

Joint Service at St Bride's Newtonmore 11th December 2022

CALL TO WORSHIP

Opening Prayer

Lord God we rejoice in your coming to us and in the strengthen and joy given to us and in the strength and joy given to us through the coming of Jesus Christ. We give you thanks for all who have revealed your salvation in the way they have lived and witnessed to your love. Amen.

1st Hymn 160 Praise my soul, the King of heaven

Mr Roy Alexander will bring our 1st Reading to us from Isaiah 35:1-10

2nd Hymn 198 Let us build a house

Mr Roy Alexander will bring our 2nd Reading to us from Matthew 11: 2-11

Let us pray Advent 3

God of eternity,

When the voice of the prophet was silent and the faith of your people low ; when darkness had obscured light and indifference displaced zeal: you saw that the time was right, and prepared to send your Son. Set us free from fear and faithfulness that we may be ready to welcome him who comes as Saviour and Lord. Amen

Thought for the day

The scriptures never promised an easy life for those who seek to do good. Here is John the Baptist in prison for speaking out against evil. John had dared to speak out against Herod Antipas of Galilee. Herod had dismissed his wife and married his brother's wife, after seducing her. Because John spoke against this he was held prisoner in the fortress of Machaerus up in the mountains near the Dead Sea. John had proclaimed Jesus as the Christ, but there in prison either he or his disciples seem to be having doubts. Perhaps John wanted to point his disciples in the direction of Jesus. John's disciples came to Jesus and asked. 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus does not answer, 'Yes', or explain in words. He does not argue his case but rather asks them to tell what they hear and see. 'Do not tell John what I am saying but what I am doing, what is happening. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news brought to them.' 'Not only are the powers of darkness being defeated but the Scriptures are being fulfilled. This is Good news! Perhaps the disciples of John were worried about this 'friend of publicans and sinners'. Jesus is not as hard or as judgemental as they would like

him to be. This was not a message of destruction for the wicked but one of the love of God. Perhaps John's disciples would have liked a little more severity. Jesus says to the disciples of John, 'Blessed is anyone who takes no offence in me.' We have to accept him as he is and not change him into who we want him to be. In accepting him he will

transform our lives as he transformed those of the people he met. Amen

3rd Hymn 485 Dear Lord, and Father of mankind

Prayers of Intercession

Blessed are you, Lord our God, who has promised us your salvation through the prophets, and that in you we will find healing and peace. We come to you, for in our coming we turn away from the darkness and enter into the light of your presence and your love.

Our God and Saviour, we pray for the Church throughout the world, that it may witness to you not only in word but also in deed. May the Church reflect your love for the world and show your acceptance and forgiveness for all peoples.

We remember at this time all who are persecuted for their faith and all who are prisoners of conscience.

We give thanks for those who have taught us the faith by the example of the way they live. May we be a good example to others. Lord, bless our homes and our loved ones with the light of your presence. We remember all who are struggling in their relationships and those whose minds are full of doubt.

Lord, we come to you for renewal and healing, for strength and for light.

We ask your blessing upon all who suffer from a disability or who are ill at this time. We pray for those who have lost loved ones this week and for those who are caring for the

terminally ill. We give thanks for your renewing powers and that you give us life eternal.

We remember friends and loved ones who are departed from us. May they rejoice in fullness of life and in the glory of Your presence.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ

Amen

4th Hymn 237 Look forward in faith

Blessing

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen