

Sunday 12th December 2021

Third Sunday of Advent

Welcome to everyone today in church. Welcome, too, to those joining our livestreams via our Facebook pages.

Covid safety measures have been adjusted to take into account the national Plan B. It is now mandatory to wear a face-covering in church. This can be removed when singing, if desired. Please consider keeping a distance when choosing where to sit in church. Please, also, remain in your seats rather than wandering to chat.

Please remember that not everyone will want to be physically close to others and respect their preferences.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

<i>St Thomas</i>	401
<i>St James</i>	12

The Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading *Zephaniah 3.14-end*

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away
your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear
disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God,
is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with

gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

GRADUAL HYMN

St Thomas 196

St James 5

Gospel Reading Luke 3.7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.' As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

OFFERTORY HYMN

St Thomas 277

St James 388

COMMUNION HYMNS

St Thomas 463

St James 307

Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

FINAL HYMN

St Thomas 489

St James 15

The Week Ahead & Information

Today 12.30pm St James' Parish Lunch

Monday-Saturday

9am Morning Prayer *on St Thomas' Facebook page*

Tuesday

10am Eucharist *at St James'*

12pm Eat & Meet Christmas Lunch *at St James'*

2.30pm TFF planning meeting *at St James'*

6.30pm Carol Singing *at Westbourne*

Wednesday

10.30am Funeral Service for George Cattenach RIP
at St Thomas'

7pm Choir Practise *at St Thomas'*

Thursday

10am St John's School service *at St James'*

10am Eucharist *at St Thomas'*

1.30pm Funeral Service for Edna Rothwell RIP *at St Thomas'*

Friday

9.30 Church cleaning *at St Thomas'*

9.30+ Organ tuning all day *at St James' – no access to church*

Next Sunday – 19th December – 4th Sunday of Advent

9.15am Eucharist *at St Thomas'*

10.45am Eucharist *at St James'*

11.15am Baptism of Finlay *at St Thomas'*

3.30pm Evening Prayer (BCP) *at St Thomas'*

4.30pm Choir Rehearsal *at St Thomas'*

6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols *at St Thomas'*
followed by mulled wine & mince pies

Advent Study Group *They Sang!*

Thursday, 6.30pm, on Zoom, for an hour.

Join us for our third session this week. If you'd like the Zoom invitation, email Fr David.

Carol Singing

If you would like to join members of the choir to sing carols at Westbourne (14th December) or The Lindens (22nd December), please let Fr David, Fr Andrew or Barbara Rogers know.

Nine Lessons & Carols

Please join us for the traditional carol service next Sunday evening at St Thomas'. If you can make and bring some mince pies, please let one of the clergy know. Remember to invite someone to come along with you!

Christmas Communion

If you know of anyone who would appreciate receiving Holy Communion at home at Christmas, who is not already on our lists, please let one of the clergy team know.

Thinking of others

We are not holding toy services this year but you are still able to donate items for children, families, and others, as we prepare for Christmas. Gift items, toiletries, and non-perishable, in-date, food items can be left at church (in the Hall at St James', at the back of St Thomas'). We will pass all items on to Raft.

Thursday Friends & Food in St Thomas' Hall

The next session will be on 13th January 2022.

Prayers

Please let Fr David know of anyone who should be included on our weekly prayer list. (frdavidstephenson@gmail.com, 07539 264279)

Names of those on the parish prayer lists will also be pinned to the prayer boards in each church.

For your prayers

For the sick: Ian, Charley, Mandy, Lizzie, Janet, Asia, Danielle, Alan, Jean, Rachael, Mike, Rita, Mother Enid, Margaret, Philip, Connie, Genevieve, Marie

For all who have died in the past week and all whose anniversaries fall in the coming week. *Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.*