



**Team Parish of Christ the King**

**St Aidan's Brunton Park**

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

**Advent 2**

The second Sunday of Advent, as we continue our countdown to Christmas, looks back to the Prophets of Old. The prophets task was, in part, to prepare people for the coming of God. As we hear their words today, and as we prepare to celebrate God's coming in flesh at Christmas, we might ask how exactly to prepare. Our reading from Malachi offers a striking image, that of the refiner's fire. Malachi says that God is like the fire that takes raw ore, full of impurities, encased in useless material – called dross – and burns that away to allow pure gold and silver to be poured out.

Perhaps as we prepare for Christmas we might hear in these words a call to allow God to do the same work within us. It's a hard task, to be purified by the refiners fire means allowing parts of us to be burned away. It means the allowing the useless clutter that so often accumulates around our hearts and our lives, to be let go of. But at the end of it, we will find ourselves with something as pure and beautiful as gold. Perhaps, particularly with all the clutter that comes with Christmas, this is a chance to let God refine away the dross, and leave us with the pure gold of his presence in Christ.

### **Malachi 3.1-4**

Thus says the Lord God: See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

## **Luke 3.1-6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

## **TODAY**

9.30am: **Advent 2** Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches as Mr Bernie Troughton leads

## **THE WEEK AHEAD**

**Mon** 7.30pm, Melbury Estate: **Carols with the Salvation Army**

**Tues-Fri** 8.55am, Church: **Morning Prayer**

**Wed** 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

**Thurs** 2.00pm, Community Room: **Film Club - Wonka**

**Sat** 10.00am, Community Room: **Saturday Cafe**

10.30am, Church: **Kids Zone**

**Sun** 9.30am: **Advent 3** Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches and presides with readings from Zephaniah 3.14-20; Philippians 4.4-7 & Luke 3.7-18  
4.00pm: **Christingle**

## **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Dec: 7.00pm: **Festival of Carols**, Church

Tues 24<sup>th</sup> Dec: 4.30pm: **Nativity**, Church

11.30pm: **Midnight Mass**, Church

Wed 25<sup>th</sup> Dec: 9.30am: **Christmas Eucharist**, Church

**NOTICES** - today's service link is <https://bit.ly/StAidan2ndAdvent2024>

**FILM CLUB** – has chosen the wonderful musical fantasy comedy 'Wonka' as their Christmas movie, depicting Willy Wonka's early days as a chocolatier.

**CHRISTINGLE** – we are raising funds for the Children's Society again this year through our Christingle service. As always this is a service ideal for all ages, where we have fun while making our very own Christingle. Bring along your family and friends for this late afternoon celebration.

**KATHERINE RUNDELL** – thank you to everyone who came along to Katherine's talk which raised £147 for the Forest Peoples Programme.

**CHRISTMAS FAIR** – thank you to everyone who supported our fair which raised £1333 towards church funds.

**SHOEBOXES** – thank you to everyone who took part in the Shoebox Appeal, a total of 33 boxes were received.

**CHILDREN'S SOCIETY** – our boxes this year raised £505 and the coffee morning £200. Thank you to everyone who raised funds.

**HELPERS WANTED** – do you have a short amount of time (30 minutes / 1 hour) to help share the Christmas message? We will be having a 'pop up' event outside of Morrisons Great Park on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December but really need helpers. Speak to Lena for more information.

**CHRISTMAS CARD DELIVERY** – can you help with delivery this year's Christmas cards? If so please take a bundle from the back of church and mark which streets you are covering. Thank you so much for your help.

**BOOK TABLE** – A reminder that the book table is always stocked with a rotation of books chosen to offer a chance to deepen and explore questions of faith through reading. Do check in from time to time if you haven't already to see if there's something that sparks your interest. Julie Smith and Mairi Macleod are always happy to be asked for recommendations, and hope that you'll make use of the table!

## Living on God's good earth

### December 2024: Christmas is for Sharing

It's the most expensive time of the year! As we look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus, the pressure to spend a lot - and waste a lot - can be very high. This month, look for ways to live and give more simply. You could give one Christmas card to the whole church on our community card board, or try 'Secret Santa' style giving with family or friends, donating any money you save. When present shopping, buying experiences and consumables are a great way to cut down on waste!

#### **For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer**

**For the church** – Archdeacon Rachel Wood and Area Dean Paul Baker.

Churchwardens: Catherine, Susan, and Dorothy

**For the community** – People's Kitchen foodbank and Children NE charity.

**For the world** – all countries facing hardship and conflict. For our own national and political life

**For those being baptised** – Harry and Teddy

**For those in need** – Esther Wooler, Martin Seaton, Sue Bates, Sheila Lonie, Christine Crompton, Alan Vout.

**For those who have died** – and on their anniversaries: Patricia Shields, Doreen Alsop, Eric Frost, Emma Flynn, Francis Leslie, Lawrence Smith, Cynthia Richardson, Ida Holst, Mervyn Spearing, June Ward, Mattie Hodgeson



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