedly asked to explain who he is. Only after the fourth question does he offer an answer, and even here his response is cryptic. This reluctance to answer suggests that John is aware that he is the signpost to someone greater. He knows that the excitement his presence has caused is nothing compared to the man who will follow him, and he seeks to point towards Jesus rather than focus on himself. This in turn creates a sense of searching and expectation. He looks forward with hope.
- In this third week of Advent, we come close to discovering the nature of the coming Messiah, yet we still don't know exactly who he is. The final answer that John gives the priests and the Levites is to reveal that the one coming after him is in fact already among them. For John it would have been literally true, but for us, on the other side of the resurrection, we must ask whether we live as if the Messiah is always among us. How does this shape the way we live?

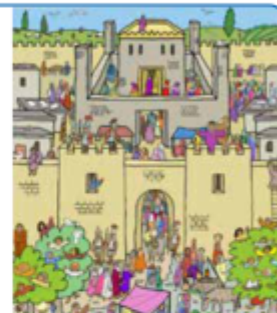
The invitation

Make an invitation acceptance using a postcard/A5 piece of blank card. Write on it: 'Lord, I receive your invitation to...' then pause. Read 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24 and then Isaiah 61.1. Think about whatever stood out for you from these readings – i.e. what might God be inviting you to do? Write this down to complete the sentence on the card – and use it as a reminder of this and a prompt for prayer.

FREE worship at home resources, including up-to-the-minute reflection on this week's Bible reading, available at:
www.rootsontheweb.com

Questions for reflection

- ▶ Where would you look to find the Messiah?
- ▶ What would you ask the Messiah if you did find him?
- ▶ If the Messiah could be anyone among us, how should we respond?



A prayer of approach

*Some of us are weary or downhearted.
Still we say: let our hearts be glad, God is always here.
Let us approach God with confidence, because
God has always been with us; let our hearts be glad!
Amen.*

A prayer for others

Lord, we pray today for all who are downtrodden, all who are oppressed, all who know the heavy hand of marginalisation on them. God, we turn to you, remembering the words of Mary, praying that you will lift up the lowly, you will raise the voice of justice, and you will scatter oppression. May all who are oppressed be set free. We ask this in joy and gratitude – and in your name.

Lord, we pray that we might find rhythms of life that sustain us here. Rhythms for cultivating and renewing the earth; human community; justice; and creativity. We ask this, in joy and gratitude – and in your name. Amen.

A personal prayer

*In my moments of weariness, or meekness, or pressure,
I know God is here.
In my moments of pride, I know God is here.
In my moments of demand, I know God is here.
God is here, always, already, at once.
Holding, sustaining and creating a new creation,
in me, in us, in all. Amen.*

Live your faith

Every day, make a conscious effort to consider: Where do you see Jesus among us today (especially, in places or people where you might not expect to see him)? Recall the words of Isaiah 61.1 (have them written on a small card) – what is God calling you to do today?



Christmas Services 2020

The following services will be available to view on these dates on our YouTube channel

Sunday 13th December Blue Christmas Memorial Service

Sunday 20th December Nine Lessons and Carols

You will also be able to see our production of "The Nativity" on the channel from
Sunday 6th December

Christmas Eve 24th December at 11.45 p.m.

Midnight Mass - live on Zoom. This will be a said service. You will need to register your intent to be present with the Vicar by 22nd December. Email to revdrobfarmer@gmail.com or Tel. 01905 319157 Joining instructions will then be sent.

Christmas Day 25th December at 10.00 a.m.

Christmas Communion service at Ronkswood Community Centre.

This will be a said service and we will be limited to 15 attendees. Again, please book in with Rob if you would like to be there.

Community Carol Singing (socially distanced and subject to any change in tier).

Friday 18th December 6.30 p.m. on the old church site

Tuesday 22nd December in the gardens of Meadow Court - Time to be confirmed. Please let Phil, Penny or Rob know if you are coming along. Wrap up well and bring a torch if you can.

Have you been wondering what has been happening as a result of being part of the Calling Young Disciples Project with Sian? Loads...including all of this...

Did you know our website has had a revamp? Take a look at:

holyltrinityandstmatthewronkswood.co.uk You can access our YouTube channel and also our new Facebook page - just search for Holy Trinity & St Matthew's Church, Ronkswood and give us a LIKE! The more "likes" we get the greater our coverage will be. Please share these new online resources with all your friends and contacts. On our Facebook page virtual Posada figures Mary and Joseph are visiting a different place in the area each day - see if you can guess where they are.

Did you know...that we gave out 45 Real Advent Calendars to Year One at Perry Wood School in December. Each tells the Christmas story and has a book of Christmas activities - AND - it's chocolate! This is just part of our ongoing commitment to supporting our local school.



Did you know that in the next two weeks we will be distributing BAGS OF LOVE to the elderly in our community and care homes. Each bag contains a plant to grow, a small cross, some sweets and a Christmas card designed by three Year One pupils from Perry Wood school. We will be displaying all of Year One's Christmas pictures around the old church site next week.

The Ronkswood Nativity video is now available to view on our YouTube channel - great for kids and adults alike. Do share it with others.

The Blue Christmas, Nine Lessons and Carols service, and the Nativity video (if we can squeeze it all on) will be available on DVD for those without internet connection this weekend.

We welcome today Revd Dr Robin Parry as our guest preacher and presiding minister.

ADVANCE NOTICE:

There will be no service in the Community Centre on Sunday 27th December. A service will be available that day on YouTube. Normal services will resume the following week.



Daily Readings for week commencing 14 th December 2020		
Monday	Isaiah 49: 14-25	1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
Tuesday	Isaiah 50	1 Thessalonians 5: 12-end
Wednesday	Isaiah 51: 1-8	2 Thessalonians 1
Thursday	Isaiah 51: 9-16	2 Thessalonians 2
Friday	Isaiah 51: 17-end	2 Thessalonians 3
Saturday	Isaiah 52: 1-12	Jude

Pray for those in need...Sally, Zena, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy Lily, Mandy and Joyce. **Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...we remember Reginald and James...**