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**Canticle**

**Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah)**

1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,  *•*

who has come to his people and set them free.

2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,  *•*

born of the house of his servant David.

3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old  *•*

to save us from our enemies,

    from the hands of all that hate us,

4 To show mercy to our ancestors,  *•*

and to remember his holy covenant.

5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:  *•*

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

6 Free to worship him without fear,  *•*

holy and righteous in his sight

    all the days of our life.

7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  *•*

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

8 To give his people knowledge of salvation  *•*

by the forgiveness of all their sins.

9 In the tender compassion of our God  *•*

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  *•*

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Collect**

Almighty God,

purify our hearts and minds,

that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour

we may be ready to receive him,

who is our Lord and our God.

**Amen.**

**Malachi 3.1-4**

**The Coming Messenger**

3See, 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. 2But 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; 3he 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. 4Then 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**

**The Proclamation of John the Baptist**

3In 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, 2during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4as 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.   
5 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;   
6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” ’

**Present Aid at St Mary’s**

If you would like to place a Christmas card on a window and place a donation towards Present Aid in the box at the back of church. Full details in the December newsletter.

***Advent 2***

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, just and true,  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
Of old you spoke by the mouth of your prophets  
but in our days you speak through your Son  
whom you have appointed the heir of all things.  
Grant us, your people, to walk in his light  
that we may be found ready and watching  
when he comes again in glory and judgement;  
for you are our light and our salvation.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

*The second candle is lit*

God our Father,  
you spoke to the prophets of old  
of a Saviour who would bring peace.  
You helped them to spread the joyful message  
of his coming kingdom.  
Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,  
to share with those around us  
the good news of your power and love.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
the Light who is coming into the world.  
  
**Lord Jesus, Light of the world,  
the prophets said you would bring peace  
and save your people in trouble.  
Give peace in our hearts at Christmas  
and show all the world God's love.**

**NOTICES:**

At the end of the service please take this sheet home with you. If you could put your hymnbook on the shelf by the door please and the service book in the box.

For events, contact details and notices please see the December newsletter available at the back of church. At St Peter’s the parish magazine will resume from December.

To enable us to make pastoral visits in as safe a manner as possible please contact the Vicar if you would like a visit. This will also enable us to minimise unnecessary travel as our parishes cover a large area and many visits are to homes where people are out.

5th December Advent 2

9.30am Morning Prayer at St Mary’s

11.00am Morning Prayer at St Peter’s

4.30pm Christingle at St Peter’s

12th December Advent 3

9.30am Holy Communion at St Mary’s

11.00am Holy Communion at St Peter’s

6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols at St Mary’s

19th December Advent 4

9.30am Morning Prayer at St Mary’s

11.00am Holy Communion at St Peter’s

11.30am Baptism of Bessie Tomlinson at St Mary’s

6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols at St Peter’s

24th December Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service at St Mary’s

11.15pm Midnight Communion at St Peter’s

11.30pm Midnight Communion at St Mary’s

25th December Christmas Day

9.30am Holy Communion at St Mary’s

11.00am Holy Communion at St Peter’s

Please note we will not be holding services on Boxing Day, Sunday 26th December.

28th December Tuesday

1.00pm Wedding of Sarah Kirwan and Stuart Smith at St Peter’s

**Confirmation Service**

We are pleased that Bishop Mark will be with us on 30th January for our Confirmation Service. If you would like to know about Confirmation please speak to the Vicar in good time beforehand.

**Mothers’ Union Christmas Project**

St Peter’s Mothers’Union is collecting new ladies and gents socks, gloves, scarves and basic underwear which will be given to the Salvation Army for distribution to the homeless in Winsford and neighbouring areas. There is a box at the back of the church and from 5th to11th December you can take to Cora Cowap’s home Brackenburn, Vicarage Lane where there will be a box at the end of the drive.

**St Mary’s Christmas Flowers**

Contributions towards flowers for Christmas would be welcome.