

## Sunday Worship at home 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020 Advent 3

### Opening Prayers:

O Lord open our lips

**And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.**

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

**Amen**

### Invitation to confession:

Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand".

So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ,  
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord, for the times we are selfish with our time:

**Lord have mercy**

Lord, when we forget to sit and pray:

**Christ have mercy.**

Lord, when we fail to give thanks for your love and all your blessings:

**Lord have mercy**

God the Father:

have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins  
and bring us to eternal life. Amen

### The Collect (Special Prayer for the day)

God for whom we watch and wait,  
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for your son:  
give us the courage to speak your truth,  
to hunger for justice and to suffer for the cause of right,  
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

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

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" Now the Pharisees who had been sent to question him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie," "This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

## **Reflection on the Gospel.**

John the Baptist had a mission. God sent him to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus, and man he wasn't worthy enough to untie the thong of his sandals. John's job was simply to be God's witness to the event of the coming Saviour and direct people towards him. He stood up to the Jews, Levites and Priests honestly and said he was not the Messiah, he was not Elijah, he was just a man living in the wilderness who knew things were about to change. John's words, strengthened by the prophecy of a cloud of witnesses from the Old Testament, were enthusiastic and exciting, urging people to repent, get ready and be surprised. No one knew Jesus or what he looked like, but John was already scanning the crowd for the face he would recognise. John baptised hundreds of people in God's name, yet he didn't care that those who flocked to him now, would eventually turn away and follow Jesus. That was what he wanted, because when that happened, his mission would be complete. It would be great if we could all be like John and talk enthusiastically about Jesus with others and what it means to have him in our lives; then simply point them in his direction and step back, leaving the Holy Spirit to do the rest. The more we talk and the more we direct, the more God's kingdom will grow in this place. Then we too can say our mission is complete!

## **The Creed**

We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.  
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

**Be still and Pray:** Include the needs of the world and your family and community. |The work of the Government, and the health of the Queen. Those who suffer discrimination of any kind, the homeless and those suffering loss of jobs and grieving for their old way of life. Pray for comfort and peace for those who are ill or awaiting hospital appointments and operations, including Lesley Sainsbury and Vincent Grove and Richard and Tricia Walker. Give thanks for all doctors, physicians and nurses and all whose work is to make us well in body and mind. Pray for the souls of those who have died especially Sue Deacon whose funeral service will take place this week, giving thanks for all her ministry in this Benefice.

## **The Lord's Prayer:**

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, in 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;  
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory, forever and ever.

**Amen**

## **Blessing:**

The Lord bless you and watch over you,  
the Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you,  
he Lord look kindly on you and give you his peace.

**Amen**

*Reverend Irene*