

# St. Christopher's Church, Hinchley Wood

## Service Appendix 24<sup>th</sup> December 2023 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

### No Hymns at this Service

### Words of Introduction

In the midst of the bustle of Christmas preparations, we take time to praise, pray and reflect, listening out for God's call, trying to hear, nurture and respond to the heartbeat of Christ in our lives.

### Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath

Lord Jesus, light of the world, blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news; blessed is Mary, your mother and ours. Bless your Church preparing for Christmas; and bless us your children, who long for your coming.

**Amen.**

### Collect

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### Reading: (2 Samuel 7:1-16)

A reading from the Second Book of Samuel

King David was settled in his palace, and the Lord kept him safe from all his enemies. Then the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Here I am living in a house built of cedar, but God's Covenant Box is kept in a tent!"

Nathan answered, "Do whatever you have in mind, because the Lord is with you." But that night the Lord said to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David that I say to him, 'You are not the one to build a temple for me to live in. From the time I rescued the people of Israel from Egypt until now, I have never lived in a temple; I have travelled around living in a tent. In all my traveling with the people of Israel I never asked any of the leaders that I appointed why they had not built me a temple made of cedar.'

"So tell my servant David that I, the Lord Almighty, say to him, 'I took you from looking after sheep in the fields and made you the ruler of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have defeated all your enemies as you advanced. I will make you as famous as the greatest leaders in the world. I have chosen a place for my people Israel and have settled them there, where they will live without being oppressed any more. Ever since they entered this land, they have been attacked by violent people, but this will not happen again. I promise to keep you safe from all your enemies and to give you descendants. When you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will make one of your sons king and will keep his kingdom strong. He will be the one to build a temple for me, and I will make sure that his dynasty continues forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him as a father punishes his son. But I will not withdraw my support from him as I did from Saul, whom I removed so that you could be king. You will always have descendants, and I will make your kingdom last forever. Your dynasty will never end.'"

### Psalm 89

O Lord, I will always sing of your constant love; I will proclaim your faithfulness forever. I know that your love will last for all time, that your faithfulness is as permanent as the sky.

**You said, “I have made a covenant with the man I chose;  
I have promised my servant David,  
‘A descendant of yours will always be king; I will preserve your dynasty forever.’”**

In a vision long ago you said to your faithful servants, “I have given help to a famous soldier;  
I have given the throne to one I chose from the people.

**I have made my servant David king by anointing him with holy oil.  
My strength will always be with him, my power will make him strong.**

I will love him and be loyal to him; I will make him always victorious.  
I will extend his kingdom from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates River.

**He will say to me, ‘You are my father and my God; you are my protector and saviour.’**

## **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, Alleluia!

I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me.

**Alleluia!**

## **Gospel: (Luke 1:26-38)**

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, “Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!”

Mary said to the angel, “I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do.”

“I am the Lord's servant,” said Mary; “may it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.

## **The Peace**

The Almighty promises aid to all who call upon the name of the Lord. In the coming of Christ that peace is made manifest from generation to generation.

## **Closing Prayer**

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

## **The Blessing**

May God, who dwelt among the nation of David, travel with you all your days.

May Christ, conceived in the womb of Mary, enter into your heart and life.

May the Spirit, whose breath brought vitality to Mary's child, inspire you to live as agents of God's holy Gospel.