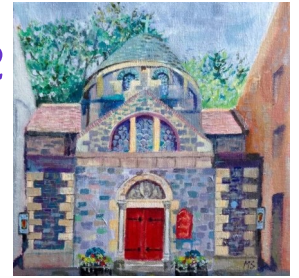




# St Columba's Bathgate and St Peter's Linlithgow



**Rector: Rev Christine Barclay**

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5<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Advent 2

**D**EAR FRIENDS, this Second Sunday of Advent, our readings continue the message of preparation, this week with the coming of John the Baptist who would prepare the way for the Messiah, he brings with him his urgent message of repentance. I hope that readings, prayers and short reflection help you engage in this most holy season as we journey towards the manger in Bethlehem.

### Collect

**S**TIR UP OUR HEARTS, Lord, to prepare the way of your only-begotten Son: that, in his coming, we might serve you with our hearts made pure; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

### Readings

Malachi 3: 1 - 4  
Philippians 1: 3 - 11  
Luke: 3: 1 - 6

### Reflection

**O**UR READINGS THIS WEEK contain references from the prophets to a messenger who will prepare people for the coming of the anointed, the long-expected Messiah, another example of God's provision for his people. All good builders know the necessity for thorough preparation which often involves chipping back to the solid foundation and making good. And those involved in advertising know that people need to be told the same thing many times before they are likely to do anything about changing their favourite ice cream or other foodstuff. So it is with God, who knows our human nature and who kindly tells us beforehand what he plans to do, and then provides John who himself points towards someone else. Hopefully there will be those, who having heard the prophecies, will already be waiting expectantly, ready to listen to what messenger John is saying.

There will be those who, through John's urgent message, will be sorting their lives out so that when Jesus' ministry begins, their hearts will already be tuned in to receive what he has to say and who will eventually recognise who he is.

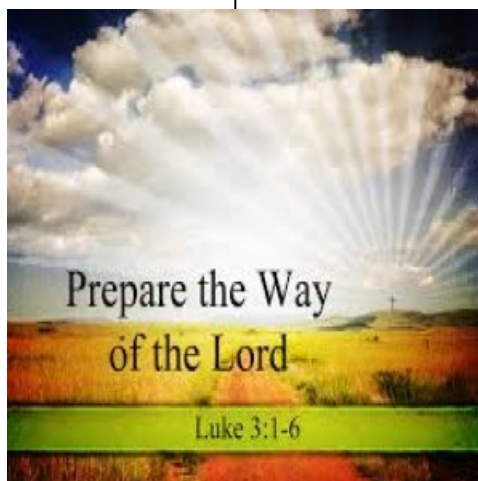
So, what about us, Paul's prayer is similar to the letter to the Thessalonians last week, it is rather like the image of carrying a very full mug of coffee from the kitchen back to bed, carefully holding it to prevent it spilling and losing some of the content on the way. We in our time, are in the privileged position of having read the prophecies, and have seen them fulfilled in John the Baptist, we have met Jesus through the Gospels and through his living presence in our lives. In a sense we are like the full mug of coffee and what we now have to do is continue our life's journey without losing a drop of what we have been given. On another level, we have to recognise that once isn't enough to hear John's message. It does us good to do so each and every Advent and for us to take a fresh look at our lives, to take stock and root out anything that is impairing our walk with God. May I wish you a good Advent pruning. Amen.

### Prayers

**E**VER FAITHFUL GOD, we pray that you would strengthen your people as messengers and ministers of your Word, that all may hear and believe in the Good News of Jesus.



Confirm our fellowship in the Gospel and keep us constant in truth until the return of Christ. Make straight the crooked ways of the world where people stumble without guidance, and make smooth the rough places where life is hard. Come with your power to bring joy to the nations and knowledge of salvation to all people. Give grace to us, our families and friends, to live together in love and desire all that is good. Heal us from all



that holds us back from you and have mercy on all who are bound up in less than honest lives. Grant them the true sense of your mercy and the good news of forgiveness. Free those who cannot forgive themselves, and give them confidence in your redeeming love. We pray for our Scottish Episcopal Church, the College of Bishops, our Primus Mark and John our Bishop and all who profess faith in your Son. Pour your healing grace on all who suffer in body, mind or spirit and we hold before you all who have asked for our prayers: for Rev Ruth Innes and those from our church families who have asked for our prayers:

**From St Columba's** Douglas & Muriel Laidlaw, Jim Marshall, Katrina Barron, Tom & Rose MacLaren, Brian Knotts, Lorna Aitken, Kath Stutt, Anthea & Katie McAlpin, Geoffrey & Hazel Gerrard, Doug & Pat Lawrie, Young Harry and Paul & Janice Moffat.

**And from St Peter's** Andrew Ramsay, Marg & Laurie (Heather's sister and brother-in-law) David Olwa, Pat & Jim Bryce, Gordon Dumayne, Kathleen Rae (Anne's friend), Cisley Moss, Peter & Marilyn McOwan, Harry & Connie Payne, Rita Manion (David's mother), Annie & Andy Gibb's (Olivia's in-laws), Bob Philip (Andy's father), Dot Pringle, Brenda Cook, Father John, Robert Boyter, Ruthie Caddell, David Szkudlarek, Jan Robson, and for all their families.

We pray for those who have died in recent days, including Jane Bruce's mum, and Stewart Fraser and for all who mourn. We remember all our loved ones departed and those connected with our church families whose anniversary of death falls at this time, including John Starr.

**From St Columba's** John Hunter, Bert Anderson, Hazel Irvine, Sarah Belcher and Richard Pake  
**St Peter's** Elie de la Rue, Ruby McMillan, Ernest James Weil and Beatrice Cramb.

### Blessing

**C**HRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS  
shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.



### Notices

**A**dvent is underway, we have turned the calendar over and are now only three weeks or so away from Christmas. Christmas lights are brightening the darkness of our High Street and our neighbourhoods, there is a lovely sense of anticipation amid the growing concerns over the new covid variant. Safe practices continue in both of our churches and receiving communion at the altar has been put on hold for the time being and communion will continue to be brought to people in their seats.

### Services for the coming week

**2nd Sunday of Sunday – 5th December** St Peter's

@ 9.30 and St Columba's @ 11.15am followed by AGM

In the evening – Advent Taize Service in St Columba's @6.30pm in Church @ 6.30pm

**Tuesday 7th December** – Midweek Eucharist @ 10.30am

**Wednesday 8th December** – St Columba's Midweek @ 10.30am

**Thursday 9th December** – Morning Prayer in St Peter's @ 9am (we are resuming this face to face service after 21 months on Zoom)

### Correction to Advent and Christmas Services

**Booklet.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas is 2<sup>nd</sup> and not 9<sup>th</sup> January.

**St Columba's AGM.** I hereby give notice that St Columba's AGM will be held after worship this Sunday (Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December). Under the terms of our constitution one vestry member stands down at the AGM and this will leave one vestry position to be filled.

**St Peter's AGM.** I am delighted to report that Ian Wallace was appointed to vestry at the recent AGM and that Jane has added Vestry Secretary to her responsibilities as my Warden. This will be until your new Rector is in place.

**Congratulations** to Elizabeth and Ian Even Cook on the safe arrival of their grandson Iain Mohan Cook and to Douglas and India his proud parents

**Life Together** – there will be no December issue this year, instead a bumper January edition will be put together with stories and pictures from all that we are going to get up to in the coming Advent and festive season. Bruce's contribution is already with our editor! So please do help make this next edition a special one to lift everyone's spirits during the dark January days. Editor Peter will be pleased to receive your contributions whenever you have them ready and the final date for contributing is **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

Alastair Small's three **Advent Studies** on the first chapter of the Gospel of St John have started. They are held in St Columba's on Thursdays at 3pm and are open to members of both St Columba's and St Peter's. the remaining sessions will be held:

Session 2 9<sup>th</sup> December Verses 12 – 13

Session 3 16<sup>th</sup> December Verse 14 The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory.

Alastair would prefer to hold the studies in St Columba's Meeting Room, but would be prepared to hold them on Zoom if that is what people wish and if he can master the technology. If you are interested, please do come along. For more information please contact Alastair [aandcsmall@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:aandcsmall@tiscali.co.uk), or phone 01506 656425 (mobile 07860 147541)

The Scottish Episcopal Institute, the ministry training body of our Scottish Episcopal Church is offering an **Advent Series: 'Reading the Bible like**

### **an Episcopalian' for Advent.**

Registration is free and open to all. It will be delivered via Zoom. The link is [here](#),  
Please note that it goes over the four weeks of Advent, from 7pm to 8pm, on the four Mondays, as follows:

Monday 29 November: The Bible's authority: Who's got the last word?

Monday 06 December: Praying with the Bible: Why a Book of Common Prayer?

Monday 13 December: The Bible in the Enlightenment: Who's the light of the world?

Monday 20 December: The Bible in the twenty-first century: How do we read it?

**Knitted Angels** for gifting this Christmas. Last Christmas our prayerfully knitted angels were such a lovely surprise to those who received them. This year I suggest that we knit them for people in the care homes in our communities. St Columba's angels will be given to Meadowvale Care Home and St Peter's to Linlithgow Care Home, The Bield Sheltered Housing and Linlithgow Day Care Centre. St Peter's are sharing this project with St John's Church. Please bring your knitted angels to church by **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December**.

### **NEWS FROM LYPP**

Over the year LYPP do many great things through their support of young people and their families in our communities. With Advent now upon us and Christmas only weeks away they are asking for support to help them reach their goal of raising £30k in 30 fundraising years – they are nearly there.

A generous offer has been made to LYPP from SOCIAL BITE who are gifting 70 Christmas Trees to local charities for them either to use themselves or to bring the spirit of Christmas into the homes of those who are finding this Christmas as challenging as it was last year. If you know of a family who would love to fill their home with that special smell and colour that only a real Christmas Tree can bring, please contact – BARBARA HAIG – [Barbara.haig@social-bite.co.uk](mailto:Barbara.haig@social-bite.co.uk)

### **SEC Morning, Evening and Night Prayer Liturgies**

Morning, Evening and Night Prayer liturgies are available at [www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices](http://www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices)

Rev Christine will be saying Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer each day at home and invites you to join in from yours.

On Thursday mornings at 9am a virtual service will be shared via Zoom™. If you would like to join in, the link every week will be:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/756114372?pwd=ZXpMWndaY210empVY1daL09paGlwZz09>

Meeting ID: 991 1810 8400 Passcode: 143983

### **For the coming week beginning on the Advent 2**

On Monday we remember Nicholas, Bishop of Myra c 326, on Tuesday we remember Ambrose, Bishop of

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	1 Kings 22.1-28	Romans 13.11-14	John 1.19-28
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	Amos 6.1-14	Revelations 1.1-8	Matthew 22.23-33
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	Amos 7.1-17	Revelations 1.9-16	Matthew 22.34-46
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Festivals	Genesis 3: 9-15, 20	Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11 -12	Luke 1. 26-38
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	Amos 9.1-10	Revelations 2.8-17	Matthew 23.13-26
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	Haggai 1.1-15	Revelations 2.18-29	Matthew 23.27-39
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Anticipation	Haggai 2.1-9	Revelations 3.1-6	Matthew 24.1-14

Milan, Teacher 397, and on Wednesday we celebrate the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

### **The Collect for the week of Advent 2 (except Wednesday)**

Stir up our hearts, Lord, to prepare the way of your only-begotten Son: that, in his coming, we might serve you with our hearts made pure; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

### **Wednesday: The Conception of Mary, Mother of the Lord**

Almighty God, who looked with favour on your servant Mary and called her to be the mother of your Son: grant us, we pray, the humility which found favour in your sight; that we, with her, may proclaim the

greatness of your name, and find the mercy shown to those who stand in awe of you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

**Each day we pray for:**

- The world: people, governments and leaders of the countries and specific issues arising in the news. Issues relating to social justice, peace, suffering and creation. And, of course, at this time for the devastating global covid-19 crisis.
- Our wider church, the SEC, our diocese, individual churches.
- Our community – residents in our area. For those with no faith, we pray for their introduction to the Christian faith, and for those with faith, that their faith may develop further.
- Those known to us who are unwell or in need.
- Our own church communities.



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Jane Ramsay - 07982252666