

Sunday 13th December

The paper-version Service



This worship sheet captures our Sunday service for those without internet.

To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the modern song from this Sunday's Service set out below.



Opening Prayer: Almighty God, thank you that you come to us in Jesus, born as a baby, a gift through Mary. Help us receive your gift of love and life and allow you to be born in us today as we worship you and reflect upon your Word. **Amen**

Song:

Once in royal David's city,
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and meek and lowly,
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

And through all His wondrous
childhood,
He would honor and obey,
Love and watch the lowly mother,
In whose gentle arms He lay.
Christian children all should be,
Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our child-hood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew,
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew,
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above,
And He leads His children on,
To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars
His children crowned,
All in white shall be around.

Read: Luke 1:26-38

The King is Coming. A summary of the talk given by Bishop David Williams.

Advent, these four weeks leading to Christmas, is a season of Light, with the longing for the gifts of Faith, Hope and Love. As we anticipate the Coming King, I want us to see this through the eyes of Mary this morning.



In a dramatic moment, the angel Gabriel tells Mary what is going to happen, and she responds “I am the Lord’s servant, may your word to me be fulfilled”

What is your experience of seeing God at work this year? In Mary’s story we learn:

1. They are initiated by God, not us. Mary did not ask for the experience she received. Nor could she have created it on her own. Only God could do it. That is always true. They are unanticipated. Not only did Mary not ask for the experience, but

she was also totally surprised by it.

2. This is also always true of these God moments. They are connected to God’s favour. It was a great privilege for Mary to be chosen for this task. It is a privilege any time God chooses one of us to help fulfil His purpose. They offer insights from God. Gabriel told Mary things about her future that she could not know.
3. Our encounters with God may not include angels, but that doesn’t make them any less supernatural. They require us to say yes. When God invites us into what He’s doing, He is giving us a chance to join in
4. Whenever we are willing to trust God and say yes to Him, our lives take on new meaning and direction. We don’t want to miss that.

Saying Yes to God: Change your approach to every year, every day, every minute that you live.



Say Yes - God loves to surprise us. He's creative. He does things we can't imagine in our wildest dreams. Say yes, and then watch how He works it all out.

Your Yes Will Open the Door for God's Best. You will never regret saying yes to God. God's best always comes after we are obedient to Him.

Stay Connected to God: Mary was a candidate for God's blessing because she was close to God. And during her lifetime, she stayed close to God—literally, as she raised Jesus. But she wasn't passive as she cared for Him. Luke says that when extraordinary things happened, Mary treasured them in her heart and pondered them. The ability to know and follow His direction always has much greater value than any human skill.



Stay Connected to Your Purpose: From the time before Jesus was even conceived, Mary knew her purpose.

It was her purpose to bear, raise, nurture, and care for the Son of God. Raising any child isn't easy. Having responsibility for Jesus must have weighed upon Mary heavily. But she bore it with grace, and she was faithful to the end. When you have doubts, face difficulties, or need to make tough decisions, don't depart from your purpose. If you know why God has put you on earth, use that knowledge as a standard. If you don't know your purpose, ask God to reveal it.

Stay Connected to People Who Encourage You: Soon after Mary learned that God was going to use her to do something extraordinary but very difficult, what did she do? She went to spend time with her cousin Elizabeth, with whom she was close. Elizabeth encouraged her and helped her get ready for what lay ahead. I believe that Jesus's actions show that He also recognized the importance of encouragement to Mary. As He was dying on the cross, He asked His disciple John to take His place caring for Mary—and who better than John, the disciple Jesus loved, to care for the mother Jesus loved? The more difficult the circumstances, the more we need and benefit from the encouragement of other

Prayers: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:4-6)



- Pray for this day, and the coming week
- Pray for the nations, their leaders, and peoples pray for justice, mercy, peace, and hope.
- Pray for individuals, for neighbours, for family and friends
- Pray for the Church

Third Sunday of Advent: 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.**

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, COGS, the communities around us and our whole nation. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

The Notices: If you know of others who'd like to receive this, or you'd rather not receive it; or if you find yourself isolated and not able to get neighbours, friends or family to help, then ring Howard, 01420 563344.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers