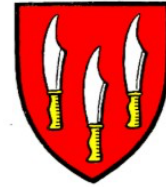


SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH
PARISH OF BURNLEY



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

7th December 2025

10:00 a.m.

Before the service, speak with God; during the service, let God speak to you; after the service, speak to one another.

Dear parishioners and friends,

Most of us feel perhaps a little skirmish to the call of repentance when we are confronted with a past event we now regret, brought to account for less than wholesome or generous behaviour towards others, fail to comply with expected community norms, or are more concerned about our ourselves than others. It appears to me in our secular community that to say sorry is often the best we can do without any real recognition of what we have done or not done. Nor is there often no recognition that we need to change our ways. The word sin is avoided, and any sense that we can all act and do and say things at times that we regret are not spoken about. There are of course many examples where people have changed their ways and behaviour for the better of themselves and the wider community while others will seek to use the legal system to protect themselves. Repentance is an unattractive idea and a negative one. It does involve grief and remorse. In today's Gospel John proclaims repentance but it is not to be read in a negative way but rather as a liberating and positive way forward. In both Hebrew and Greek, it means a change of behaviour, a new direction, a change of heart. John is calling those he is speaking to move forward, look to the future with hope, to change their values and to recreate a time when God's dream will be fulfilled. He proclaims his message in the desert as a means of warning that without change the future is dubious and lacking certainty. While not wanting to be alarmist scientists across the world are reminding us that if we ignore the signs that the creation is telling us then we do so at our own peril and the future for our children and grandchildren is at risk.

The challenge for us all at this time whether we have faith or not is to ensure that we acknowledge the part we all play in the stewardship of the creation and as people of faith do my values and lifestyle align with God's Kingdom.

Shalom Ray

INTROIT HYMN, AM 27 On Jordans Bank the Baptist cried.

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SENTENCE The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the Good news

COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Merciful God, who sent your messenger John the Baptist to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: give us grace to heed his warning and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of our

redeemer, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. **Amen**

1ST READING, Isaiah 11.1-10

11 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

² The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,*

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.*

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.*

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed^o together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.*

Return of the Remnant of Israel and Judah

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.*

For the word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 72. 1-7,18-21



SECOND READING Romans 15.4-13

⁴ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel for Jews and Gentiles Alike

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore, I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name";

¹⁰ and again he says,

"Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";

¹¹ and again,

"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him";

¹² and again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope."

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that
you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

For the word of the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see
the salvation of God.

Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia

The Lord be with you.

And also, with you.

A reading from the Gospel according to St Matthew

⁶ "In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea,
proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the
one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, The voice of one crying
out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths
straight.' "

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist,
and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and
all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and
they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But
when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to
them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to
come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume 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 ax 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. "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

For the Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD: Peace in the Middle East, Sudan, Congo and Ukraine. For the Richmond Churches Food Centre and all those in need. *FOR THE SICK, RECOVERING, AND THOSE WHO GRIEVE* Bruce, John Ross, Jack, Neil, Craig, Helen, Nanette and Liam. *FOR THOSE RECENTLY DECEASED:* Gavin De Mello, Roderick Hergstrom and Helen Eckersley
FOR THOSE WHOSE YEAR'S MIND OCCURS THIS WEEK:

Offertory Hymn: AM 33 Creator of the Starry night

Recessional Hymn: AM 45 O come O Come Emmanuel

Joint Christmas **carol service** at St Stephen's Richmond on the 14th December at 5pm. Mark in your diaries now.

Christmas Services

24th December 9pm Carols ,9.30pm Festival Eucharist

25th December 9.30am Christmas Eucharist

28th December 10am Choral Eucharist

Invite a friend to one of our Christmas services.

