



14TH DECEMBER – THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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. **Amen**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35.1-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

PSALM 146.4-10

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help!
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the seas,
and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
The Lord loves the righteous;
the Lord cares for the stranger;
he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way of the wicked. **R**

The Lord shall reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Alleluia! **R**

SECOND READING: James 5.7-10

A reading from the letter of James.

Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11.2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord, may the gifts we offer in faith and love be a continual sacrifice in your honour and truly become our eucharist and our salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

POST 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. **Amen**

HYMNS

Entrance:	227
Offertory:	22
Communion:	24
Final:	3

PRAYERS

Bishops in our diocese: Martin, Will, Ruth.

The Sick: Chris Avery, Emily Brunsdon, Felicity Caperon, Sarah Cashmore, Jenny Chatterton, Laura Cooper, Barbara Dann, Tracey Divall, Anne Hawken, James Hawthorne, Chong Lin Khong, Alan Lockett, Jane, Richard and Tim Mortimer, Tracey Norris, Peter & Cheryl Scrivens, Edward Sibley, Claire Stogden, Catherine Wallis, Andrew, Shelley and family.

Recently departed: Harry Newman, Diane Reynard, Amanda Smith.

Year's Mind: Margaret Green, Ralph Covell, Enid Smith, Louis Lewis, Ian McLennan, Albert Hodson, Wendy Dann, Beatrice Halton.

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

This afternoon at 4pm we will be holding our annual Nine Lessons & Carols service. This will be followed by festive refreshments. Do please join us!

Wednesday 17th December

10am	Said Mass
------	-----------

Sunday 21st December - Fourth Sunday in Advent

8am	Said Mass
10am	Sung Mass
3pm	Crib Service at Christ Church, Fairwarp

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

10am	Said Mass
4pm	Crib & Christingle Service
4pm	Carol Service at Christ Church, Fairwarp
11pm	Midnight Mass

Thursday 25th December - Christmas Day

8am	Said Mass
10am	Parish Mass with Carols

A HUGE THANK YOU for all the support with providing foliage or purchasing arrangements to fund church flowers for Christmas and beyond. This raised an incredible amount of money which will be spent wisely for everyone's pleasure/benefit. Very many thanks. Lynn

Priest in Charge:	Fr Andrew Hawken: vicarstjohns25@gmail.com	Fr Andrew's rest days are usually Monday & Tuesday
Churchwardens:	Carol Brown: (01892 652310) carol.brown@btinternet.com Philip Morris: (07967 359599) morrip57@gmail.com	
Hall Contact:	Please go the Church Hall section of the website: https://www.stjohnscrowborough.co.uk	
PCC Secretary:	Rita Burton: (01892 664071) tylersrmb@gmail.com	
Safeguarding:	Carol Brown: (01892 652310) carol.brown@btinternet.com	