PREPARING A WAY FOR THE LORD



Second Sunday of Advent 8th December 2024





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Preparing for Today's Eucharist

Gospel: The Baptist's Message (Luke 3:1-6)

Every year, the second and third Sundays of Advent focus on John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus. John's mission was to create a community of repentance, ready to welcome the Messiah. This wasn't about people feeling bad about their sins—it was about real change: turning away from old habits and reshaping values and priorities. In Hebrew thought, repentance means a complete turnaround, heading in a new direction.

John prepared for the Messiah by living in the desert, reflecting Israel's journey through the wilderness during the Exodus. His simple clothing and lifestyle rejected materialism and showed his focus on God's mission. His message wasn't negative. By quoting prophets like Isaiah and Baruch, he showed that leveling hills and filling valleys symbolized preparing for God's Kingdom of peace and justice. Real preparation takes effort and intention.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection:

What changes in my life will help me welcome Jesus this Christmas?

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Please all stand

PROCESSIONAL HYMN 265

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

GREETING

The Lord be with you. And also with you!

ST PETER'S PARISH PRAYER

Let us pray:

Almighty and Everlasting God, who has gathered us at St. Peter's to worship you in the beauty of Anglican liturgy, grant that we may nurture faith in our diverse community and share your love with all people. May we serve with compassion and grace, reflecting your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

We have this Advent Wreath to remind us of the coming of Jesus Christ who is the light of the world.

We light the first candle to remind us of all God's people who, in every age, watched for his coming.

(the first purple candle is lit)

A young person asks: Why do we light the second candle?

Another person and the congregation replies:

'We light the second candle to remind us of the great promise made by God and told to us by the prophets.'

As we light the second candle let us say together:

Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

(the second purple candle is lit, then say together)

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

'A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of its roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.' (*Isaiah 11:1-2*)



For the word of the Lord: thanks be to God.

Let us pray together:

Lord Jesus, your coming was proclaimed by the prophet Malachi who tells us you will purify us and refine us like gold and silver until we present offerings to the Lord in righteousness, then the offering will be pleasing to the Lord. (First Reading)

Come, Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, you come among us now, as St Paul remembers those who "...sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." (Second Reading)

Come, Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, you will come again in glory, because you want all the world to "...see the salvation of God" (Gospel).

Come, Lord Jesus.

Our Father who is in heaven, we need the light of peace and love to shine in our world. Help us to prepare our lives and homes to receive the Messiah. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

HYMN TIS 289 Christmas is coming (vs 1-2)

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." Jesus said: "This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself."

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

In today's gospel John the Baptist is urging us to "prepare the way of the Lord". (*Pause*) For the times our lives have not heralded God's coming, we ask for forgiveness and peace.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us.

Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

KYRIE ELEISON

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.

TRISAGION

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY / COLLECT

Let us pray.

God of our salvation, you strengthen the winding ways of our hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin: keep our hearts watchful in holiness, and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose Day draws near, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Please be seated for the reading

FIRST READING

Malachi lived in the 5th century BC when Judaism was being restored after the exile. He has an exalted view of the responsibilities of the priests and is devoted to the temple and the purity of its worship.

A reading from the Prophet Malachi 3:1-4

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.

Hear the word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

The Song of Zechariah (Benedictus) APBA 425 (Luke 1.68–79)

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel: you have come to your people and set them free.

You have raised up for us a mighty Saviour: born of the house of your servant David. Through your holy prophets, you promised of old: to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us. To show mercy to our forebears: and to remember your holy covenant. This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies. Free to worship you without fear: holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life. And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High: for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way, To give God's people knowledge of salvation: by the forgiveness of their sins. In the tender compassion of our God: the dawn from on high shall break upon us, To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death: and to guide our feet into the way of peace. SECOND READING

Paul urges his fellow Christians to prepare for the second coming of Christ by pure and blameless lives.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians 1:1-11.

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Hear the word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN 284 VS 1,2

GOSPEL (Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. (Luke 3:4,6)

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you! And also with you!

A reading from the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Luke 3:16.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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.""

This is the Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GRADUAL HYMN 284 V3

SERMON

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Please stand as we affirm our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed, each in our preferred language.

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the Forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION please kneel/sit

We offer our prayers in a spirit of gratitude, knowing that God hears us when we call out. With confidence, let us we bring our prayers to God.

(At the end of each section) Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Conclude the prayer with:

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers:

Grant that what we have asked in faith, we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF APPROACH

[Let us pray.]

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

THE PEACE

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. (*Luke 19:38*)

The peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you. Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Please all stand

OFFERTORY HYMN 276

The offering is collected during the hymn. The gifts of the people, Bread and Wine and collection of money, are brought to the Lord's Table.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Blessèd are you, Lord God of all creation: Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER (ADVENT)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

- All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, ever-living God.
- We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was looked for by the prophets, heralded by the Baptist announced by an angel, born of the Virgin Mary, and revealed at last to men and women of every race.
- By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.
- Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

- On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'
- After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new

covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

(Let us proclaim the mystery of faith)

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:

proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,

his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son, and bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord,

with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray, each in our preferred language:

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

BREAKING THE CONSECRATED BREAD

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread so may your Church be gathered from the end of the earth into your kingdom.

AGNUS DEI

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us. Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

THE INVITATION

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

God invites everyone to gather around his table. We extend an invitation to all baptised Christians to come forward and receive this Holy Sacrament. Others are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing by crossing arms over chest.

DURING COMMUNION: 288

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BLESSING

The Lord be with you. And also with you!

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ. Amen!

DISMISSAL HYMN 270



Parish Link Notices & Information Second Sunday of Advent Parish Office: 03 9899 5122 E anglicans.boxhill@bigpond.com W www.anglicansboxhill.org.au Usual Office hours: Tue & Fri 8.30am – 12.30pm

St Peter's, 1038 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill. Vicar: Rev'd Victor Fan

Years Mind

Marlene Mack, Hazel Addison, Elizabeth, Frances Forward, and Stella McKenzie, whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Prayers for the Church

The Anglican Parish of Upwey/Belgrave Heights with St George's Monbulk (Jerome and Vivianne Dias); The Diocese of Willochra (Bp Jeremy James, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Stonnington (Colleen O'Reilly); Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (Bp Ezekiel Kumir Kondo); Pastoral services: Holy Trinity Doncaster (Bp Kate Prowd); Footscray Anglican Parish (Abp Philip Freier); St Andrew's Corio/Norlane Karen Congregation (Bp Brad Billings); Choral service of lessons and carols: St Peter's Brighton Beach (Abp Philip Freier); Confirmation services: St Dunstan's Camberwell (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St Alban the Martyr St Alban's (Bp Brad Billings).

Prayer of the Week

Merciful God, who sent your messenger John the Baptist to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: give us grace to heed his warning and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Daily Readings

Monday	Isaiah 35.1-10	Ps 85.8-13	Luke 5.17-26
Tuesday	Isaiah 40.1-11	Ps 96.7-13	Matthew 18.12-14
Wednesday	Isaiah 40.25-31	Ps 103.1-5	Matthew 11.28-30
Thursday	Isaiah 41.13-20	Ps 145.8-13	Matthew 11.11-15
Friday	Isaiah 48.17-19	Ps 1	Matthew 11.16-19
Saturday	Malachi 4	Ps 80.14-19	Matthew 17.10-13
Sunday	Zephaniah 3.14-20	A song of Isaiah	Luke 3.7-18

ABM Pew Reflections

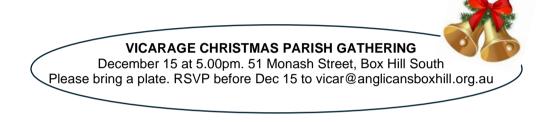
Malachi's voice rings loud and clear. The Lord is coming. Not as a jolly Santa but coming to cleanse. The Lord's own righteousness will expose and purify that which is not of God. The message is clear: turn from evil and do good by doing justice. • May our ears be open to the insistent voice of God calling for us to be people of justice. • Give thanks for the work and witness of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

Christmas services 2024

Dec 22 7.00pm, Nine lessons and carols - Supper in Undercroft Dec 24 6.00pm, Family service, 11.00pm First service of Christmas Dec 25 9.30am, Eucharist

TREE OF REMEMBRANCE

There is a tree in the baptistry and you are invited to hang a card with the name of a person you want remembered on it. There are cards near the tree for you to use.



JAMS, CAKES IN THE UNDERCROFT

There will be some Christmas cakes and jams for sale in the Undercroft after the 9.30am service for anyone who would like them. Great for Christmas gifts... or just for enjoying for yourself, friends and family!

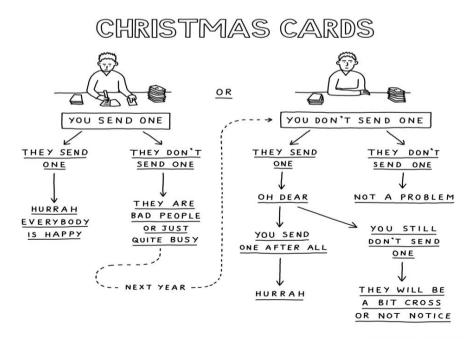
THANK YOU

This year the ParishPeople@Work group (mainly Garry P, Garry M, and Rob) have undertaken the big project of renovating and updating the toilet areas in the hall. This work saves the parish a great deal of money and, along with all the other work they undertake, is carried out professionally and to a high standard. The work is ongoing but will eventually mean that the hall is much more enjoyable to use and a better rental prospect. We are very fortunate to have this volunteer group.

TO MAKE YOU SMILE



Just over Christmas... I heard about it on a money-saving website.



CartoonChurch.com

ROSTER	Today 8.12.24	Next week 15.12.24	
SIDESPERSON	Dianne A	Barbara P	
SERVERS	Michele, Michael Z, Judy J, Garry M	Rosemary, Jeff, Michael Z, Kim	
READERS	Edwin C, Dianne A	Marly F, Hena P	
INTERCESSOR	Marly F	Judy J	
COUNTING	Elizabeth B, Hilary B	Charles B, Rob K	
MORNING TEA	Rosemary S, Peter W, Barbara M	Cecilia, Margaret R, Jan, Jenny F	

OUR INFORMATION

FIRST AID KIT – Located in the office and kitchen.

TOILETS – Located in the Church Hall and in the church building through the church doors front right.

WHEELCHAIR – Located near the toilet for the disabled upstairs.

FIRE & EMERGENCY – Please make yourself aware of the nearest escape route in the event of an emergency or fire. OH&S – Please ensure that any

incidents/accidents are reported to the Vicar or Wardens and incident report completed.

Mission Statement

At St. Peter's, we celebrate Anglican liturgical worship, nurture Christian faith within our diverse community, share God's love across all communities, and serve with compassion and grace to all people. **Vision**

To ensure that there continues to be a living, committed, communal Anglican presence of liturgical celebration, nurture and outreach.

St Peter's is part of the Anglican Church of Australia and the worldwide Anglican Communion. St Peter's church is on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and we acknowledge them as the traditional custodians of this land.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE All child safety concerns must be reported to Kooyoora Professional Standards 1800 135 246

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Week Ahead

SUNDAY 8.12.24 9.30am Eucharist 11.30am Mandarin service 2.00pm Dinka service, *church* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

MONDAY 9.12.24

Vicar's day off 6.30-9.00pm Narc Anon *Undercroft* 6.30-8.30pm Celestial Tai Chi, *hall* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

TUES 10.12.24 8.30am-12.30pm Office open 9.00 onwards Parish People@Work 6.00-8.00pm Bellydancing, *hall* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

WED 11.12.24 9.30-11.30am Playgroup, *on holidays* 10.30am Eucharist 10.00-11.30am Wellways Tai Chi, *hall* 8.00-9.00pm Choir practice, *Undercroft* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

THU 12.12.24 6.30-9.30pm Crossways ESL, *hall* 6.30-9.00pm Sudanese prayer group, *church* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

FRI 13.12.24 8.30am-12.30pm Office open 9.00-11.00pm Sudanese Bible study, *church* 9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

SAT 14.12.24
10.00am Bible Study, office
10.30am-1.30pm Sat School, U'croft, hall
5.00-8.00pm Student piano concert, church
9.30pm Evening Prayer on Zoom

SUN 15.12.24 8.00am Eucharist, 9.30am Eucharist 11.30am Mandarin service 2.00pm Dinka service, *church* 5.00pm Parish Gathering at Vicarage

For the Diary

December 10 Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm

December 14 Student piano concert: 5.00-8.00pm, *church*

December 15 Vicarage Christmas gathering, 5.00pm

Christmas services 2024

Dec 22

7.00pm, Nine lessons and carols, Supper in Undercroft

Dec 24 6.00pm, Family service 11.00pm First service of Christmas Dec 25

9.30am, Eucharist

This week: Friday Lucy, martyr (d. c.304) Saturday John of the Cross, mystic & teacher (d. 1591)

CLERGY Vicar

Reverend Victor Fan **T** 0402 948 390 **E** vicar@anglicansboxhill.org.au

Honorary Clergy Reverend Betty Bracken Reverend Anne Kennedy

Sudanese Ministry Reverend Joseph Arou

WARDENS: Garry Male Linda Boyd CHILD SAFE OFFICER Cecilia Joyner 039 899 5122