

15th DECEMBER 2013



Advent 3

WELCOME

The Lord welcomes you to his house - as do his people - especially visitors and newcomers.

WORSHIP

As we appreciate God's loving purpose towards his creation and to us so we are led to worship.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Lord of life, who brings the desert into bloom, who brings sight to the blind, who longs to restore his people, we come before you with eagerness. May we attend to your word and earnestly seek you and your blessing through our worship. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

THIS WEEK

MONDAY

'Flashmob' rehearsal in All Saints at 7.00 pm.

TUESDAY

Ballymena Rugby Club Carol Service in St Patrick's at 8.00 pm. All welcome.

Healer Prayer Group - 7.15 - 8.00 pm.

Bible Study - informal - 8.00 pm. All welcome.

WEDNESDAY

Advent service in Ballyclug at 8.00 pm.

Ballymena Academy Carol Service in St Patrick's - only for ticket holders.

THURSDAY

Inter-church Advent Reflections - West Church

at 12.30 pm.

FRIDAY 'Flashmob' event sponsored by local churches.
Tower Centre 7.00 pm. Singers required.

NEXT SUNDAY Young Persons' Nativity Service in St Patrick's at 11.30 am.

Services of Nine Lessons and Carols -
Ballyclug - 10.00 am
St Patrick's - 6.30 pm
St Columba's - 7.00 pm.

THANKS To those who contributed to the Salvation Army Family Appeal. We were able to pass on more toys than in previous years.

BISHOPS' APPEAL Please consider using the envelopes of this annual appeal - the Church of Ireland's special effort for emergency relief and development.

FINANCE Well done as giving to General Fund continues to show an increase on last year's figures.
Since beginning October
2012 - £22,965 2013 - £26,863.
Please let us know if you have not yet received your envelopes.
Please also make up any giving for 2013 by 31st December.

EACH WEEK

MINISTRY OF PRAYER This takes place after the 11.30 am service and the 6.30 pm service in St Patrick's.

PRAYER SUPPORT Team Leader - Doreen Cowan, Tel. No. 2564 4709.

READINGS IN ST PATRICK'S

Isaiah 35:1-10 (Page 673)

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Thank you God that you are for us and you want to change us for the better. Help us to want that change. Amen.



ADVENT 3 - St Columba's

15 December 2013

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 35 beginning at verse 1

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus² 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.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say 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.'

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶then 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;

⁷the 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.

⁸A 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.

⁹No 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.

¹⁰And 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

**Hear the Gospel of our Saviour Christ, according to
Matthew, chapter 11 beginning at verse 2**

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to Jesus, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ ⁴Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the 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. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’

⁷As 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.”

¹¹Truly 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, LORD JESUS CHRIST.

ADVENT 3 - Ballyclug

15 December 2013

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 35 beginning at verse 1

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus² 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.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say 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.'

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶then 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;

⁷the 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.

⁸A 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.

⁹No 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.

¹⁰And 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

**A reading from the Gospel according to St Matthew
chapter 11 beginning at verse 2**

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to Jesus, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ ⁴Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the 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. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’

⁷As 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.”

¹¹Truly 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 word of the Lord

THANKS BE TO GOD