

# Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## Fourth 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>	<b>448</b>
<i>St James</i>	<b>185</b>

### **The Collect**

God our redeemer,  
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the mother of your Son:  
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,  
so we may be ready to greet him  
when he comes again as our judge;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **First Reading Micah 5.2-5a**

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

**GRADUAL HYMN**

*St Thomas* 136

*St James* 161

**Gospel Reading Luke 1.39-55**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be<sup>e</sup> a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

**OFFERTORY HYMN**

*St Thomas* 467

*St James* 186

**COMMUNION HYMNS**

*St Thomas* 32, 527

*St James* 273, 187

**Prayer after Communion**

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour:

fill us your servants with your grace,

that in all things we may embrace your holy will

and with her rejoice in your salvation;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**FINAL HYMN**

**St Thomas 307**

**St James 9**

## **The Week Ahead & Information**

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

### **Monday-Friday**

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

**Monday** 9am *St James' School Service in church*

**Tuesday** 10am *Eucharist at St James'*

**Wednesday** 11am *Raven Croft Christmas Communion Service*

1pm *Funeral Service for Tony Crawford RIP at St Mary's*

6.30pm *Carol Singing at The Lindens*

**Thursday** 10am *Eucharist at St Thomas'*

### **Friday** *Christmas Eve*

10am *Funeral Service for Rita Lomax RIP at St James'*

11am *Carol Service at The Lindens*

4pm *Family Crib Services at St James' & St Thomas'*

6pm *Family Crib Service at St Thomas'*

11.30pm *Midnight Mass at St James' & St Thomas'*

### **Saturday** *Christmas Day*

10am *Festival Eucharist at St James' & St Thomas'*

### **Next Sunday – 26<sup>th</sup> December – St Stephen's Day**

10am *Communion & Carols at St Thomas'*

***NB This is a joint service with St James***

## **Advent Study Group *They Sang!***

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

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

## **Thank you**

To everyone who has helped prepare our church buildings for Christmas services and celebrations. Don't forget, now, to invite people to come with you to share in our festival services!

## **Christmas Week**

Fr Andrew and Fr David are on leave during Christmas week. Please contact only in case of emergency.

## **St Thomas' Parish Lunch**

This will be an Epiphany Lunch on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January, in the Hall. Tickets are £10 each (children free) and are available TODAY!

## **Dates for 2022**

The **Refectory Café** will be open, 11-1, on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> January.

**Eat & Meet** Lunches will be at St James', 12pm, on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Thursday Friends & Food** will be in St Thomas' Hall, at 2.30pm, on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> January.

## **Prayers**

Please let Fr David know of anyone who should be included on our weekly prayer list. ([frdavidstephenson@gmail.com](mailto: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, 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.*